

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND



**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES BY GRADE 12 BUSINESS
STUDIES TEACHERS IN KING CETSHWAYO DISTRICT.**

BY

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SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

WITH SPECIALISATION IN CURRICULUM STUDIES

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for a Master's Degree in Education, at the University of Zululand, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete list of references.

Signature _____

Date: _____

(Mrs TS Ndlazi)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother Samkelisiwe maZungu Khoza and my father John Khoza whose efforts nurtured me in such an extent that I can achieve higher goals in life. This study is also dedicated to my husband Enock Ndlazi, my sons, Sphe Ndlazi and Thuthu Ndlazi, for their love, support and understanding.

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Abstract

Assessment plays a vital role in students' learning whether in basic education or tertiary education. It provides information to both teachers and learners about learners' progress in their education. The teacher's understanding of the use of assessment in teaching and learning is one of the factors to be taken into consideration. However, teachers sometimes experience challenges when it comes to the implementation of formative assessment. The successful implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies needs teachers to have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitude. The aim of this study was to explore the practices, understand the experiences and investigate the challenges of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment in the King Cetshwayo District. Data was collected from five participants who purposefully selected, the participants were Grade 12 Business Studies teachers from schools under Mhlana cluster. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The findings of the study revealed that teachers are aware of the importance of the use of formative assessment, for instance they use it to establish prior knowledge and they also use various activities to implement formative assessment. The research results also revealed that formative assessment activities done during the lesson enhance learners' performance, help to improve learner involvement and participation and that results in students participating meaningfully in their own learning. Participants revealed that formative assessment assist teachers to accommodate learner diversity using different assessment activities. The study also revealed that there are challenges that were encountered by Business Studies which include the learners' lack motivation which has a negative impact on teaching and learning. The other challenges that were encountered by teachers and hinder the effective use formative assessment in schools include, overcrowded classrooms, heavy teacher workloads and limited resources. The study recommended that teachers need to be continuously developed and capacitated on effective strategies that can be used to implement formative assessment effectively.

Keywords: CAPS, Formative assessment, involvement of learners, overcrowded classrooms, resources.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Assessment has become a major policy for improving classroom teaching and learning. As far back as 1998, Black and William (1998) conducted research that indicated that assessment has an impact on improving learning. There are various types of assessments i.e., baseline assessment, diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. However, it should be noted that educational assessment has historically served primarily as a summative tool for controlling the section of knowledge (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). In the South African context, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) puts an emphasis on the importance of formative assessment and how it should be used in daily teaching and learning, Department of Education, (DoE ,2011). In this dissertation the focus is on the implementation of formative assessment by teachers of Business Studies.

Business Studies is the subject that aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, attributes, and values that are critical for informed, productive, ethical, and responsible participation in the formal and informal economic sectors (DoE, 2011). To achieve the purpose of the subject proper implementation of formative assessment is necessary, as that allows for the use of different assessment activities in the learning and teaching of Business Studies. It is therefore imperative for Business Studies teachers to implement formative assessment strategies effectively during the course

of teaching and learning, so as to improve learners' performance and achieve the aims of the subject (Nguyen,2021). There are also formal and informal assessment tasks that need to be administered during the teaching and learning course i.e., case studies, projects, problem-solving, presentations. Furthermore, the study conducted by Grussendorf and Booyse (2014) revealed that Grade 12 Business Studies learners have to possess higher cognitive skills of synthesis, evaluation, and dealing with content in an unfamiliar environment. Hence, grade 12 Business Studies teachers are the ones who will be participants in the study, so as to explore their practices, understand their experiences and investigate the challenges they are faced with when implementing formative assessment.

Grade 12 is an exit grade in the Further Education Phase (DoE, 2011) which makes it more urgent that they are exposed to various assessment tasks in preparation for postschool life. Additionally, according to the researcher's experience which is 12 years of teaching Business Studies, she is of the view that the focus of teachers is more on drilling learners to pass their final examination (summative assessment) with high marks than on building learners' knowledge through formative assessment. Business Studies is hoped to be a subject that prepares learners for entrepreneurial skills like problem-solving, creative thinking, management, leadership, etc. DoE, (2011). Therefore, it is more important that formative assessment is effectively implemented so as to afford the grade 12 students to leave the schooling system with skills and knowledge that will help them in the future.

The successful implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies needs teachers to have the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources together with the ability to apply formative assessment strategies so that they help learners learn by acquiring required skills and knowledge. (Ketabi & Ketabi, 2014). Additionally, Grussendorf and Booyse, (2014) are of the view that every assessment task given to learners should counter for their age level and cognitive skills. It should be noted that formative assessment which is also called assessment for learning needs to be used during the learning process with the aim of supporting learning.

However, Ochout and Madiba, (2018) revealed that teachers do not view assessment as an integral part of learning, they rather see it as an additional task that has little relationship with what occurs in the classroom, therefore viewing implementation of formative assessment as an addition in their workload. Additionally, the researcher's observation is that teachers focus more on preparing for the final examination to get high pass marks than on ensuring that required outcomes of Business Studies are achieved during teaching and learning. This is what made an interest to the researcher to do this study to investigate whether teachers of Business Studies do practice formative assessment in their teaching and learning. It is also in the light of the above background that the current study seeks to explore the practices, understand the experiences, and investigate the challenges faced by Grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

There are mainly three ways in which formative assessment can be applied (SCASS; 2017). Firstly, on the fly, which occurs in response to unexpected teachable moments and is done in an endeavour to address learners' misconceptions. Secondly, planned interaction which is purposeful is designed by teachers to identify the gap between what learners know and what they should know. Thirdly, its curriculum embedded formative assessment which happens when the assessment tasks are integrated into the policy documents, like CAPS.

Formative assessment is also used to provide constructive feedback to learners so as to improve learning as learners are put at the centre of teaching and learning (William & Leahy, 2016). Therefore, it is of vital importance that the implementation of formative assessment is done effectively through the application of informal or daily assessment in Business Studies. Formative assessment helps students to know and recognize the standards they are aiming for, by providing feedback that helps students to recognize their next steps and how to take those steps (William & Leahy, 2016). It is worth noting that Business Studies is structured to develop knowledge, skills and values which are necessary for learners to participate responsibly, productively and effectively in business activities in both the formal and informal sectors.

There are challenges faced by teachers when they are implementing formative assessments. According to Gussendorf and Booysen, (2014) curriculum change is one of the factors that causes the challenges in the implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies, especially in the South African context.

The other challenge is the lack of time when it comes to the implementation of the school-based assessment (Othman, Salleh, & Norani, 2013). The author further state that teachers need time to use a variety of assessment tasks in various ways to implement the formative assessment. Additionally, teachers need to gain insight into learners' way of thinking about the subject matter, framing feedback that helps them move toward specific learning goals (Black & William, 2009) for them to be able to implement formative assessment effectively. The authors further state that there is no medicine for how formative assessment should look like can be found other than that teachers can use any type of activity and a method of assessment. This is done to

ensure that teachers teach to reveal the way learners think around and to improve the level of learning and the advancement of learning.

The workload is another factor that contribute to teachers' challenges as some teachers have more workload which has a negative impact on the time they must focus on School-Based Assessment (SBA) (Black & William, 2009). What is needed is adequate time, less workload, and clear guidelines for formative assessment to be effectively implemented and that would lead to improved learner outcomes. The availability of resources and time are also the major requirements for the achievement of outcomes in Business Studies.

Additionally, the pace for grade 12 in Business Studies is faster since the breadth and depth of the content must be covered in three terms (Gussendorf & Booyesen, 2014). It, therefore, becomes difficult for teachers and learners to effectively implement formative assessment because of the fast pace coupled with their workload. Therefore, considering that Business Studies according to CAPS policy is content driven and must be covered in three terms, it's not surprising that there are challenges with regards to the effective implementation of the formative assessment in Business Studies, especially in grade 12.

Researchers like Moss, Brookhart, and Long, (2013) are of the view that formative assessment is important as it sends a message of what is worth learning. Therefore, the same goes for Business Studies grade 12 teachers who must make sure that formative assessment is effectively implemented as a way to show students that what they are learning is worth learning. Formative assessment leads to the achievement of outcomes as per (CAPS) (DoE 2011) policy as it engages learners in different activities. Additionally, the formative assessment also helps in addressing learners' needs in time and it also allows learners to express themselves (Shepard, 2005).

According to the (DoE, 2011) Business Studies learners' will be able to:

- Acquire and apply essential business knowledge, skills, and principles to productively and profitably conduct business in changing business environments.
- Apply basic leadership and management skills and principles while working with others to accomplish business goals.

- Be able to secure formal employment and are in a position to pursue sustainable entrepreneurial and self-employment career pathways.
- Create business opportunities, creatively solve problems, and take risks, respect the rights of others and environmental sustainability.
- Be committed to developing themselves and others through business opportunities and ventures.
- Be motivated, self-directed, reflective lifelong learners who responsibly manage themselves and their activities while working towards business goals?

According to William and Thompson, (2007) there are five strategies to be used to ensure the implementation of formative assessments and those are:

- Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success
- Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of learner's understanding.
- Providing feedback that moves learners forward.
- Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- Activating learners as the owners of their own learning

The above strategies of formative assessment link with what is required in both the informal and formal assessment of Business Studies, it also means that effective implementation of the above strategies will ensure proper the achievement of outcomes in Business Studies as per CAPS policy (DoE, 2011).

Hence, the current study endeavours to explore the practices, understand the experiences, and investigate the challenges of grade 12 Business Studies teachers. It was discovered that more studies are based on different assessment tasks according to policy document. This includes Continuous assessment, diagnostic assessment, formal assessment, informal assessment etc. The focus of this study is on whether teachers of Business Studies practice the formative assessment in their teaching and learning which means it is specifically based on the practices of formative assessment by teachers.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Personal Practice Assessment Theory (PPAT) by Box, Skoog and Dabbs (2015) was chosen as a framework for this study which amongst other things aims to explore formative assessment practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers. Personal Practice Theory of Assessment (PPAT) was developed by Cornett (1990) from the curriculum development model of Personal Practice Theories. Personal Practice Theory is a systematic theory of each teacher based on personal experience obtained from non-educational activities such as life as a learner or parent and practical experiences attained from the design and the application of the curriculum through instructions.

Personal Practice Theories give a clear direction to teacher's behavior during classroom activities (Ritchie, 1998). According to Duong (2018) and Laung (2015) teachers should thoroughly explore formative assessment practices to understand how the aspects of formative assessment are actually achieved in the classroom interactions. Teachers are encouraged to improve through personal experiences and practical inquiry, this will help in the application of PPTs and teachers' ability to modify, confirm or otherwise change those theories by reflecting on the achievement of their exploring experience.

Personal Practice Assessment Theories (PPATs) aim is to address teachers' assessment theories. The basis for teachers' personal practice assessment theories is the following.

- Assessment is useful in improving teacher instruction and student learning by providing quality information for decision making.
- Assessment is relevant to the work of teachers and the life of students.
- Assessment is about the accountability of students through certification processes.
- Teachers and schools are made accountable through internal or external evaluation.

It is the researcher's contention that those conceptions held by the teachers are a result of their beliefs, values, goals, experiences, and knowledge of assessment and contribute to their personal practice assessment theories. This theory is therefore

useful for teachers as it encourages them to work towards the improvement of the life of students and are made responsible and accountable through evaluation of their work.

Box *et al.*, (2015) in their study about Teacher Personal Practice Assessment, revealed the complexities of implementing formative assessment, such as the constraints that teachers have in the use of formative assessment in their instruction.

The constraints include but are not limited to teachers' knowledge that plays a critical role in shaping their assessment practices. Hence, this study will also look at the challenges that are faced by teachers in implementing formative assessment in Business Studies.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Formative assessment is taken as an integral part of teaching and learning in all the subjects including Business Studies. In the South African context, CAPS (DoE, 2011), emphasises the importance of formative assessment and how it should be used in daily teaching and learning (DoE, 2011). However, summative assessment seems to be considered more reliable among the two (Black & William, 2009). The most challenging part when it comes to the implementation of formative assessment tasks is that do teachers really practice formative assessment in their teaching and learning of Business considering the content to be covered, assessment tasks to be administered both formal and informal, learner differences, teacher' workload and skills and knowledge of the formative assessment . The challenges faced by teachers may impede learners to achieve expected outcomes in Business Studies as stated in the CAPS document. One of the purposes of Business Studies" is to equip grade 12 learners with important principles, skills, and knowledge of business to conduct businesses in a profitable and productive way in a dynamic business environment" (DoE,2011). Hence, the current study aims to explore the formative assessment practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers, understand what teachers' experience, and investigate their challenges.

1.5. AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore the practices, understand the experiences and investigate the challenges of grade 12 Business studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment in King Cetshwayo District.

1.5.1 Objectives of the Study

- To explore the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process.
- To understand the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies teachers as far as the implementation of formative assessment is concerned.
- To investigate the challenges faced by grade 12 Business Studies teachers on the implementation of formative assessment.
- To enhance or improve the assessment practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers.

1.5.2 Research Questions

- What are the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process?
- What are the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies teachers as far as the implementation of formative assessment is concerned?
- What are the challenges faced by grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment?
- How can the assessment practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers be enhanced or improved?

1.6 Intended contribution of body of knowledge.

The study is hoped to bring knowledge of whether teachers can practice formative assessment in the teaching and learning of Business Studies with the knowledge and understanding of the importance of formative assessment. It will also provide

guidelines on how formative assessment should be implemented in Business Studies. It will also help the Department of Basic Education to identify the challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of formative assessment and to come up with strategies on how the challenges can be addressed.

The findings may help the Department of Basic Education to find the ideas from teachers about the support they need from the Department to ensure effective implementation of formative assessment. The study will also contribute to the knowledge of Departmental officials, like subject advisors on the support they need to give to the teachers to improve the implementation of formative assessment.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is defined as a system of models, procedures, and techniques used to find the results of a research problem (Creswell, 2014). This study used qualitative research methodology collect and analyse data. The qualitative investigation would serve as an avenue for the vase, exploratory angle of looking at practices of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers in King Cetshwayo high schools. In attempting to fulfil this purpose this section pays more attention to outlining the research methodology, which includes the discussion of the research paradigm, population and sampling data collection technique and data analysis. The section ends with a discussion of trustworthiness, issues of credibility, reliability, validity, and ethical consideration in the study.

1.8 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Creswell (2014), there are mainly three research approaches and those are qualitative, quantitative. and mixed methods. The current study employed qualitative research as it can be used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Cresswell, 2009). The qualitative approach is also used in this study as “it studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of the phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). The author further stated that “qualitative research is useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon and the way

people interpret their experiences of the world”. Therefore, the approach was appropriate for the study as it has helped the researcher to explore the practices and understand the experiences of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment at King Cetshwayo District.

