
DISSERTATION SUBMISSION

**Title: Exploring the Teaching and Learning of
Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11
History Classrooms**

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Submission date: November 2024

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the
Master's Degree with specialization in Subject
Education in Social Sciences in the Department of Social
Sciences and Commerce Education in the Faculty of Education
at the University of the Free State.

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*Inspiring
excellence,
transforming
lives through
quality,
impact, and
care.*

DECLARATION

I, Londeka Mazibuko, hereby certify that this dissertation titled: 'Exploring the Teaching and Learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11 History Classrooms' is a product of my own, and it has not been submitted before. I am handing in this dissertation for a Master of Education degree at the University of the Free State. The sources used in this dissertation have been accordingly acknowledged through citation.

I also hereby cede the copyright of this work to the University of the Free State.



29/11/2024

SIGNATURE DATE **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to myself, Londeka Mazibuko. I faced challenges, but I did not allow them to distract me from finishing this dissertation.

To my parents, Mr Thomas Gidali Mazibuko (father) and Mrs Fikile Patricia Mazibuko (mother), thank you so much for not putting too much pressure on me and for allowing me to pursue the one thing that makes me happy: preparing to be an academic.

To my sisters, Ms Samkelisiwe Precious and Ms Nontokozo Fortunate Mazibuko, thank you for always being there for me and motivating me to do my best, even when faced with challenges. Your inspiration kept me going.

To my daughter, Ms Elethu Bokamoso Mazibuko, thank you for constantly reminding me to keep going. I have sacrificed the time I should have spent watching you go through your first grade of school, but I chose to work on this project, and I hope to make you proud. I hope this will remind you to continue loving school as you do so that one day, you will pursue what your heart desires.

Thank you to the National Research Foundation for allowing me to further my studies under your guidance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my ancestors (the Kubhekas and Mazibukos) and God for giving me the strength to write this project, even on days when I struggled. Thank you for being there for me during this journey and for opening up learning opportunities.

I sincerely thank my supervisors, Dr O.O. Adebola and Dr B.B. Moreeng; without your support and guidance, I wouldn't have made it this far. Thank you for providing guidance, support, and love throughout all stages of this dissertation.

I am grateful for the assistance from the KwaZulu Natal Department of Basic Education in allowing me to conduct my research in its institutions. To the principals and teachers,

thank you for your willingness to collaborate with me. Your input made it possible for me to complete this project.

I thank the Centre for Graduate Support for providing guidance through information workshops that offered valuable insights into the research journey. I left every session I attended with a wealth of information. Please continue supporting postgraduates, as we learn a great deal from your workshops.

Thank you to the Faculty of Education at