1.9 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The current study has adopted the interpretive paradigm, as it focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied. The paradigm was appropriate in this study as that has helped in getting the perspective of the Grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment. According to Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, (2011), interpretivist more often is interested in the insight of a particular setting and the core belief of the interpretive paradigm is that reality is socially built. Interpretivism is more comprehensive since it acknowledges the number of perspectives from diverse people. It is understood theoretically that in the interpretive paradigm researchers are allowed to view the world through the beliefs and perceptions of individuals (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The author further mentions that in investigating the answers for research the researcher who uses the interpretive paradigm employs those experiences to construct and interpret his/her understanding from the data collected (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

The researcher chooses the interpretive paradigm because the focus is on getting different views, beliefs and ideas on the practices, experiences and challenges of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study has collected data using the case study as a qualitative research design. The case study was used to gain an understanding of the issue in real-life settings, and it was an ideal method when the researcher was aiming to find answers to the “why and how “type of questions. (Merriam, 2009). The case study is also described as a qualitative inquiry mostly suitable for a comprehensive, holistic, and in-depth investigation of complex issues (Cresswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009).

In this case study, the researcher aims to gain an understanding of the practices, experiences, and challenges of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment.

1.11 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researcher used the purposive sampling method to select participants who could provide relevant information regarding the phenomena that were explored in the study which is a formative assessment. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling that is also called judgemental, which is the deliberate choice of participants due to the qualities the participant possesses (Eitikan, Musa, Alkassim, 2016). It is also defined as a type of sampling where participants are chosen with a 'purpose' to represent a phenomenon, group, incident location or type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The reason for choosing purposive sampling was that the researcher targeted participants of the specific characteristics and those are grade 12 Business Studies teachers. The participants were from King Cetshwayo District specifically at Umfolozi Circuit schools of Mhlana cluster, which is a cluster that is constituted by rural schools and as such is characterised by poor resources and a shortage of teachers. Five participants were selected from secondary schools that are part of the Mhlana cluster. The participants were grade 12 Business Studies teachers with more than three years of teaching experience. 21 April 2022

1.12 DATA COLLECTION

Two data collection methods were used for the collection of data in this study i.e semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Data was collected from five teachers who are teaching Business Studies in grade 12 at King Cetshwayo District. According to Taole and Mncube (2012), an interview is regarded as an interaction or communication between a researcher and the participants with the aim of exchanging the information. The researcher used the semi-structured interview as the primary data collection tool. The researcher decided to use this method to collect data as it was going to allow the participants an opportunity to explore their understanding and ask

questions to obtain clarity on what they didn't understand. The researcher used the same questions to ask all the participants during the collection of data. This assisted the researcher when comparing the results during the data analysis process.

The second data collection instrument used in this study was document analysis. Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as a systematic procedure used in qualitative research, where documents are interpreted by the researcher to give an idea and the meaning around certain topics. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) stated that: "Document analysis is defined as a form of qualitative that uses the systematic procedure to analyse documentary evidence and answer specific research questions". The benefit of using document analysis is that it uses existing information as it is typically cheap and often free. The researcher used valuable sources of information such as annual teaching plans, lesson planning, and programme of assessment which were found in the teacher files. McMillan and Shumacher, (2006) believe that document analysis "is one of the methods that can be easily employed to identify and implement procedures of the curriculum". The reason for using document analysis was that it gave substance to the results and was great for triangulation of the results from focus group interviews because of what would have been seen documented in teachers' files.

1.13 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is defined as "a systematic process of examining, selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting data to address the initial propositions of the study" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

In the current study, data were analysed by transcribing the data a tape recorder coupled with expanding notes from interviews. The researcher also interpreted data based on the behaviour of participants during the interview. Data analysis was analysed following steps by Mcmillan and Shumacher, (2006). The first stage was data organisation entails the separation of data into workable units. In this stage, data was broken into small chunks. The second stage was *data* coding wherein data was converted into the format that allowed for coding. Third stage was classification and tabulation, in this stage, the researcher used the table to classify the information and

to do coding. After all these stages data were presented using the description and interpretive style.

1.14 The Trustworthiness of a Qualitative Research

“The qualitative researchers can establish the trustworthiness of their research by addressing the transferability, dependability and confirmability of their studies and findings” (Mills & Gay,2016). There are four criteria that are considered appropriate in qualitative studies that should establish the trustworthiness of the research, namely credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Guba, 1981).

The trustworthiness in this study was mainly developed through the following strategies:

- Triangulation between semi-structured interviews and document analysis with the participants.
- The researcher carried out extensive member checking whereby the informants commented on drafts of the case study pertaining to their formative assessment practices in Business Studies.
- The research instrument was also peer-reviewed by the Business Studies subject advisor and curriculum specialist and modifications were made based on their suggestion and recommendations.
- The involvement of the research assistant was considered to mitigate conflict of interest.
- The trustworthiness was ensured through the following criteria as suggested by Guba (1981). Guba (1981) suggested the following two methods to be used to establish credibility:
 - Firstly, its practice triangulation: where sources will be compared with one another in order to cross-check data.
 - Secondly, members check where the researcher verified the data with the participants before writing the final report.

Transferability refers to qualitative researchers’ beliefs that everything they study is context-bound and that the goal of their work is not to develop true statements that can be generalized to larger groups of people.

The researcher collected detailed descriptive data that permitted comparison of a given context to other contexts in which transfer might be possible. No claims were made regarding the generalizability of the results of this study.

Dependability refers to the stability of the data. The researcher ensured trustworthiness by ensuring that the researcher was thoroughly described and precisely followed a clear and thoughtful research strategy by describing each step of the qualitative component namely sampling, how data were collected, coded, analysed thoroughly, and carefully. Confirmability refers to the neutrality or objectivity of the data that have been collected. The researcher gave a detailed description of the research design and supply other researchers with a clear audit trail, should they wish to conduct a similar study in a different context.

In this study, trustworthiness was mainly developed through triangulation between semi-structured interviews and document analysis with the participants. The researcher carried out extensive member checking was carried out whereby the participants were commenting on drafts of the case study pertaining to their formative assessment practices in Business Studies. The research instrument was also based on peer review by a Business Studies subject advisor and curriculum specialist and modifications were made based on their suggestion and recommendations. Lastly, the involvement of a research assistant was considered to mitigate conflict of interest.

1.15 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

The participants who participated in the current study were from schools that belong to King Cetshwayo District in Umfolozi Circuit in one cluster called UMhlana. The schools are closer to each other and accessible to the researcher. Therefore, the current study does not expect to have any challenges infrastructural and financially. There were few expected limitations with regards to access to information as permission was sought from the KZN Department of Education before the data collection process. Consequently, the study was completed within the required period.

1.16 Intellectual Property

The world Intellectual Property organisation defines intellectual property (IP) as creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names,

images, and designs used in commerce. The researcher is also aware of the IP rights as set out in the Public Finance Research and Development Act of 2008. Therefore, other than the usual copyright issues, the researcher is not expecting any special intellectual property rights to emanate from this research.

1.17 Knowledge Dissemination

Knowledge obtained from the study will be made available to the University of Zululand library in the form of a dissertation. It will also be presented in workshops, seminars, and local and International Conferences

1.18 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The study comprises five chapters which are outlined as follows:

Chapter 1

Chapter one outlines the general orientation of the study, the statement of the problem, the research aim, objectives and questions are outlined.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of the practices, experiences and challenges faced by Grade 12 Business Studies teachers from both local and international contexts. The theories that underpin the study are also explained in detail.

Chapter 3

This chapter will entail the methodology that will be applied. The qualitative approach, design, research paradigm, type of study, and research instruments will all form part of this chapter. Information about the research participants will also be included.

Chapter 4

This chapter discusses the analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected as well as the presentation of findings gathered from all the targeted samples of the study. **Chapter five**

This chapter will reveal the findings, conclusions and recommendations. Limitations to the study and measures to address the limitations will also be highlighted.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the background of the study, the research problem, research questions, research objectives and, the significant of the study. The theoretical framework and the research design methodology used in the study were also discussed. This chapter reviews the literature on the practices of formative assessment by Grade 12 Business Studies teachers at King Cetshwayo District. It focuses on Business Studies in the South African Curriculum, the purpose of Business Studies, the meaning of formative assessment practices of formative assessment in Business Studies, and the importance of feedback. Additionally, it also describes the experiences and the challenges of the teachers in the implementation of formative assessment.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 PERSONAL PRACTICE ASSESSMENT THEORY (PPAT)

This study is informed by Personal Practice Assessment Theory (PPATs) Box *et al.*, (2015) which is about the interpretation of the assessment practices of teachers. The current study aims at exploring how and in what way PPAT influences the grade 12 Business Studies teacher's formative assessment practices in selected high schools in the King Cetshwayo Districts. According to Box, (2008), Personal Practice Assessment Theories refers to "the conceptual structures and visions" that assist teachers with reasons for their actions, and choices of teaching activities and curriculum material. The PPAT was found by Cornett (1990), and it refers to the systematic theories or beliefs held by each teacher" Cornett 's (1990) based upon personal experiences which are not related to teaching activities e.g., life as a student or parent, and practical experiences, gained over the years which are part of curriculum design and implementation (Cornett,1990). So, both the personal and practical experiences play a vital role in teacher's understanding and implementation of formative assessment. Personal Practice Theory of Assessment (PPAT) was developed by Cornett (1990) from the curriculum development model of Personal

Practice Theories. Personal Practice Theory is a systematic theory of each teacher based on personal experience obtained from non-educational activities such as life as a learner or parent and practical experiences attained from the design and the application of the curriculum through instructions.

The application of formative assessment depends on a clear understanding of the teachers' perceptions of the importance of assessment (Xao *et al.*, 2021). Teachers play an important role in the implementation of formative assessment throughout the teaching and the learning process. Therefore, the importance and application of formative assessment are linked to how teachers understand formative assessment (Yan *et al.*, 2021). Teachers' personal perceptions and beliefs in the classroom influence how they teach and assess.

In this study, the researcher as the Business Studies teacher uses different assessment tasks, teaching strategies and questioning techniques to improve learner achievement. The alignment between the outcomes they set for learners to achieve, and the pedagogical consequences is important. The strategy is used to close the learning gaps discovered during the teaching and learning process with appropriate strategies. It is also critical that a conducive learning environment is created for learners in order to achieve the required learning outcomes. Bransford, *et al.*, (2000) reminds teachers that classrooms and any other teaching and learning environment should be organised in a way that accommodates all the different needs of learners. The author further stated that formative assessment and learner-centred approaches are interlinked, which means that formative assessment activities are by nature learner-centred, as learners play an active role in the process of teaching and learning. So, the use of formative assessment strategies, ensure that the learner is at the centre and allowed to own their learning. Fox-Turnbull (2006) conducted a study on technology teachers' knowledge of formative assessment and the kind of feedback they provide to students. She found that teachers usually used higher-level thinking and/or open-ended questions as part of formative assessment strategies and that had a positive contribution to the technology students' performance. She concluded that teachers' knowledge has a positive impact on the use of quality formative assessment strategies, and, therefore, affects students' performance.

Black and William (2002) published *Working Inside the Black Box*, which provided educators with practical steps on how to implement formative assessment practices in the classroom context. The authors further extended the description of formative assessment, by adding assessment for learning, which aims to promote pupils 'learning through the design and practice. Hence, feedback plays a critical role in this kind of assessment as it is used to scaffold learning and change some of the teaching and learning activities and strategies which are not helping the learners to achieve the planned outcomes. The emphasis is also on the importance of self and peer assessment strategies, the former helps learners to own and improve their own learning, whilst the latter allows learners to help each other.

The actions that are taken by both teachers and students because of formative assessment practices, play a vital role in the teaching and learning process. Teachers also need to acknowledge the prior knowledge and beliefs that learners bring to a learning task and use it as a foundation upon which to build knowledge (Bransford *et al.*, 2000).

Formative assessment strategies entail the use of effective pedagogy, which is defined as teaching and learning activities that have positive results for the students. Firstly, the activities result in observable changes in students, they lead to active student engagement and understanding of the content which improves their learning experience (Westbrook *et al.*, 2013). Teachers are involved in multifaceted actions when interacting with learners during the teaching and learning process (Kanjee, 2020). The actions include lesson planning, lesson introduction, questions asked in class, the chance given to learners to respond, and the feedback given by the teacher. At the core of all these activities are formative assessment strategies which help the teacher to identify and address areas of concern observed during lesson presentation. (Alexander 2008; Megahed *et al.* 2008; Schweisfurth 2011; Westbrook *et al.* 2013). Questioning, keeping learners involved in their learning using self-assessment and peer assessment, giving constructive feedback and changing the teaching strategies during the lesson to accommodate learner differences, here are some of the popular formative assessment strategies (Hay *et al.*, 2015). The following strategies give clear picture of how teachers can practice formative assessment successfully in their teaching and learning process.

2.2.2. What is formative assessment?

Black and William, 1998) define formative assessment as “encompassing all those activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged”. Formative assessment refers to all assessments undertaken by learners during the lesson to firstly, identify what learners know and can do, and, secondly, to take appropriate steps to support learners improve their knowledge, understanding or skills. Furthermore, Qualters (2000) defines formative assessment as the assessment activities that are done in the classroom to improve learning. The activities are constructed to provide learners with the required information. It allows learners to learn something which will change and improve their learning. It is also referred to as ‘classroom-based formative assessment’ or

‘Assessment for learning’ as it consists of the various activities that are used to improve learning for learners (Qualters 2008). The primary purpose of formative assessment is to lead to actionable steps to improve what learners know, understand or can do (Christodoulou, 2017), The characteristics that define formative assessment are that it involves both learners and teachers, it is conducted during the lesson, is based on informal evidence, which is obtained using planned and/or spontaneous activities, it requires the teacher to provide feedback that learners can apply, and it leads to specific actions the address learners’ learning needs. In practice, formative assessment is mainly based on teacher judgement, as assessment becomes formative when the information is used to adapt teaching and learning to meet student’ needs.

Boston (2002) argues that formative assessment assists learners to be aware of their learning gaps, especially when it is encompassed with feedback that guides them to fill the learning gaps that exist between the desired goals and their understanding knowledge, and skills. It also encourages learners to express their feelings and, beliefs and even improves the learners’ level of thinking. Black *et al.*, (2003) further argue that formative assessment must be within the control of the teacher since any changes in formative assessment are an integral part of the teacher’s daily work. It can, therefore, be deduced that formative assessment aims to improve the quality of teaching and

learning as both the teachers and learners gain from its implementation in the classroom, it also helps in gauging whether the planned outcomes are achieved. Chappuis (2015) warns that grading formative assessment tasks could hinder the process of learning, thereby negatively affecting learners' performance. Learners may ultimately give up learning if they always get low marks in their graded assessment tasks. So, learners need to understand the purpose of formative assessment that it is assist them to improve and take ownership of their learning, thus improving their overall performance.

2.2.3. Formative Assessment Key Strategies

William and Thompson (2007) proposed a model of formative assessment consisting of five key formative assessment strategies. Additionally, William (2011), claims that the afore-mentioned key strategies result into effective formative assessment.

- 1. Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success*
- 2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and learning tasks*
- 3. Providing feedback that moves learners forward.*
- 4. Activating students as instructional resources for one another, and*
- 5. Activating students as the owners of their own learning*

2.2.4. Discussion of formative assessment key strategies

The first strategy entails clarifying and sharing learning intentions and success criteria with the learners. It is important that teachers communicate with learners about what learners are expected to achieve, it assists learners to be prepared for what the teacher is going to teach by understanding the learning objectives. According to William (2011), learning intentions (LI) and success criteria (SC) should be known and understood by both teachers and learners in the classroom. Teachers are expected to share with learners' lesson outcomes which need to be achieved by the end of the lesson. Therefore, learning intentions and the criteria for success need to be communicated and be visible to every learner for the duration of the lesson. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2000), the lesson is likely to be far more effective when teachers design their lessons in such a way that they start from what learners already

know and build new knowledge of the learners starting from backward. Clearer goals facilitate the assessment of the most relevant knowledge and skills, which in turn provides more valid and reliable data about students' learning needs and thus the possibility to make more valid and reliable decisions about feedback and instructional activities that are adapted to the students' learning needs, (Anderson, 2018).

The second strategy is engineering effective classroom discussions through questions. Asking questions during teaching and learning ensures that learners are involved in their learning as they get an opportunity to express themselves through answering the questions asked during the lesson. Black and William (2009) argue that "questioning is used to start effective classroom discussions and to involve learners in other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding". Hence, it is vital that teachers use various kinds of activities thus applying different questioning styles, for an example, a teacher may call learners to respond to questions without them indicating the intention of responding by raising their hands, this gives learners opportunities to participate even those who use to hide when others raise hands to answer the questions. According to Anderson (2018) "an example of a formative assessment activity pertaining to Key strategy 2, would be when a teacher asks the students questions in a whole-class session, and the students answer on mini-whiteboards that they hold up at the same time for the teacher to see". The author Black and William (2009), further, states that the teacher may also give learners a few minutes to think about the answer to the questions before they respond or give learners time to discuss the answer with their peers before they respond. William (2011) is of the view that there should be a balance in the kind of questions asked, for instance, open-ended and closed questions and higher-order and lower order questions, and that the type of teachers' questions should provide the foundation for later feedback to learners "(Kanjee, 2020).

Writing and using higher order thinking questions during the lesson is critical to challenge learners to improve their knowledge and understanding of the new concepts that they are learning. High cognitive demand questions are questions that require learners to provide detailed descriptions/explanations in their responses. Thus teachers should always begin questions with words such as explain, compare, describe, etc.

Teachers also have to engage students and use both spontaneous and planned activities to improve learner participation as a means of collecting evidence on what learners know, understand and can do (Kanjee, 2020). This will help in achieving Business Studies skills since it requires learners to be engaged in different activities. Spontaneous activities include informal questions or discussions while planned activities include all activities and questions prepared before the Business Studies lessons. However, it is important that teachers must ensure that they create a positive learning environment where learners feel confident about participating in lessons. Black and William (2003) are concerned that there is a lack of “rich and good” questions that require critical thinking on the side of learners.

Providing feedback that moves learners forward, is the third key element of effective assessment strategy. Teacher’s feedback, whether written or oral, is vital for improving and directing the learners’ learning. In formative assessment feedback is central. Black and William (1998) stress that “feedback to any pupil should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve and should avoid comparisons with other pupils”. The authors, further, define feedback as information that is “useful in closing the gap between actual and desired levels of performance”(Black and William, 1998). Feedback in formative assessment is considered effective when it allows teachers to identify the gap in the performance of learners. It is important that the teacher should try to use the effective ways of closing the gap so that learners achieve desired outcomes. Feedback could be done orally or in writing during teaching and learning process (Kanjee & Mthembu, 2020).

According to Brookhart (2008), there are four factors need to be considered to ensure effective feedback i.e., timing, amount, mode, and audience. Teachers need to give feedback that enables learners to enjoy what they are learning. Research has shown that feedback has great impact to learning and learner achievement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Similarly, Smith (2014), notes that feedback is the lifeblood for learning. However, the form, format, and timing of the feedback, is what determine its impact on learners. Kanjee, (2020) asserts that the primary purpose of providing feedback is to support learners in improving their knowledge, understanding and skills regarding the topic of the lesson.

In practice, teachers use oral feedback when they speak to the learners about their work and how to improve it; and written feedback in the form of comments on work that learners submit, also clearly indicating how to improve it. It should be noted that both oral and written feedback must focus on the task and not be used as judgement against the learners. Teachers can also give descriptive feedback that allows to follow it so that they can improve their work. All the above mentioned will assist in ensuring the proper implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies.

The fourth strategy involves activating learners as learning resources for each other (peer assessment). When learners can assist each other during the formative assessment that is called peer assessment. Peer assessment encourages learners to become the learning resource for other learners thus, learning from each other. Black and Wiliam (2004), maintain that peer assessment help learners to learn and support each other and evaluate the work of their peers. Additionally, William (2011), concludes that teachers should be able to improve the collaborative skills of leaners so that teaching and learning would be successful in the classroom.

Slavin, Hurley, and Chamberlain (2003) suggest that there are two conditions to be met in order to improve peer assessment and ensure that learners act as learning resources for one another. Firstly, the learning environment must provide for group goals where learners are working as a group not working in a group. Secondly, its individual accountability, where each and every individual learner is taking responsibility for his or her actions in a group, so there can be no “passengers.” when partaking in assessment activities. Peer assessment encourages learners to work collaboratively with others during the teaching and learning process. Teachers need to ensure that learning goals and assessment criteria is accessible to achieve the goal of collaborative learning in the classroom, this is referred to as Peer Assessment Strategy (Kanjee, 2020). The purpose of peer assessment is to obtain evidence that can be used to provide feedback to a partner for improving their knowledge, understanding and skills. Peer assessment is more than just asking learners to mark each other’s books. It requires learners to engage in deep thinking about the work and to explain to each other which aspects were done well, and which aspects need to be improved upon.

However, teachers must guide learners on how to apply this process for providing descriptive feedback and to create opportunities during lessons for learners to undertake peer assessment.

According to Kanjee, (2020), teachers should apply the following steps when implementing a peer assessment strategy.

Step 1: Select specific lessons that are appropriate for peer assessment.

Not all lessons are suitable for this strategy.

Step 2: Indicate which learners are paired together (pair learners with similar abilities).

Step 3: Ensure that ALL learners understand the success criteria.

(Provide learners with exemplars of what “good” and “not there yet” quality work looks like.)

Step 4: Peers must use the SC to review each other’s work to identify work that has been done well and work that can be improved.

Step 5: Peers will first explain and discuss aspects of the work that have been done well.

Step 6: Peers will then explain and discuss aspects of the work that can be improved.

Step 7: The peers will then discuss the goal/s that they need to set to improve the work. Step 8: Teachers must monitor and support learners as they undertake the process to reinforce what learners had done well and provide guidance on what can be done.

The fifth strategy entails activating learners as owners of their own learning (self-assessment). Self-assessment assist learners to be responsible for their own learning process this can be achieved through teachers’ engagement in equipping learners with knowledge and skills on how to conduct self-assessment. That is why learners need to understand the objectives of the assessment and know how to plan for the next activities meant for improving their learning (William 2011). Teachers also need to ensure that learners are fully familiar with the process to be followed before giving them self-assessment activities.

In addition, it is important that teachers provide opportunities during lessons to facilitate the self-assessment process, by giving them opportunities to review their work, to obtain relevant evidence to improve their own knowledge, understanding and skills. In addition, teachers need to demonstrate for learners how to conduct self-assessment.

However, Kanjee (2020) has improved and added other two more formative assessment strategies which make Seven Formative Assessment Strategies. These strategies will also cater for the recent condition of the pandemic COVID 19 which affects the functioning of schools. The following are the two formative assessment strategies:

2.2.5 Planning and preparing lessons that focus on learning.

Using formative assessment in a classroom requires careful planning and preparation. This also applies to lessons conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The planning includes identifying the objectives and assessment criteria for the topic, specifying activities that will be used, and how these will be applied. It also includes writing higher order thinking questions that will be used in the lesson, listing the resources required and how these will be applied (Kanjee, 2020). During planning, the techniques and strategies will or will not be used for the lesson need to be indicated. It should be noted that lesson plans in the formative assessment approach are written with learners in mind. The main question to be addresses is: What it is that learners must attain?

2.2.6 Using assessment evidence to improve teaching.

This strategy requires that teachers regularly review and rethink their lesson planning, preparation, and presentations to improve their own teaching practices. This strategy values teachers' reflection based on learners' oral and written responses to class work, and from learner questions and discussions (Kanjee, 2020). Reflection helps teachers to understand why they do what they do, and it helps them to become more aware of their actions. It helps the teacher to rethink their teaching practices, improves teacher's own practice, builds teacher's self-esteem, and encourages teachers to be lifelong learners. The effective implementation of this strategy requires that teachers reflect on their lesson planning, preparation, and presentation, how to improve their use of the formative assessment strategies, how learners are learning, focussing on what

feedback learners require, and methods and techniques for improving learner involvement in all lessons.

2.3. Formative assessment and feedback

Formative assessment is believed to provide constructive feedback by many researchers (Black & Williams, 1998; Heritage, 2007; OECD, 2005). One of the purposes of feedback is to inform learners about their learning status compared with the lesson's objectives so that they are motivated to narrow the gap between their current understanding and the lesson's outcomes (Cai 2016; Lee & Lim, 2019). Feedback motivates learners and their sense of self-efficacy (Heritage, 2007). It is given so that learners can improve their learning. Research has shown that learners will always be willing to do better when the feedback they receive shows how they have worked on their assessment task (Majola, 2014). According to Brookhart et al., (2010) feedback for formative assessment should result in action by both teachers and learners, describe learners' work against the clear outcome, direct learners on strategies for improvement, and involve learners in different assessment forms such as self and peer assessment. Previous experiences helped the researcher as Business Studies teacher and assessor to learn that practicing formative assessment involves providing constant and continuous feedback to learners. The researcher is also aware that Business Studies learners need to be active and participate during the feedback session. This is in line with one of key the strategies by William and Thompson (2007) which stresses the importance of providing feedback that moves learners forward. Additionally, Hay *et al.*, (2015) assert that using formative assessment during the teaching and learning process, helps Business Studies teachers to ascertain whether learners are able to achieve what they are supposed to achieve based on the expected outcomes, and whether to modify the classroom practices to achieve the intended outcomes. Feedback, thus, enables the teacher to change strategies to assist learners who are not yet achieving the outcomes, all these practices are linked to what the theory says about teacher practices in ensuring the implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies.

It is vital that Business Studies teachers should start by communicating the learning objectives to learners so that they are able to achieve the intended outcomes which

are usually stated at the beginning of the lesson. The other strategy by William and Thompson, (2007), entails, the role of a teacher in “clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success”. Formative assessment has, therefore, become a fundamental factor in promoting the relationship between what is being taught and what learners must achieve.

Lee (2008) conducted a study in Hong Kong secondary classrooms in which she explored the role of feedback in writing. The study revealed that feedback is effective if it makes learners aware of their strengths and weaknesses. It also needs to be communicated clearly and highlights what learners have achieved and what they need to do in order to improve their performance. Learners also need to be provided with opportunities to act on teacher feedback so that they can improve their work and be active in managing their own learning. In the same vein, Nicol (2010), asserts that the teacher-learner dialogue is essential for the improvement of learning, the teacher plays an important role of being an authoritative source of feedback in the discipline and, thus able to scaffold students learning. Learners can also be involved in giving feedback to their peers in what is called peer feedback. It involves instances where learners receive feedback from many other learners. In peer feedback learners’ give as well as receive feedback. It can be concluded that feedback is more contractive and effective if it is provided by both teacher and learner which is teacher-based feedback and learner-based feedback. However, there are challenges in the implementation of peer feedback, such as learners lack of confidence in their peers. In order to deal with that peer and teacher feedback can be immersed, for example, learner might provide peer feedback on each other’s activities and the teacher would then give comments on the peer comments and not on the activity (Nicol, 2010)

According to Ozan, (2018), formative assessment becomes more imperative from the intensity of the feedback given to learners about their learning and given to teachers for their instructions to learners. Formative feedback is knowledge or facts provided to learners, that motivate and encourage learners to arrange and plan their thinking and actions so that they can improve their learning (Ozan, 2018)

2.4. Business Studies in the South African Curriculum.

This section gives overview of Business Studies curriculum in South Africa as the is more about formative assessment in Business Studies this is also because the formative assessment is part of the curriculum. The teaching and learning of Business Studies take place Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Business Studies was introduced through CAPS in grade 10 in 2012, grade 11 in 2013, and grade 12, in 2014. As per CAPS, Business Studies is more about improving the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values critical for informed, productive, ethical and responsible participation in the formal and informal economic sectors. (DoE: 2011.). This subject is usually offered joined with Accounting and Economics in a stream that was previously called Commerce stream which now in CAPS is called Business, Commerce and Management (BCM). The role of Business Studies in the FET phase is to: Develop learners into South African and global businesses so that they can understand the functions of the different role players, various issues and challenges that have influenced the business (DoE, 2011). The Business Studies curriculum focuses on four main topics, i.e., Business environments, Business Venture, Business Roles, and Business Operations. Each topic consists of subtopics of which most of which take time to complete. In the National Curriculum

Statement (NCS), the four main topics were called “Learning Outcomes” and the Mn subtopics were called Assessment Standards (AS). According to CAPS (2011), Business Studies is allocated 4 hours per week that must be used to teach and also assess all the topics and subtopics. Business studies as a subject is taken as responsible for preparing learners for entrepreneurial skills like problem-solving, creative thinking management, leadership, etc.

2.5. Teachers Practices of formative assessment.

This section provides the information what is it that Business Studies teachers do that show that they are practising formative assessment in their teaching and learning of Business Studies as per different literatures.

2.5.1. Activating learner Prior knowledge

Research has revealed that formative assessment assists teachers to assess the prior knowledge of learners about the topic, this happens through asking questions during the teaching and learning process, especially during the introduction of the lesson. It is through formative assessment that teachers determine what learners already know and understand, the errors they make, and what misconceptions they may have (Hattie, 2012). The questions asked by Business Studies teachers should aim at provoking learners' experiences, identifying and refining their ideas, and explaining learners' point of view (Chin, 2006). When Business Studies teachers ask questions to get what learners know about the new topic before it is explained to learners, they are activating learner's prior knowledge. The process of activating prior knowledge assist students to link the experience they have about the topic with the new content, so it acts as a foundation upon which students build new knowledge. It also helps learners to reflect on their understanding and for teachers to address the misconceptions students might have on the topic before continuing with the lesson.

Mohammad, (2020) in his study where he was observing teachers' practice of formative assessment revealed, that some formative assessment activities that teachers were using included, testing knowledge from the previous lessons before starting a new lesson by asking questions. Getting learners' prior knowledge is a vital aspect of formative assessment as it helps both teachers and learners to close the gap they might have on the topic under study. Hence, Business Studies teachers need to use this strategy effectively as that will help learners understand the practical component of the business.

Prior knowledge is usually found to have powerful impact on the performance of learners and their learning experiences (Jong, 2019) . Generally, learners with lower level of prior knowledge have more challenges of mastering knowledge than those learners with the higher level of prior knowledge, this gap can be reduced by providing clear directions to guide learners with low prior knowledge (Bumbacher, 2018). According to Geoffrey, (2018), prior knowledge of learners assist teachers to combine the new information with the information that learners already possess therefore it is essential that teachers always assess learner prior knowledge so that they would be

able to provide corrections of learner misconceptions (Geofrey, 2021). Diaz, (2017) points out that the incorrect information may lead to learner misunderstanding which may disturb learners' view of recent knowledge to be mastered. It is thus encouraged that teachers discover learners' misunderstandings and try out the means to correct them as early as in the introduction of the new topic (Geofrey, 2021).

2.5.2. Provision of feedback to learners

Provision of feedback is seen as the important part of ensuring practices of formative assessment by many researchers. Feedback is a vital aspect of assessment for learning, as it supports and scaffold students' learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and improves students' learning. It is taken as a critical connection between teaching and learning (Plank, Dixon & Ward, 2014). Learners' knowledge, skills, and understanding is increased through formative feedback (Shute, 2008). For instance, problem solving is one of the topics taught in grade 10 -12, so providing formative feedback to learners, allow them to enhance their knowledge and skills. According to Black and William (1998), there are two main types of feedback, i.e., directive, and facilitative. Directive feedback is focused and specific as it tells learners what it is wrong and how can be fixed, while the facilitative feedback provides students with guidelines and suggestions to consider as they revise their understanding of the topic. However, Shute (2008) put the emphasis on the goal directed feedback and motivation, goal-directed feedback as the name suggests assist learners with information on their progress towards a desired goal/s. It should be noted that if goals are unattainable, learners are likely to experience failure and, thus, become discouraged. Therefore, teachers have to assist learners through feedback to set achievable goals, so, goals have neither to be too high or too low. Feedback also helps the teachers to re-visit their content for the benefit of the students.

Researchers like Wiggins, (2004); Bright and Joyner, (2005); Heritage, (2008); argue that the power of feedback on students' learning is one aspect of formative assessment that astonishes many teachers. It is also important that everyone involved in the feedback session understand what it entails. Feedback can be given orally, e.g., through a question asked or it may be written as a comment or a question (Wiggins, 2004).

The author further warns that feedback should not be a struggle for teachers they should make it part of the teaching and learning process in an endeavour to improve learner performance.

2.5.3. Implementation of Peer and Self-assessment.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment is defined as the process where teachers allow learners to do the activity that enables them to be actively engaged in their own their learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Additionally, Andrade and Du (2007) define self-assessment as part of formative assessment where learners can assess and evaluate their own work. It also helps teachers to reflect on learners' work, establish their strengths and weaknesses, focus on improving their strengths and discover ways of dealing with their weaknesses. In Business Studies formal formative tasks like projects, class tests and presentations require that the teacher ask learners to do it as an individual, each learner may be asked to assess his or her own work while the teacher is guiding them through the task by using assessment criteria.

Peer assessment

Peer assessment is one of the assessment types that is used in Business Studies, and it works well as it allows learners to be actively involved in their learning it is also used in informal activities as self-assessment does (CAPS, 2011). "Peer assessment entails the activity where learners assess their peers' work, it is often in pairs or a group, as it is used for sharing ideas and insights (Brooks, 2002). Additionally, Dube (2019) echoes the sentiments that Business Studies teachers need to prepare learners for the real world, and one of the ways of doing that is through letting them work together. The teachers have a role to play in preparing learners to work in collaboration with others to develop skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, interpersonal skills and leadership skills, etc. (Bound, 2016). On the other side Falchikov, (2007) states that the peer feedback in learning is a process that is created from the experience of our earliest years. Hence, the way the assessment tasks are designed encourages learners to work with others, thus preparing them for the real world.

The other advantage of peer assessment is that it forms part of the learning process as it involves “understanding and articulating the values and standards of a “community of practice”, so it clear that learners learn better when they do peer assessment (Falchikov, 2007). Therefore, learners need to be provided with more opportunities to practice peer assessment so that they can benefit from it in terms of knowledge and skills, and that will also make them more competent in it.

2.6. Challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of formative assessment.

As much as teachers use formative assessment but it is not used fully (Wylie & Lyon, 2015). The section below present challenges and experiences by teachers in implementing formative assessment from different studies.

2.6.1. Teacher knowledge and lack of training

One of the challenges faced by the Business Studies teachers is the effective implementation of formative assessment, which is usually due to teachers’ lack of knowledge (Educational Research Newsletter, August 2007). Research shows that teachers typically assign tasks that require learners to memorise, which is done through rote learning instead of giving them questions that need them to think deeply about their responses. The other challenge is the teachers’ lack of training when it comes to the implementation of formative assessment in the classroom and misconception about the term itself (Curry, Mwavita, Holter, & Harris, 2016; DeLuca & Bellara, 2013; Dunn, Airola, Lo, & Garrison, 2012; Mandinach & Gummer, 2013; Kenyon, 2019). So, it shows that teachers’ knowledge is the most challenging factor for the effective implementation of formative assessment and that generally, teachers do not understand the concept of formative assessment (Quyen, 2016). The study conducted by Quyen (2015) in Asia revealed that teachers in Asia do not attend professional programmes of development in the implementation of formative assessment. There was one study by Yin and Buck (2015) which reported there was training on formative assessment which was done through collaborative action research.

However, the duration of the workshop which is seven weeks does not guarantee that teacher`s knowledge and skills in the formative assessment will be improved (Quyen, 2015; Abdulla 2016). Adeleye (2017) asserts that, there is a need to maintain an intense “real world” focus while injecting theoretical perspectives into the learner`s expense. Since Business Studies is a practical-oriented subject, teachers need to be trained in understanding what formative assessment is and how it can be effectively implemented in the classroom context for the benefit of the learners.

2.6.2. Overcrowded classrooms

One of the purposes of formative assessment is to improve individual learner`s performance, based on relevant feedback from different stakeholders including other peers and learners. As formative assessment needs the active involvement of learners an overcrowded classroom might pose several challenges. One of the challenges is that it is difficult to implement the formative assessment effectively in an overcrowded classroom, as providing feedback is part of the process, as a result, teachers find it difficult to provide feedback as learners are sometimes noisy and don`t pay attention (Quyen & Abdulla 2016). Additionally, more time is spent by teachers providing feedback to the overcrowded classroom and that is the reality for Business Studies teachers as well (Mabaso, 2021). According to Warui (2015) there has been increased in the number of learners doing Business Studies owing to learners evading the Maths and Science stream. As a results, the teacher learner ratio does not meet the policy requirements and as such teachers find it difficult to enforce discipline. The other challenge is that of learners bringing cell phones into the classroom, irrespective of policies preventing learners to bring them in class (Mamman, Chadi, Atbu & Jirgi, 2015). The cell phone disturbance leads to peer distraction and teachers do not have varied alternatives (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010), as they cannot use corporal punishment as those results to dismissal in the South African context.

2.6.3. Lack of time and resources

Implementing formative assessment is time-consuming, as teachers need time to plan and develop questions, to engage learners to think critically, to ask their own question and to respond to the questions from peers and teachers (Jett, 2009).

Parents are not willing to send their children to schools that are failing to provide resources and enough time for learning of the children (Duncombe, 2017). Teachers value time they have with learners during class meetings, thus view formative assessment as time consuming and, therefore, may prefer teacher-centered approach (Jett, 2002). Consequently, formative assessment is not effectively implemented if the approach of teaching and learning is teacher centered and that is against the CAPS and assessment policy guidelines. Additionally, Abdulla (2016), concurs that the lack of time and resources negatively affects the effective implementation of assessment for learning in the schools, as teachers are not able to provide learners with adequate opportunities to do different assessment activities. According to Department of education (2011) the time allocated for Business studies in grade 12 is four hours per week. During the given time, teachers and learners are expected to interact meaningfully with the content and assessment is part of those hours (Mlaba, 2014). It should be noted that time for planning, administrative activities and extra curricula activities is not catered for in these four hours. Hence, Msomi (2013), suggest that more time should be afforded for teachers to plan for assessment. Azuama (2014), conducted a study in Nigeria where the findings revealed that the lack of instructional resources is one of the reasons that prevent teachers to teach effectively. Additionally, Tikly (2010) reveal that the shortage of the infrastructural resources can negatively affect the teaching and learning process as well.

Lack of equipment, financial resource and specialist rooms for the practical activities at schools are also some of the challenges faced by teachers which had a direct impact on teaching and learning process, and on implementing formative assessment (Ncube & Tshabalala, 2016). Other challenges that have a negative impact on the performance of Business Studies in high schools include, inadequate textbooks, workbooks under resourced classrooms and lack of books in the libraries as some of the factors that hinder the effective implementation of formative assessment in teaching and learning of Business Studies as a subject (Cantrell, 2014). Additionally, Azuama (2014) also highlighted that “there is a serious dearth of textbooks and other instructional materials for Business Studies in Nigeria”. Therefore, the lack of resources in high schools might negatively influence the teaching and learning of Business Studies.

2.6.4. Pressure and work overload

In an endeavour to cover and complete all assessment tasks in Business Studies as per CAPS, both teachers and learners work under pressure. Teachers in the study conducted by Sach, (2015) stated that they felt pressure to meet government targets for attainment and the pressure had the potential to hinder the use of more formative assessment methods. Yan and Cheng (2015) also caution that he focusses on summative assessment could have a negative impact on the implementation of formative assessment. Kenyan,(2019) further argue that teachers might not use formative assessment in their teaching even if they understand its importance and advantages as they feel pressured to meet the instructional demands of high stakes testing Therefore, the pressure that teachers go through in an endeavour to complete tasks at a given limited period of time with few available resources also has a negative impact on the implementation of formative assessment. Consequently, teachers prioritise completing the syllabus within the set time frame rather than spending time on formative assessment (Sethusha, 2012). Hence, Mabaso, (2021) is of the view that time for teaching Business studies should be increased at least by one lesson so that teachers can complete the syllabus on time.

2.6.5. Improvement of learner participation

Formative peer assessment has been used as an alternative method of engaging learners in the development of their learning (Davies, 2006; Kilic & Cakan, 2007; Vickerman, 2008). The active involvement engagement of learners in their own assessment improving learning and that is usually attainable through formative assessment (Ngwenya,2012). Shared understanding between teachers and learners is one of the positive effects brought by the effective implementation of formative assessment during teaching and. One of the effective strategies used by the Business Studies teachers is problem-based strategy where learners are given real-life problems to solve and are motivated to come up with business-oriented solutions (Dube,2019).

Young (2005) assert that it is vital for learners to understand that they need to make efforts when learning as that leads to them improving their learning experience. Therefore, teachers need to emphasize and encourage the issue of effort in the classroom context rather than focusing on learners who are intellectually gifted.

Additionally, Black and Wiliam (1998) argue that indeed the 'active involvement of learners in their own learning is another important factor that contribute to learners' success. Learners, need to be exposed to different assessment strategies including self-assessment to help them to be reflective practitioners and to improve their performance. 26 July 22

2.6.6. Improvement of learning

Formative Assessment is also called 'classroom-based formative assessment' or 'assessment for learning (Harlen, 2014). It is defined as activities that are used to improve student learning (Qualters, 2008). It is an essential part of the teaching and the learning process as it provides feedback to learners on their performance, it also guides learners on what they need to focus on so as to improve on their weaknesses (Kotzé 1999). One of the goals of formative assessment is to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process so as to achieve the learning outcomes. Authors et al, (2016), are of the view that formative assessments assist teachers to focus on students thinking and they incorporate that their planning. Additionally, formative assessments also help in minimising the gap between learners existing knowledge and the aimed objectives, which in turn leads to learners becoming goal oriented rather than performance oriented. Therefore, learners continuously learn to achieve the learning objectives independently and consistently (Elezi and Bamber, 2017). Congruently, DBE (2011) stated that assessment for learning is developmental, and it focus on learners' strengths and weaknesses, it is also seen as promoting pupils' learning (Flórez & Sammons, 2013). The preceding discussions emphasised that formative assessment as responsible for enhancing students' learning.

2.7. Formative assessment strategies that can be used in Business Studies

A formative assessment strategy is an instrument or activity that "provides information of sufficient detail to pinpoint specific problems, such as misunderstandings, and it enables teachers to make good decisions about actions to be taken and with whom" (Chappuis, 2015). Formative assessment strategies provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their thinking (Kang *et al.*, 2014), usually by the teachers.

In fact, Trumbull, and Lash (2013) purported that any instructional activity can be used for a formative purpose if it provides teachers with information about student understanding and assist in students' learning.

2.7.1. Case Studies

Case studies are generally used in the teaching and learning of Business Studies (Azuama, 2014). Case studies present the real –life scenarios to students so that they can that apply the learnt concepts (Beckisheva *et al*, 2015). Case study is a formal task given to learners in term 1, where they are given cases which are business-related and of practical situations and learners are expected to respond to questions after they read and understood the case. These case studies are found in the Business Studies CAPS document, the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) and Programme of Assessment (POA). Case studies are also given as informal tasks during teaching and learning to provide learners with scaffolding opportunities. The use of case studies improves students' ability to analyse complex questions which are related to the real life thus promoting students' learning and improve their performance (Bonney, 2015). Case studies in business studies are considered as stories that present realistic, complex, and contextually rich situations (Majola, 2019). They also involve a dilemma, conflict, or problem that one or more of the characters in the case must negotiate (Beckisheva *et al*, 2015). Therefore, the use of case studies develops learners' practical and critical thinking skills as it takes learners through the process of active thinking and practice. Snyder and Snyder (2008) argue that case studies teach critical thinking and problem-solving skills, a case study could be, for example, about the success of a particular business in a community. Therefore, if learners are familiar with activities based on solving problems from the case studies, they can learn tactics of the business from case studies presented to them. Case studies also allow both teachers and learners to discuss and debate business-related issues.

2.7.2. Questioning

According to Black and Wiliam (2009), questioning can be used to involve learners through classroom discussions, to get information on learners' understanding. Questioning is regarded as a quick and easy informal formative assessment strategy to be used by teachers. However, the planning of questions needs to happen before lesson delivery to allow for deeper prompt (Jiang, 2014; Smart & Marshall, 2013). Questioning is one of the most common activities in the classroom whereby teachers ask questions with an aim of promoting learning, by engaging learners in question and-answer dialogue. Skooler (2005) argues that, as teachers likely to spend 30-50% of their time asking questions, therefore, it is important that when designing questions, teachers aim for questions that stimulate learners' thinking and cater for all the cognitive levels and not only the lower cognitive level (Skooler, 2005). Black *et al.*, 2004 commented that, Teachers should also plan and use carefully crafted questions to allow learners to make connections by introducing new pieces of evidence and argument. Teachers' focus should be on guiding learners towards increased understanding (Fisher & Frey, 2019). Therefore, teachers need to incorporate learners' background knowledge and misconceptions to make their strategy effective. Teachers need to be equipped with questioning techniques so that they can use the strategy effectively. Consequently, careful planning is required to develop effective questioning skills that enhances learners' cognitive skills and improves learning. Questioning is one of very important aspects of practising formative assessment so if teachers are more used in questioning the formative assessment is practiced.

2.7.3. Group work/ Collaborative learning/ Cooperation learning.

Collaborative learning is learning process where students and teachers work together to arrive at the learning outcome (Harper, 2002). In business studies there are topics that engage learners in group work, usually in the form of informal task, the topics like; team performance; conflict management, problem solving, and creative thinking lend themselves directly to group work. One of the requirements for effective collaborative strategy is that in a group there must be students of mixed abilities (Kalpana, 2014).

There are many advantages that come with using collaborative learning, group members become motivated and that may lead to higher retention of knowledge, which ultimately may result in improving students' performance (Mohammadjani & Tonkaboni, 2015; Rafael & Jose, 2013). The authors, further assert that because of the diversity of students within the group. Authors, like Ganyaupfu, (2013) and Wanza (2012), agree that collaborative learning is effective than lecture method, thus it assist in developing problem solving skills, which are needed in the teaching and learning of Business Studies. Some of the tasks require in Business Studies require that students work in small groups, share ideas, and get group's performance (Ng & Lee, 1996).

2.7.4. Group discussions

Discussion is a type of activity that engages learners in a group conversation to share their opinions on a given topic. A teacher can give learners a topic to discuss in groups, as part of cooperative learning. Jagtap (2015) argues that it is an active learning classroom method whereby teachers provide learning opportunities to learners to work in groups. The tasks that can be done in groups, especially Business Studies class include a visit to a business to conduct research and write a report. This task is part of the requirements by the CAPS document. Furthermore, a teacher can also give learners a topic to discuss, debate and present in class using visual aids.

2.7.5. Oral and written presentations

Communication and interpersonal skills are being nurtured and tested through oral and written presentations. According to Morley, (2006), oral presentation skills are essential for employability and true academic study as amongst other things assist learners during, Business studies learners are expected to use their communication skills when they interact with different people in the real business world, therefore, learners are given the presentation task in term 2 as a formal task. Grade 10-12 learners are expected to prepare a written presentation based on a given topic and then they are given an opportunity to do oral presentation in the class.

There is also a topic called; Presentation of Information and Data Response which is taught from grade 10-12. Learners are also expected learn the presentation skills, so that they can present business reports which are the key to decision-making in a business (Chanderdeo *et al.*, 2016). When dealing with oral and written presentation in Business Studies, learners need to develop support materials (charts, graphs, handouts) for the presentation, learn how to prepare for the verbal presentation and use audio-visual aids. Additionally, learners must be trained on how to present and analyse content, and it is through oral presentations where learners learn how to prepare, organise, and deliver information successfully (Zivkovic, 2014). Hence, (Majola, 2019), confirm that learning how to present will help the teacher to know how to teach oral presentation and nurture the communication skill of learners which is important for their future academic and work lives. Hedge (2000) asserts that teachers must offer learners many opportunities to improve their communication skill, which will then help them communicate their needs, ideas and opinions. This is achieved through presentation.

2.7.6. Project

Project as an activity usually takes place outside the classroom, it focuses on equipping learners with skills of doing practical either as individuals or as a group (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). It is advisable that for the completion of the project learners are given extra time. In doing projects learners, usually use research skills and business management knowledge and skills obtained in the classroom (IJSER, 2016). In Business Studies from grade 10 to 12, the Project is a formal task given to learners in term two, for learners to submit in term three. The responsibility of the teachers is to set the project task where learners are expected to apply the knowledge and skills obtained in the classroom to the outside world and in real situation (Mohammad, 2015). Project is a method that can help learners to develop their personal goals. According to Department of Education, Business Studies CAPS document (2011), one project per year is compulsory from grade 10 to 12.

2.8 Conclusion

Formative assessment is of vital importance, and it needs to be implemented in teaching and learning. According to the review of the literatures on the formative assessment for the effective implementation of formative assessment teachers need to apply different teaching strategies. The variety of the learning and teaching strategies would yield to learners being involved in different activities and able to acquire various skills. The chapter has discussed literatures based on the practices and experiences of teachers in the implementation of formative assessment by Business Studies teachers, this includes improvement of learner participation, improvement of learning, implementation of informal tasks, questioning and provision of feedback to learners. Challenges faced by teachers were also discussed include lack of time and resources, teacher knowledge and lack of training, overcrowded classrooms, pressure, and work overload. The strategies to implement formative assessment outlined that is: case studies, projects, group discussions, oral and written presentation.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a discussion on the research methodology used in the current study that includes, the research approach, the research design, the sampling of participants, the data collection process, data analysis followed as well as ethical issues. The focus of the study was on the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies teachers regarding the implementation of formative assessment. The study used the qualitative research methodology. According to Bandari (2023), qualitative research is more about collecting, analysing non-numerical data like text, video, or audio to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVISM

Nieuwenhuis (2007 in Maree (2016)) states that paradigms serve as the lens or organizing principles to interpret reality. This study employed an interpretive research paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is believed by many researchers as mainly used in qualitative research methods (Thanh, 2015; Denzil & Lincoln ,2005 ; Meyer, 2001).The researchers who use interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods often seek experiences, understandings and perceptions of the participants, hence it is relevant for the current study which aimed to understand the experiences, practices and also the perceptions of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment. Additionally, interpretivism seeks to understand a particular context; its core belief is that reality is socially constructed (Willies, 2007). Furthermore, Thanh (2015,) researchers who uses the interpretivist paradigm ask broad research questions designed to explore, interpret, and understand the social context. The researcher used grade 12 Business Studies teachers to get reality from participants particularly those who are experienced in the phenomenon in this case in the implementation of formative assessment. Berryman (2019) believes that “social construction, language, shared consciousness, and other social interactions” are important means for interpretive to invent facts. To achieve this goal, Berryman (2019) suggests that for interpretive researchers, to find answers to qualitative questions, they need to structure their research questions in a way that focuses on understanding "how

and why. This is the reason researcher uses interpretive paradigm with hope that the information participants give to the current study will provide clear facts that answers the research questions. Through the analysis of the data, researchers can explore, explain, express, and attempt to place themselves in the participant's vision or thinking pattern to reconstruct the text's intended meaning: (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022).

3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This study adopted qualitative research approach as the approach requires the researcher to be closely involved with participants so as gain contextual understanding of the research topic and to get the information needed from the participants (Bryman, 2012). The data was collected in the King Cetshwayo District, wherein eight teachers of Business Studies were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of their formative assessment by practices. Qualitative method aims to discover and understand how people make meaning from the way they perceive their lives (Sethusa, 2012). During the interview process the participants were asked to explain their perceptions about the practices that contribute to effective and efficient implementation of formative assessment, in that way participants were able to construct meaning based on their lives and experiences. Additionally, Meyer (2001) state that, the descriptive nature of qualitative research enables readers to understand the meaning attached to the participants' experiences, the distinctive nature and the impact of the problem. The current study aimed at understanding the practices of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers on the implementation of formative assessment in King Cetshwayo District. The researcher collected data using one-on-one semi structured interviews with teachers who were purposefully selected. Denzin and

Lincoln (1994) claims that, "qualitative research is a multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter". As the researcher I had to interview participants in their natural setting to align with the naturalistic aspect of the qualitative approach. The other reasons, why I chose qualitative research approach for the current study is that it results into detailed account of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences; "(Denzin, 1989).

The approach also allows the researcher to choose from a wider range of research methods, which allow the researcher to interact directly with the participants.

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

A research design is a plan or strategy which involves the identification of underlying philosophical assumptions, specifying the selection of participants, data gathering techniques to be used and data analysis to be done (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Maree, 2016). The current study used a case study design to collect data, with the aim of getting the in-depth information on the formative assessment practices by grade 12 Business Studies teachers. Case study involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system, a type of design in qualitative research, an object of study, as well as the product of the enquiry (Creswell (2007). The case study design was also helpful in investigating the challenges encountered by Business Studies teachers when implementing the formative assessment. The case study is also used to probe the context in depth, viewpoints and make the topic more researchable. The researcher purposefully selected Business Studies grade 12 teachers in King Cetshwayo District to generate an in-depth knowledge on the practices of formative assessment.

A case study is relevant in this research because the purpose of the study is to explore the experiences, practices as well as challenges in the implementation of formative assessment by grade 12 Business Studies teachers. According to Cohen (2001), case studies observe the effects in real contexts, and it also recognises that a context is an influential element of a cause and effect. Furthermore, case studies carry out in depth investigations of specified characteristics of a programme, event carried out individually or in groups over a period (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Additionally, Marree (2016) and Yin (2009) assert that case study research refers to an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon in this case it's the practices of formative assessment by grade 12 Business Studies teachers.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHOD.

Semi-Structured Interviews

This study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from grade 12 Business Studies teachers to get their knowledge and experiences about their practices, challenges, and experiences regarding the implementation of formative assessment. An interview is a person-to-person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind (Kumar, 2014). One-on-one semi-structured interviews were used to interview eight grade 12 Business Studies teachers in King Cetshwayo District schools. Semi-structured interviews involve a series of open-ended questions based on the topic area/s the researcher wants to investigate (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 2002). The open-ended nature of questions asked in the semi-structured interviews allowed for opportunities for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss questions in depth (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 2002) Semi-structured interviews also involves direct interaction between the interviewer (researcher) and interviewee (participants) and it allowed the interviewer to move to asks questions in order to get the information from the participants, who are grade 12 Business Studies teachers.

3.6. SAMPLE

(Bryman, 2012) defines sampling as a selection of a division of the population that the researcher will use to conduct the study. In thejkhb current study, purposive sampling was used to select eight Grade 12 Business Studies teachers in King Cetshwayo District. Five schools were selected from lower-performing schools and three were selected from the high-performing schools in rural areas.

Cohen (2011) asserts that in purposive sampling, participants are chosen based on the common characteristics they share. In the current study, purposive sampling was used as it helped the researcher to choose the participants that provided relevant information and had experience in teaching Business Studies in Grade 12. Furthermore, Patton, (2000) concurs that purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich participants. Additionally, Eitikan (2015) states that purposive sampling is based on subjective judgment of researchers.

Hence, the researcher used her judgment to collect data collected from the chosen participants using semi-structured interviews to make conclusions and judgement on the experiences, practices and challenges based on the implementation of formative assessment by Grade 12 Business Studies.

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to UNIZULU research Ethics Policies, "Ethics are the principles and practices that guide the ethical conduct of research, these should embody respect for the rights of others who are directly and indirectly affected by the research. Such rights include privacy and confidentiality, protection from harm, and giving informed consent. Interviews were tape-recorded with permission from participants to ensure that all important information was captured. Consent forms were given to each participant to ensure that participants understood that participation was voluntary; they are not forced and that their names and that of their schools were not mentioned. The researcher of the current study ensured that there was no harm to the participants and that they were not affected directly or indirectly. The current study had teachers as participants during the data collection process. Therefore, it was important to ensure that they had to feel protected and safe when participating during the data collection phase. Ethical issues were considered for every aspect of the study. Arifin, (2018) asserted that, to ensure the proper application of ethical conduct it is important to protect the human subject in an all-research study. The researcher further stated that "It is responsibility of a qualitative researcher to ensure that participants have a power of freedom of choice to be involved in a study by protecting the participant's identity throughout the study (Arifin, 2018).

Informed Consent

A letter asking for permission to conduct focus group interviews were sent in advance to all the participants. All participants of the study were informed about the purpose of the study before they participated in the study. Interviews were tape-recorded with permission from participants to ensure that all important information was captured.

Consent forms were given to each participant to ensure that participants understood that participation was voluntary; they are not forced and that their names and that of their schools.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

There was a commitment that the names of the participants and the even names of their schools were not going to be revealed. All participants and schools were coded, and codes substituted their names.

Deception

The current study ensured that the information supplied was true, correct, and without unethical omissions or commission of the data. No false information was used to benefit the researcher or deceive the participants or anyone who may be affected by plagiarism.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) emphasise the importance of ethical guidelines in educational research since the current research involves human beings. The ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University of Zululand to conduct research. The Department of Education also granted the research permission to conduct research in King Cetshwayo District. The study targeted grade 12 Business Studies teachers as participants. All interviews were conducted after the participants were made to understand their rights. The researcher provided written informed consent to the participants' prior interviews for participants to read, understand and sign. Informed consent was also discussed verbally to ensure that participants understood. According to Bryman (2012) social ethics in social research is vital as it entails how the researcher treats the participants. To ensure fair treatment all participants volunteered to be always maintained. Participants were informed of their rights of participation; they were allowed to withdraw at any time. The researcher also explained clearly that confidentiality would be always maintained by ensuring that data could not be linked to individual participants by name or by the school's name. The purpose of the study was also explained both verbally and in writing to the participants before they participated in the interview.

The dates and times of the interview were communicated and decided upon based on common agreement between the researcher and the participants. Before the interview commenced a letter asking for permission to conduct interviews, invitation letters, and consent forms were sent to participants.

3.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are some factors that affected the research process and data collection process one of the factors was the outbreak of the pandemic COVID19, some participants could not freely communicate since they had to wear masks and maintain social distancing in compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Other teachers could not participate because they were afraid of physical contact which could lead to infections related to COVID-19. According to the researcher's plan, two data collection methods were to be used, i.e focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews. However, the University of Zululand Research Committee (UZREC) recommended that focus group interviews should not be administered since they may put participants and the researcher at a high risk of being infected. The data was collected only from rural schools and urban schools were excluded. Some interviewees were not easy to find due to commitments such as running examinations and attending meetings and others were busy with their own studies.

3.9. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

The qualitative data analysis process focused on understanding how participants make meaning of given phenomena by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Data analysis was done after data collection, the data were analysed using the thematic analysis framework as one of the qualitative research data analysis methods. Thematic analysis is a powerful yet flexible method for analysing qualitative data that can be used within a variety of paradigmatic or epistemological orientations, (Kiger. & Varpia,2020). The authors further stated that thematic analysis is an appropriate method of analysis for seeking to understand experiences, thoughts, or behaviours across a data set.

This method produced detailed themes based on the issues addressed in the interviews. As interviews were recorded data was transcribed into texts. Similar and related topics were grouped together to reduce categories. According to Moodley (2013) “in qualitative research data analysis involve expanding notes from the interviews and /or transcribing tapes, and ordering, describing, summarizing, and interpreting data obtained for each study unit”. In the current research all interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed into notes which made it easy for data to be analysed. Bryman (2002) asserts that data analysis assists the researcher to have a thorough examination and clear picture of the whole interview process. The data collected from participants were analysed using an organised and systematic way to present detailed findings (Merriam, 2009).

3.9.1. Trustworthiness

According to Baillie (2015); Finlay (2006) “trustworthiness’ portrays quality in qualitative research and underpins both rigour in the research process and the relevance, and confidence in the research outcome.” Also, it is an authority for building the authenticity of the research results, and truthfulness of findings (Cypress, 2017).

3.9.2. Dependability

Dependability is about the stability (reliability) of data not only over time but, over conditions as well. In qualitative research validity is embedded in dependability (Neuman, 2006). To ensure the dependability of this study, no information was left out or misinterpreted, the researcher listened to the interviews repeatedly to ensure that there were no omissions of information. Furthermore, participants were asked to verify the transcribed interviews. The data analysis was done based on the information obtained from interviews.

3.9.3. Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred from one context to another and in another setting while working with other participants (Kortstjens & Moser,2018). They further mentioned that the researcher uses transferability judgment with thick descriptions.

The researcher collected data from 8 participants who are in grade 12 Business Studies in King Cetshwayo District, the with the belief that the information obtained from eight schools can be compared with what is happening in other schools concerning the implementation of formative assessment in Business Studies in grade 12. According to Cope (2014), researchers should provide sufficient information on the research context to enable the reader to assess the findings' capability of being "fit" or transferable.

3.9.4. Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to show that the data characterise the participant's responses and not the researcher's biases and viewpoints (Polit & Beck ,2012). Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe confirmability as the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the participants and by not the researcher bias, motivation, or interests. The interpretations and conclusions of this study were based on the ideas and words of the participants, the researcher quoted the participants verbatim as it is shown in the following chapter.

3.10. Chapter summary

This chapter presented the methodology followed during the research process. The concepts, such as research paradigm, research approach, and research design, sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis processes were unpacked, and reasons were given for the type of methodology used in this study and reasons thereof. The chapter also explained ethical considerations that were followed to ensure the safety of participants and the limitations of the study were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter covered the research approach, research design and methodology used in this study. This chapter focuses on the steps taken in analysing and interpreting data generated through semi-structured interviews. Eight teachers from seven schools in King Cetshwayo District were chosen and used as sources of data collection. These teachers are presented as participant 1 to participant 8, these teachers were teaching Business Studies in Grade 12 in the selected schools.

The current study was guided by four research questions. It should be noted that the responses recorded during the semi-structured interviews with teachers were taken verbatim, hence there are no corrections done on any grammar or sentence construction mistakes. The research questions were as follows:

- What are the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process?
- What are the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies in as far as the implementation of formative assessment is concerned?
- What are the challenges faced by Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment?
- How can the formative assessment practices of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers be improved?

4.2 Coding of participants

Participant	Gender	School	Teaching experience
1	F	School 1	2 years
2	M	School 2	13 years
3	M	School 3	8 years
4	F	School 4	8 years
5	M	School 4	12 years
6	M	School 5	2 years
7	F	School 6	4 years
8	M	School 7	10 years

The data was collected from eight participants who are teachers that teach Business Studies. Participants consist of three female teachers and five male teachers. Participant number One and Six both have Two years' experience. Participant Three and Four both have Eight years' experience. Participant number four and five are from one school. Participant number Two from school number 2. have Thirteen years' experience, participant number Five from school number 4. is with Twelve years' experience and participant number Eight from school number 7. With Ten years' experience.

4.3 FINDINGS

RESEARCH QUESTION. NO. 1.

What are the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process?

Themes

Theme 1. Establishment of prior knowledge

Prior knowledge refers to what learners already know before they learn something new. This can be found when teachers ask questions during the introduction of the lesson, learner's responses reveal their previous knowledge about the topic. Findings from participants of the interviews revealed that most teachers use question and answer method especially in the introduction stage of the lesson to find learners' prior knowledge. They also mentioned that it is important to recognise what a learner already know before you move to what is unknown.

Participant no.4 supports this by mentioning that,

"...at most I always use question and answer method it helps to assess learner's prior knowledge and you can be able to develop the learners from known to unknown. The participant further elaborated that," first I start with prior knowledge so by asking questions on the previous lesson and then learners will

give me some answers and then I would see whether others they know or don't know, and I develop it from there."

Participant no. 8 confirmed this by saying.

"I normally ask them questions as a whole class during teaching and learning usually at the beginning of the lesson.

Participant no.2 added by saying that: “

You must find out how much they know, because once you undermine their knowledge you will be surprised that they know much better than you think about the topic”.

On the other hand, participant no. 6 emphasized the point raised by Participant 2 who had this to say”:

I ask questions during teaching and learning to track what learners already know”.

Therefore, it can be concluded that asking questions during lesson introduction keeps teachers informed about what learners know. It also activates learners' prior knowledge, so that they can engage effectively during class discussions. When learners' prior knowledge is recognised, learners become keener to participate in class seeing that there is something they know and can thus contribute to what is taught.

Theme 2. Implementation of group work

Group work takes place when learners are given an opportunity to do assessment activities in teams. Teachers group learners into small operating teams where learners discuss issues to solve given problems. The findings from the interviews revealed that teachers normally do various activities but most of teachers confirmed that they use group work most of the time. Some of the advantages that were highlighted by the teachers is that group work allows learners to assess each other in groups. Teachers are of the view that learners learn better when they work with their peers. Teachers also mentioned that learners who cannot work as individuals get a better chance to learn with others.

Participant no 3 believes that peer assessment helps learners to learn from others and learn to assist others, she indicated that:

“... peer assessment gives learners a democratic opportunity to assist one another, this is due to the fact that there are different learning styles for learners therefore it is better to group them”.

Participant no.8 supports this by mentioning the point that.

“I would give them group work because group work will make them involved in their learning, it will also help them to learn from others because learning is easy when they are learning from peers”.

Participant number 4 supports this by saying.

“I give classwork in groups; it helps learners to learn from each other”

It can be concluded that group work is one of important activities which is administered in the practices of formative assessment. It encourages learner participation and improves learners' great responsibility towards their own learning. The more learners can assess the activities of their peers and provide feedback the more they learn to take responsibility of their own learning using the skills they acquired when they assess their group members. Group work also gives opportunities for learners to be heard and share ideas. This means that group work is beneficial for students because it allows them to collaborate with another in a way that they can learn from each other and work together to solve problems.

Theme 3. Usage of different types of informal formative assessment

Informal assessment are the assessments that usually take place in the classroom during teaching and learning to track learners' progress, it includes non-formal activities that are given to learners to do while teaching and learning is taking place. Informal assessment is in line with the learner-centered approach since learners learn by doing activities and the teacher acts as a guide. Participants mentioned that they usually use different types of informal assessment i.e., case studies, oral presentations, and scenarios. The informal assessment activities help by keeping learners interested and involved in their learning to ensure that they achieve required outcomes.

Participant no. 1 pointed out that:

I give them a problem to solve and ask them to present their feedback I make copies of case studies and allow each learner to share their views in the case study.

Participant no. 5 commented that:

I use variety of assessment like discussing scenarios and case studies which are based on real situation with them and asking them question to respond the way they understand then they will present their findings in the class.

Participant no. 8 indicated that:

“...in order to check what learners, understand I give them case studies, scenarios where learners answer the questions based on the scenario and answers will be presented in both writing and orally.”

Participant no.6 added that:’

Questions are asked while teaching is taking place, learners will be able to answer questions based on a given case study or scenario, so you are teaching something, but you keep on checking whether they understand”.

Questioning is another strategy that is used by teachers as an informal activity, this was confirmed by **Participant no. 2** when saying:”

In informal activity normally I use questioning, where I ask questions while teaching and learning is taking place”.

Participant no. 4 agreed by saying that:

“At most I always use question and answer method to develop learner from known too unknown”.

Participant no.3 mentioned that:”

...it could be questioning that I use to ensure that learners do understand the topic of the day”.

The discussions above make it clear that various informal assessment activities are used in the implementation of formative assessment by the teachers.

The informal activities engage learners to different learning experiences of which they end up understanding that they need to be responsible for their own with teachers' support. Participants also mentioned case Studies and or scenarios, where learners are provided with a certain case or problem to solve to show they better understand what is done in the classroom, and they are sometimes asked to present their solutions or findings to the class. Therefore, it can be concluded that when learners are engaged in a variety of tasks, they can learn more and acquire learning skills necessary for their development.

Theme 4. Teachers provide feedback to learners.

Feedback assists by informing both learners and teachers about the performance of the learner through the use of assessment. Teachers provide feedback to learners about their performance in the assessment activity with the aim of improving where learners are doing better and finding some ways of correcting where learners are struggling. Feedback helps teachers to understand whether the knowledge, skills and outcomes were achieved by learners. Findings from the participants revealed that whatever teachers and learners are doing as formative assessment helps in giving feedback to the learner.

Participant no.1 is in support of the provision of feedback by the teachers she pointed out that:

"..... I as a teacher provide feedback to learners so that they can be able to improve and work well knowing what they understand and still not understand".

Participant no. 3. Supports the point by commenting that:

"I give learners feedback on what they know after you have taught the lesson..."

Additionally, **participant no.4.** said:

"I also give feedback to learners throughout the lesson and can help me to see whether follow or don't".

It can be concluded that feedback as part of formative assessment assist in filling the gaps in learners' understanding.

Learners are also motivated to engage more with the lesson; thus, it is considered as one of the important factors in teaching and learning process. Participants indicate that feedback is important to give to learners as it keeps both teachers and learners well informed about what learners understand and do not understand. This relates to what should happen according to the literature that teachers should assess and give feedback to learners. They agree to the idea that successful implementation of formative assessment can be achieved if teachers give assessment to learners and ensure that feedback is always.

Theme 5. The use of individualisation as an assessment strategy

One of the assessment strategies used by Business Studies teachers is individualisation which involves assessing a learner as an individual to ensure that each learner get an opportunity to improve his or her skills and knowledge during teaching and learning: Individualisation can be classified as self-assessment where learners learn to do activity and are also able to assess their own work.

Participant no. 4 agreed by saying that:

“...another thing is that they must learn to stand on their own as an individual where I give them individual activities...”

Participant no. 8 said:”

I normally use individualization because learners must develop themselves individually they must improve the sense of responsibility because in groups most of the learners hide without showing their potential skills”

Participant no.2. Agreed by saying that:

.... “again, it could be the self-study, where I tell my learners to do their activity as individuals.”

From the participant’s responses it is evident that the teacher also develops the learner as an individual. Individualisation also assist teachers to be able to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses for learners as individuals. The individual development of the learner helps even learners themselves to identify their strengths and weaknesses for them to improve on their weaknesses.

RESEARCH QUESTION NO. TWO

What are the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies in as far as the implementation of formative assessment is concerned?

Themes

Theme 6: Improvement of learner involvement and participation.

The formative assessment activities done during the lesson helps improve learner involvement and participation and that results in students participating meaningfully in their own learning. The findings revealed that teachers are of the view that learners become more involved in the lesson if there are formative assessment activities done during the lesson. During the semi-structured interviews with the teachers, it became clear that teachers believed that it is important that formative assessment activities are conducted during lesson presentation so as to encourage learners to be more involved in their learning. **Participant 1** had this to say:

“Formative assessment helps in terms of learner participation you know you are not the only who participate, they are the one who participate more through answering questions.”

Participant 2 also confirmed by saying:

“... check that you are still in line with goals and that learners are not lacking behind, so that’s why most of the time you must try by all means to involve them during the lesson.”

Participant 4 added:

” ...Meaning learners are active at participating in class and then the lesson goes well and smooth.”

Participant .8 put the main emphasis of formative assessment as improving learner participation.

“Learners become more interested in teaching and learning process as it is informative and it also give them more understanding. Learning better is giving learners more involvement in the process of learning and teaching.”

The statement by Participant 7 also highlighted:

“Well according to my understanding the role of formative assessment during teaching and learning is to detect whether learners are actively participating and understand the content”.

From the discussion above it can be deduced that formative assessment does improve learner participation and involvement. The participants highlighted that when the teacher ask some questions during lesson presentation learners get motivated and become actively involved.

Theme 7. Improvement of learning

Improvement of learning entails enhanced learners' performance which results in the achievement of outcomes as the consequence of the implementation of formative assessment. It also means that teachers have achieved the objectives of the teaching and learning process where learners are able to understand what they are learning. The responses from teachers indicated that they understand that formative assessment contributes to the improvement of learner's learning. Other participants mentioned that formative assessment builds the positive interaction between the teacher and the learner especially when immediate feedback is given to learners.

Participant no.6 highlighted that:

” It helps educators to understand whether learners are in line with what they have learnt. It also improves the level of understanding of learners.

Participant 2 supports this by saying:

“Once it is conducted effectively it can improve learning, because learners can be able to work independently, and they become responsible for their actions “

Participant 7 confirmed that:

“Formative assessment contributes to implementation of learning as it builds or engage learners to learn skills by involving the learners as partners in the process it also builds learners skills”.

Participant 4: agreed by saying:

“, yes, they do improve the learning and its vital for teaching and learning its very vital it help to give learners an opportunity to improve their performance”.

It can be concluded from participants' point of view that formative assessment improves learning especially because teachers are able to provide feedback as mentioned above, feedback also help learners improve their performance. Formative assessment also keeps learners busy with their own learning as individuals as well as peers. When learners are taking active part in their own learning there is improvement in their performance.

Theme 8. Formative assessment accommodates learner-diversity.

Participants revealed that formative assessment assist teachers to accommodate learner diversity through the use of different assessment activities. Learners come from different backgrounds and thus have different learning styles; Formative assessment helps in accommodating all learners with their different backgrounds. Participants shared that learners are not the same when it comes to learning cognitive levels and behaviour. There are learners who are more gifted, less gifted, and mediocre when it comes to learning levels. Some learners are very shy and even hide behind other learners in the classroom and others are outspoken. There are learners who are good at speaking and others are good at writing, also other learners are good in calculations others are good at reading. Participants mentioned some of learner differences as one of the reasons that teachers use different teaching strategies to cater for all learners.

Participant no 8.' had this to say:

“Learners are not the same, therefore teachers must be multitalented to assist different learners who are from different environment and different communities and have got different understanding”.

Participant .3 supports by saying:

“There are different learning styles therefore others learn best if they hear, and others learn best if they are doing and some others may find that they learn best if they can see what you are talking about as you are teaching”

Participant no.4 confirms:

“You may find that most learners are able to write they are good in writing and others are good in speaking”.

Participant 7: said: *so some are shy while others are outgoing”*

It can be concluded from the findings above that formative assessment allow teachers to cater for every kind of individual learner. When teachers use different teaching styles and different assessment task each learner get to be developed based on their learning style.

RESEARCH QUESTION NO. 3

What are the challenges faced by Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment?

Themes

Theme 9. Learners’ lacks motivation.

Learners’ lack of motivation has to do with learners who cannot learn on their own, learners who need to be pushed by their parents or teachers to do their schoolwork. Learners lack motivation is a challenge for teachers and that has a negative impact on teaching and learning. Participants said learners need some motivation because others do not believe in themselves, others are demotivated, however, for formative assessment to be implemented effectively and efficiently learners need to be motivated.

Participant 1 said:

” And also, our learners need to be motivated and willing to learn, they need to meet teachers half way”

Participant 6 shared a concern that:

” Ok my experience what can I say you may find out that most of the learners are maybe demotivated they are not used to working independently.

Participant 8 commented:

" I think learners need more motivation, if you are giving them motivation you better do feedback which encourages them very well, you also give them rewards for work well done you even applause for more creative work done so that others will be encouraged of doing what others are doing".

From participants' responses it can be concluded that sometimes teachers find it difficult to work with learners because they show lack of interest and motivation to learn. It is during the implementation of formative assessment where teachers identify those learners who lack motivation. Teachers try to engage them by using different assessment strategies.

Theme 10. Limited time allocated for Business Studies in the timetable.

The Department of Education allocates time for all subjects in the CAPS document, Time allocated for Business Studies (BS) on the timetable is 4 hours per week, per grade i.e., grades 10, 11 and 12. According to the views of participants the time allocated for BS is not enough, taking into consideration the number of topics and contents stipulated in the CAPS document and in the Annual Teaching Plans. The expected dates on which teachers must be completed to teach those topics are also indicated in the CAPS document. Additionally, teachers are required to do different assessment tasks which include formal and informal tasks. The regular marking, provision of feedback, recording of marks, should also be done on this allocated time. The participants highlighted the challenge, that they feel time allocated for Business Studies does not allow teachers to effectively implement formative assessment.

This is witnessed by **Participant 8** who said:

" Time allocation of the teaching of Business Studies is also a problem because some of the topics in Business Studies would not be completed because of time which is allocated to Business Studies in all schools".

Participant 1 and 7 agreed with a concern that it is more time consuming to implement formative assessment. **Participant no.1**

It is time consuming in a sense that not only are coming to class to formatively assess but you are coming in order to teach as well, and time is very limited"

Participant 2 was concerned about the shortage of time:

"You find out that we may not have enough time to utilize this formative what to achieve goals because of time."

Participant 1 added:

" The presentations could be time consuming and that hinders the learners to get full attention".

Participant 7. anchored participant 1 assertion and said:

The first one is time consuming because as you plan the lesson, it is time consuming because whenever you are using formative assessment during the class you need to consider all learners, when they don't understand you keep on going back without moving to another topic".

Based on the views of participants teachers are not satisfied with the time allocated to Business Studies in the timetable as it does not allow teachers to implement formative assessment effectively and as required in the CAPS document. One may conclude that it is sometimes possible for the teachers not to complete all topics and stipulated assessment activities in Business Studies due to the limited time allocation for Business Studies.

Theme 11. Overcrowded classrooms.

Overcrowded classes refer to having more than expected number of learners in one classroom. The Department of Education's policy indicate the teacher-learner ratio of 1:30, meaning 30 learners per 1 teacher to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. However, most of the schools are still overcrowded and that has a negative impact on the implementation of formative assessment.

For instance, in the overcrowded classrooms teachers are not able to give immediate feedback to all learners and cannot focus on individual learner development. Overcrowded classroom is one of the challenges that most participants mentioned as hindering the implementation of formative assessment.

Participant 2 had this to say:

..... but we have this problem of what as I said we have overcrowding”.

Participant 4 supported Participant 2 and said:

two is the sizes of the classrooms are not manageable they are overcrowded”.

Additionally, **Participant 7** was concerned that giving feedback to large classes was not easy.

Participant 7 highlighted that:

.... whenever you are using formative assessment during the class you need to consider all learners, so you end up giving feedback to few learners and at the end of the day if they don't understand you have to go back without moving to another topic”.

From the participant's views overcrowding poses a huge challenge in schools, especially when it comes to the implementation of formative assessment. It becomes difficult for teachers to focus on individual learners especially those who are struggling and that leads to poor learner performance. It even becomes difficult to use group work as the space for them to sit in groups becomes a problem as well.

Theme 12. Teachers' heavy workload

The number of subjects, classes, and learners each teacher is responsible for has a direct influence on the quality of teaching and learning as well as assessment. Work-overload is one of the stressors for teachers. The introduction of CAPS promised a decrease in teacher workload (section 2.4). However, that promise is not practical as teachers are still facing the challenge of heavy workload. Participants raised concerns about the heavy workload and its effect on the implementation of formative assessment.

Some schools are faced with the challenge of being understaffed so available teachers in the school have to ensure that teaching and learning is taking place to and that all subjects are taught.

Participants 3 mentioned that:

“ ...again, it could be the tight duty load for that particular teacher of Business. Studies that can hinder the h teacher for direct planning “

Participant no. 1 supported participant 3 by saying:

Another failure is the fact that you as a teacher are having a very very heavy workload, so you have to mark in order to give feedback and also you have to be able to match the assessment strategies with the lesson outcomes”

Participant 5 mentioned that:

teachers have a lot of work to do, planning, teaching, assessing marking and providing feedback...”

Participant 8, added:

As teachers we are working under pressure, we have a lot to do...”

The responses of participants indicate that teachers' heavy workload affects even the proper planning of teachers. Once a teacher goes to the classroom without proper planning, it becomes difficult to implement formative assessment effectively. The other challenge concerns the marking the assessment tasks, providing feedback and ensuring that assessment tasks lead to the achievement of the outcomes. Consequently, the teachers become fatigue and thus, teaching, learning and assessment are compromised.

Theme 13. Lack of resources

The resources in teaching and learning refers to the Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM) or tools that are used to support the teaching and the learning process. It is difficult for teachers to implement formative assessment when the school have challenges of inadequate resources. The responses from participants revealed that teachers are concerned about the lack of resources which affect the implementation of formative assessment.

Participant 1 highlighted that:

We don't have enough resources, topics like presentation and data response I would like my learners to be able to see the overhead projectors. I would have loved my learners to use the multimedia that they are talking about in that certain topic, but we are unable because we lack resources.

Participant 3 supported by saying:

There is no study material, there is no teaching aid that support or stimulate a learner's interest that led to failure to expose learners to practicality of lessons that can allow learners to master the content easily

The point of exposing learners to practical's is important because it is difficult to teach leaners to present business information using power point slides when there is no even one *computer to that*.

Participant 4 said:

Yes, textbooks are available, but some are not enough like the electronic ones like overhead projectors and there is a shortage of school equipment like desks.

Participant 5 added:

in our school we have shortage of resources like projectors as teachers when you want to project a certain information like videos it is difficult as we don't have such resources.

Participant 8 concurred:

"Definitely no, there are no resources at all since the DoE prescribed electronic presentation of which there are no projectors there are no laptops to show this presentation, but learners have to respond to PowerPoint slides questions while they have never seen them".

It is a challenge for teachers of Business Studies to effectively implement formative assessment especially using power point for presentation purposes. It is difficult for learners to respond to questions based on the use of computers whereas there are no computers at school.

RESEARCH QUESTION NO. 4

How can the formative assessment practices of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers be improved?

Themes

14.1. The employment of qualified Business Studies teachers.

Qualified teachers are teachers who hold teaching professional qualifications, thus are assumed to have necessary teaching skills. It is of necessity that teachers are employed to teach the subjects which they are professionally qualified to teach so that they are competent in terms of teaching as well assessment. Participants suggested different things including the employment of more qualified teachers to deal with the challenge of overcrowded classrooms and teacher heavy workload.

Participant 3 suggested that:

if we can make a recruitment of other teachers so that learners will get enough attention from the teachers so that no learner is going to be left behind”

Participant.4 pointed out that:

.... for effective implementation of formative assessment, I think I recommend that the DoE that is the department I 'm employed with, employ more educators as to help in the problem of overcrowding classes like implementing the ratio of 1:30 that means one educator must teach 30 learners.”

Participant 5 recommended that:

The government should employ enough educators to reduce teacher workload”.

Participant 6 concurred:

.... “the department need to consider the hiring of qualified teachers.

Lack of qualified teachers poses a challenge to the implementation of formative assessment. Teachers need to have relevant knowledge and skills to be able to implement curriculum effectively. If more teachers are employed, it will mean that the problem of overcrowding and the heavy teacher work load would be solved and that will lead to the improvement of teaching and learning.

14.2. Provision of resources

Provision of resources entails the provision of the teaching and learning support materials for use during teaching and learning process. Participants recommended that the government needs to provide enough funding so that schools can buy required resources including using computers in order to improve teaching and learning.

Participant 7 said:

...for instance, if the department can provide us with sufficient teaching and learning materials that will make teaching and learning easy and fairly or firm”

Participant 1 supported by saying:

” I think it is the responsibility of the department to provide schools or teachers with more resources that they can use to assess learners in terms of formative assessment”.

Participant 8 agreed by saying:

I also believe that the provision of resources by the Department of Education to improve formative assessment.

It can be concluded that the government or Department of Education must ensure that schools have the required resources for quality teaching and learning to take place and for effective implementation of formative assessment. Provision of resources can be in the form of government funding schools so that they buy the required resources.

14.3. Teacher training on formative assessment

Teacher training is about the initiative by the Department of Education as an employer to improve the skills of the teachers. Teacher training can be done through the provisions of training centers or having workshops where teachers attend to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Furthermore, training can also improve the competency and confidence of teachers. The participants recommended that teachers should be trained to ensure effective implementation of formative assessment.

Participant 1 said:

I think teachers need more workshops in terms of being taught how to assess learners in terms of formative assessment”.

Participant 6 mentioned

There should be more training of educators but with training I know that there is training which is offered but is not enough because the department normally trains teachers maybe for two days or for one day even though work which needs to be covered is more”.

Participant 8 suggested that:

workshop on formative assessment implementation must be given to educators so that they will practice or do formative assessment properly”.

It can be decided from the views of participants that teachers still need training and workshops on how to effectively implement formative assessment. When teachers get proper knowledge and training support, they will be able to assess learners formatively and also provide relevant support to learners.

Chapter summary

This chapter presented findings and analysis of findings, based on problem statement and research questions. Findings were drawn from the thematic analysis of data. The data collected in the semi-structured interviews confirmed that, the practices of formative assessment in grade 12 Business Studies is taking place with different assessment strategies and different of activities. Participants also shared their experiences in the implementation of formative assessment like the importance of accommodating learner diversity. They also mentioned the challenges they face during teaching and learning as well as in conducting assessment. The findings indicated that lack of resources does affect the implementation of formative assessment. Teachers, however, mentioned that the practices of formative assessment help teachers to be able to give constructive feedback to learners and, therefore, it improves learning. Challenges included overcrowded classes and suggestion was made that the Department of Education should employ more teachers and provide more resources. The findings also revealed that there is inadequate time in the timetable allocated for

Business Studies. Additionally, data indicated how giving assessment activities improve learner involvement and participation. The next chapter discusses the research findings, and it also focuses on recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the analysis of data collected from participants through semi-structured interviews on the practices of formative assessment by grade 12 Business Studies teachers at King Cetshwayo District. The current chapter discusses the research findings.

5.2. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 Research question 1: What are the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process?

5.2.1.1 The effective implementation of formative assessment improves learners' learning.

Participants revealed that, their experiences with regards to the implementation of formative assessment, is that it contributes to the improvement of learners' learning. This is in line with William (2013), who states that formative assessment is "one of the most powerful ways of improving student achievement". There is literature which indicate that there is a positive relationship between effective implementation of formative assessment and student achievement (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Teachers use the information collected during the formative assessment activities to close the gap between students' understanding of the content and what the content addresses (Miranda & Hermann, 2015). It can, therefore, be deduced that the tasks given to learners, help teachers to diagnose whether learners achieve the required outcomes. Teachers are also given a chance to improve their teaching strategies in an endeavour to improve learners' performance. Additionally, Popham, (2013), is of the view that since the extensive review of formative assessment practices by Black and William's (1998b) teachers have seen the need of using formative assessment strategies to improve student performance and learning.

Therefore, it is important that schools should ensure that formative assessment is implemented properly in order to improve teaching and learning. Furthermore, Kenyon (2019), suggests that a focus on increasing student understanding through the implementation of formative assessment strategies in the classroom may help improve student achievement as students understand the important concepts better. It is thus clear that the usage of different formative strategies by teachers improve learning. The application of formative assessment includes appropriate identification of student lack of understanding, a clear indication of the criteria used to judge performance, measure successful progress, provide specific feedback, and instructional correctives, that will move the student towards successful attainment of learning targets (Brookhart, 2007; Guskey, 2010). Therefore, formative assessment provides individualised feedback and information about what students need to do to improve performance. Evidently, the implementation of appropriate formative assessment activities does contribute to improved learning.

5.2.1.2. Improvement of learner involvement and participation

Teachers' responses revealed that formative assessment improves learner involvement and participation through the usage of different formative assessment activities and different assessment methods that engage learners during teaching and learning. Additionally, teachers ask questions, give formative informal tasks and provide feedback to learners in order to help learners to be fully involved during the teaching and learning process. Black et al. (2003), highlight that formative assessment can take different shapes and it can take place at any time during the lesson, it also encourages students to be actively involved in their lessons as they are allowed to air their views. Teachers have another important role to play, in encouraging learners through different strategies they use in class to actively involve and interacting with the teacher during lesson presentation (Young, 2005). The more learners are willing to put effort in their learning, the more they are fully involved in teaching and learning. Likewise, Adkopolu (2018); Moss and Brookhart (2009) view formative assessment as a chance for the teachers and learners to share ideas and work together so as improve students' learning.

Furthermore, the authors asserted that it is important for both, students, and teachers to learn from formative assessment process, for effective learning to take place. Formative assessment keeps learners active especially after they have received feedback from the teachers, which guides them on where they need to improve. Overall, there is evidence that formative assessment helps improve learner involvement and participation.

5.2.1.3. Giving feedback to learners

Responses from participants revealed that when teachers give feedback to learners, it improves learners' learning. (Kanjee, 2020), asserts that the primary purpose of providing feedback is to support learners in improving their knowledge, understanding and skills regarding the topic of the lesson. Additionally, feedback also closes the gap between students' present understanding and their ideal performance (Cai, 2016; Lee & Lim, 2019). Furthermore, Black and William (2009) confirms that feedback enhances collaboration between teachers and learners, and it also encourages learners to play an active role in the learning process, because of appropriate feedback given to them. It can, therefore, be deduced that interaction between teachers and learners can be enhanced when teachers implement formative assessment by providing feedback. Baroundi (2007), is of the view that feedback leads to further learning opportunities. During feedback sessions, teachers can do remedial work with learners as they are able to decide whether they need to go further with new lesson or help learners understand the previous lesson. Furthermore, Stiggins, (2002) is of the view that regular feedback on assessment should be given to learners and that leads to learners being motivated to do their tasks. Boston (2002) argues that feedback narrows the gap between the desired outcomes and learners' current knowledge. However, Black and William (2009), cautions that for feedback to be effective, learners should be actively engaged in their own learning. It can, therefore, be deduced that giving feedback to learners improves learner participation and involvement which then leads to improved learning outcomes.

5.2.1.4. Group work as assessment strategy

Teachers revealed that, formative assessment is better applied when they use group work, because it allows learners to learn from others and help each other during teaching and learning. According to Sithole (2018), working collaboratively in small groups is known to help with the development of many key skills, including problem solving skills, communication skills, speaking and listening skills that are required of students for both their academic and their future success in their chosen careers. The author, furthermore, stated that working in small groups also provides learners with opportunities to share ideas and understandings, to uncover misunderstandings and to negotiate with others to reach consensus. The use of group work, assist in improving language learning, thinking skills, communication skills and leadership skills through (Kagan, 2012). However, it should be stressed that all the advantages of the group work can be realised if learners are given the opportunity to work in groups. Sithole, (2018) is of the idea that, team learning has valuable benefits that students can reap for their after-school lives and in the workplace. It is, therefore, clear that using group work in assessing Business Studies improve learners' communication skills, better understanding of leadership role, being ethical and responsible while working with others. Evidently, group work can be regarded as one of the beneficial methods for implementing formative assessment in the teaching and learning process.

5.2.1.5. Activation of prior knowledge

Teachers revealed that formative assessment helps them to activate learners' prior knowledge. Teachers can discover what learners already know about the topic, they usually do that through the use of questioning at the beginning of the lesson. Bransford (2000), asserts that, there evidence which suggests that learning is enhanced when teachers focus on learners' prior knowledge, they bring in class.

Furthermore, the authors are of the view that teachers use learners' prior knowledge to gauge what is it that learners know and build on that while as a starting point for observing students 'changing conceptions as lesson proceeds. Formative assessment strategies can be conducted anytime during the lesson it can be, before, during, and, or after the lesson (Conderman & Hedin, 2012; Magno & Lizada, 2015).

Before the start of the lesson, it is done to gauge students' current understanding of the upcoming curricular concepts (Clark, 2012). It also helps learners get motivated as they feel included and valued. It is, therefore, evident that the implementation of formative assessment helps in activating prior knowledge especially when teachers ask questions to find what learners already know before tackling new information. Additionally, implementing formative assessment helps teachers to engage learners in their learning through the activation of prior knowledge.

5.2.1.6. Usage of various types of informal assessment activities

Participants' responses revealed that, teachers use different types of informal assessment activities during the implementation of formative assessment in their teaching. Informal assessment activities in Business Studies include, peer assessment, self-assessment, group discussions, presentations, case studies and or scenarios. When using different activities learners are provided with a case or a problem to solve and they are asked to present their solutions or findings to the class. These informal activities engage learners to different learning experiences of which assist them to take ownership of their learning. All these types of assessment are useful for engaging learners in their learning. Regier (2012), further asserts that a range of different assessment strategies must be applied by the teacher to explore the eagerness of students to learn a certain unit of study and to plan the instruction to accommodate the needs of the students. Similarly, Majola (2014), confirms that the use of different of formative assessment strategies assist teachers and students to identify difficult areas in the subject. So, it can be deduced that when teachers assign different formative informal assessment tasks for learners to do, learners get to achieve variety of skills, knowledge, and values.

5.2.1.7. Formative assessment caters for individualisation and learner diversity.

Research findings also brought to the fourth that when teachers implement formative assessment in the classroom they get to assess and develop the learner as an individual. Teachers can do this when they give individual assessment tasks which helps to identify unique strength for each individual learner.

According to the study conducted by (OECD, 2008) indicate that teachers can use varied assessments activities to get information on students' ability to apply learning to new situations a vital skill to learning. It is important that students who may not do well in certain tasks are given an opportunity to show their knowledge and skills in others. to learn and on how student understanding might be corrected or deepened. Individual learning and teaching approach helps learners who do not have learning support at home (OECD, 2003). Individualised assessment tasks give and individual learner opportunity for to be developed according to his or her learning ability, which promotes individualised skills which set the individual learners apart from others. Participants also highlighted that that the implementation of formative assessment assist teachers to accommodate learner diversity. For instance, when teachers give variety of assessment tasks to learners, the different learning styles of learners are accommodated since learners learn in different pace and have different learning abilities. Broadfoot and Black (2004), note the vital role played by formative assessment to support learning, and promote individual empowerment in the diverse classroom. Furthermore, formative assessment can help assist learners to become more fully self-aware and understand their own strengths and weaknesses, while working collaboratively with fellow learners from the diverse environment (Sethusha, 2014). It can be concluded that since learners are not the same, teaching strategies and assessment strategies should also be different to cater for learner diversity.

5.2.1.8. Overcrowded classrooms

Teachers revealed that overcrowded classrooms are one of the challenges that affect the effective implementation of formative assessment in schools. Ngwenya (2019), argues that overcrowded classrooms comprise the quality of education (Fasasi & Amadi, 2015; Marais, 2016; Shamim & Kuchah, 2016). There are policies implemented by the Department of Education (DoE) like the Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) to deal with the challenge of overcrowded classrooms in South Africa, especially in rural schools. The disadvantage posed by overcrowded classrooms, is that it does not allow enough time and space to implement differentiated assessment tasks so as to cater for different teaching and learning styles (Marias, 2016), and they tend to be teacher centred.

Marias, (2016), recommend that the Department of Basic Education should reduce the teacher learner ratio from 1 to 30 to 1 is to 25 for the benefit of both teachers and learners. Overcrowded classrooms seem to be a challenge in most schools and formative assessment is, therefore, affected because teachers cannot actively engage learners as required by formative assessment. Evidently, overcrowded classrooms pose a challenge for the effective implementation of formative assessment, so the Department of Education should try to help the schools deal with the issue of overcrowded classrooms.

5.2.1.9 Heavy work overload for the teachers.

Participants revealed that the other challenge faced by the teachers is the heavy workload which has a negative effect on the implementation of formative assessment. Teaching in overcrowded classrooms comes with an increased administration workload. According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2010), teachers' work overload is a mismatch between capacity and load, this has been explained as the imbalance between capacities to activate a curriculum. Mabaso (2020), outlines some of the teacher's responsibilities, which include, but are not limited to teaching content, controlling learners' books, writing monthly report on syllabus completion, developing and implementing an improvement plan for the learners at risk, designing standard question papers, conduct formal and informal activities and provide feedback. According to the circular 75 South African Schools and Administration Management System (SA-SAMS) document, teachers are expected to record their student's individual marks on the (SA-SAMS), this added to teachers' workloads as not all schools have administration clerks responsible for this task. The absence of administration clerks in other schools poses a challenge for the teachers as they must be the ones recording marks, hence, some teachers end up giving few assessment tasks so as to avoid being overloaded (Mabaso, 2020). From the discussion above there is evidence that workload is one of the challenges that teachers are faced with when implementing formative assessment.

5.3. Limited time allocated for Business Studies

Teachers also revealed that time allocated to teach and assess Business Studies by DoE is not enough. Most importantly teachers highlighted that it is difficult to, firstly, do all topics as prescribed in the CAPS in the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). Secondly, to conduct all assessment tasks as stipulated in the Programme of Assessment (POA). There is limited time allocated for teaching Business studies in CAPS which is 4 hours per week, from grade 10 to 12). Teachers are expected to plan, demonstrate, and revise the curriculum (Mlaba, 2014), in the limited time allocated in CAPS. Findings presented by Pele (2014) also concurred that the time allocated for Business Studies is not enough, taking into consideration that even that hour that is allocated is not entirely used for teaching and learning. In that limited time, teachers are expected to plan, teach the content, and assess learners. Evidently, there is a limited time allocated Business Studies and that has direct impact on the number and types of assessment that teachers can conduct. As a result, teachers sometimes do not conduct the required number of assessment activities.

5.4. Inadequate resources

Participants revealed that, there are inadequate resources and that poses a challenge to the implementation of formative assessment in schools. Each learner is expected be in possession of a Business Studies textbook of and other relevant stationery. Due to rapid changes that have occurred in the South African curriculum, schools can no longer afford to supply all learners with textbooks (Mlaba, 2014). The shortage of Business Studies textbook has direct impact not only on curriculum coverage and in the implementation of formative assessment, but it also deprives learners an opportunity to attain equal education. Chisholm (2012) concurs that the shortage of textbooks in schools “devalues the right and dignity of these learners to have an equal education”. Additionally, Cantrell (2014) reveals that there is indeed a shortage of Business Studies books and that makes it difficult to conduct effective lessons. It can be concluded that lack of resources at schools especially, textbooks hinder the effective implementation of formative assessment.

5.5. Lack of motivation by the learners

Another challenge revealed by the participants is that learners lack motivation. Therefore, it becomes difficult to implement formative assessment if learners are not motivated. Implementing formative assessment needs learners who are willing and motivated to participate in all kinds of activities. Participants indicated that some learners are shy which makes it difficult for them to participate in activities like oral presentations while others hide during group discussion sessions. Some reasons that cause learners' lack of motivation include laziness, playing in class, ill-prepared teachers, low self-confidence, dissatisfaction while learning, and students' personal problems like lack of intrinsic motivation (Huitt, 2005; Relianisa & Rokhyati 2020; Rokhyati, 2020). Unmotivated students, often lack direction, and without that direction learners cannot learn, and they have other priorities, and sometimes are given complex tasks without a detailed explanation from the lecturer (Simon, 2019; Rokhyati, 2020). It is evident that when learners are not motivated it becomes difficult for teachers to work effectively with learners.

5.6. Recommendations made by the participants.

The participants provided suggestions and recommendations in dealing with the challenges they experience.

Employment of qualified teachers

Participants recommended that the Department of Education should employ qualified Business Studies teachers. It will help in the effective implementation of formative assessment since these teachers will know how to use different assessment strategies to improve learning. The employment of more qualified teachers will also help decrease teachers' workload, increase their motivation, and decrease the number of learners per class. Participants also suggested that there should be workshops to develop teachers continuously on the strategies used for effective implementation of formative assessment. Kuze and Shumba, (2011), are of the view that to address the broader policy issues, other teachers can be re-educated through inservice training or workshops and in the implementation of formative assessment for all subjects.

Therefore, it can be deduced that if qualified teachers are employed and capacitated, they can be able to implement formative assessment effectively in the classroom context.

Provision of adequate resources

The participants also recommend that the Department of Education should provide schools with adequate resources. The provision of adequate resources helps teachers to effectively implement formative assessment during teaching and learning. The findings confirm the study conducted by Kuze and Shumba (2011) which state that the Department of Education should make provision for the required resources, such as prescribed textbook for every subject. Participants further suggested that government should provide funding to schools so that they can buy resources depending on the need of the individual school. It is recommended that government should supply resources to schools to ensure that all schools have the required resources.

5.7. Chapter summary

This chapter presented the discussion of the main findings of the research study which aims to explore the practices of formative assessment by grade 12 Business Studies teachers. The findings indicated the practices, experiences and challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of formative assessment it has also presented the recommendations of how the challenges mentioned can be solved.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to investigate grade 12 Business Studies teachers' practices of formative assessment in King Cetshwayo District. Chapter one outlined the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, methodology of the study and significance of the study. In chapter two relevant literature was reviewed, focusing on formative assessment practices, experiences of teachers in the implementation of formative assessment, challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of formative assessment activities and the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 presented the research methodology which entailed an interpretivist research paradigm, qualitative approach, population and sampling, data gathering methods and data analysis framework. Chapter four provided the presentation and analysis of the findings collected from eight participants in seven different schools in the King Cetshwayo District. The purpose of this chapter is to make conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the current study which were presented and discussed in Chapter 5.

6.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.2.1. Research question 1. What are the practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment during the teaching and learning process?

Usage of various informal activities and provision of feedback

When teachers implement formative assessment in their teaching and learning they use different assessment strategies and offer different assessment activities. Additionally, teachers provide feedback after each assessment task in order to provide information about learners' misconceptions and also suggest the areas in which learners need to improve.

Various assessment tasks help in meeting each individual's learning needs and feedback on assessment also helps learners discover their strengths and weaknesses. Majola (2014), concludes that the main purpose of formative assessment is to give feedback to students so as to empower them by enhancing their learning and achievement and they in turn become self-regulated learners. This conclusion is in line with what was discussed in chapter 2 about the importance of giving various assessment tasks to learners and providing feedback which helps in learner improvement.

Recommendations, it is therefore recommended that teachers provide appropriate feedback to learners after each assessment activity given to learners. Feedback helps learners to improve their competence it motivates them to continue learning. It is highly recommended that teachers use questioning at the beginning of the lesson to engage learners to find learners' prior knowledge and thus link what learners already know with new knowledge.

6.2.2. Research question 2. What are the experiences of grade 12 Business Studies in the implementation of formative assessment?

Improvement of learner involvement and participation.

Implementing formative assessment during the teaching and learning process assists teachers in ensuring that learners are actively involved and participate in class. Formative assessment improves learning because learners are given various assessment tasks which helps them during the learning process. This conclusion is supported by the verbatim quotes from participants in chapter four, where they revealed that formative assessment allows learners to participate fully in their learning by giving them various activities which include group discussions, presentations, case studies, and problem-solving. Therefore, when learners are actively involved in their learning, they can improve their performance.

Recommendations, teachers should use various types of assessment activities to improve learner participation and involvement. Additionally, teachers should continuously provide feedback to learners so that learners enhance their understanding of the content, thus improving their overall performance.

6.2.3. Research question 3. What are the challenges faced by grade 12 Business Studies teachers in the implementation of formative assessment?

Overcrowded classrooms and teacher's heavy workloads

There are several challenges that hinder the effective implementation of formative assessment by teachers. Overcrowded classrooms are one of the contributing factors to poor practices of formative assessment because of the lack of space in the classrooms and the high-noise level. Excessive workloads of teachers are another contributing factor of poor implementation of formative assessment. This conclusion is based on the concerns made by the participants in chapter four, that teachers have a lot of work to do which causes stress including the high demands and deadlines by the Department of Education. One of the reasons that lead to overcrowded classrooms is the shortage of teachers and poorly resourced schools.

Recommendations, it is advisable that the Department of education employ adequate teachers to deal with the challenges of both heavy workloads and overcrowded classrooms. When teachers are enough at schools their workloads would be manageable and at least have a ratio of 1:30 as proposed by the Minister of Education (DoE, 2008). The Government needs to increase the budget for the education sector to improve the infrastructure of previously disadvantaged schools, thus reducing overcrowded classrooms. The teachers need a manageable workload for them to be able to implement the formative assessment effectively.

Inadequate teaching time for Business Studies

The data indicated that there is much content to be covered in the Business Studies curriculum for grade 12 in a short period of time and teachers find it difficult to cope. The time allocated for Business Studies as per the CAPS document is four hours per week. Participants in this study felt that there are many assessment activities that need to be conducted within a limited timeframe. This implies that the subject content would not be adequately covered, and the formative assessment might be short-changed.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Business Studies hours increase to at least five hours per week in the timetable, to allow teachers to cover all contents and also conduct the required number of assessment activities and provide adequate feedback.

6.2.4. Research question 4. How can formative assessment practices of Grade 12 Business Studies teachers be improved?

Teacher training on proper implementation of formative assessment.

Participants in chapter four recommended that the Department of Education should provide training for teachers on how to effectively implement the formative assessment. This is in line with the reviewed literature in chapter two which states that some teachers find it challenging to implement the formative assessment. The reasons include a lack of understanding, skills, and strategies on how to properly implement the formative assessment.

Recommendation: it is recommended that the Department of Education organise workshops on a continuous basis for teachers so that they are empowered with the necessary knowledge and skills for effective implementation of formative assessment.

6.3. Limitations and Recommendations for further study

The current study focused only on the grade 12 Business Studies teacher's practices of formative assessment in King Cetshwayo District. Thus, the findings only explain what happened during the data collection process. Future research can be done on learners' experiences of formative assessment in the Business Studies curriculum.

6.4. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the practices of formative assessment practices of grade 12 Business Studies teachers in King Cetshwayo District. The findings of the study indicate that teachers do conduct formative assessment and they believe that formative assessment assist during the teaching and learning process as learners become actively and fully involved. The findings also revealed that Business Studies has a variety of assessment activities prescribed in CAPS document which ensures that learners are formatively assessed. The assessment activities include case studies, presentations, projects, assignments, and tests. Findings from participants also indicated that feedback is important as it help learners understand their content better, thus improving their overall performance. The findings further revealed that even though teachers are trying their best to implement formative assessment, they

still indicate the need to be capacitated in terms of knowledge and skills of implementing formative assessment. Hence, one of the recommendations of this study suggest that the Department of Education need to provide workshops on the implementation of assessments in an endeavour to improve teachers' knowledge and skills in the implementation of the formative assessment activities. The findings also revealed that there are some challenges that teachers are faced with in an endeavour to effectively implement formative assessment. The challenges include overcrowded classrooms, heavy workloads, lack of resources and limited time allocated to Business Studies in the timetable. It can be concluded that the Department of Education has the responsibility to provide the required resources to schools which include textbooks, employ more qualified teachers, and improve on the schools' infrastructure especially in rural schools.

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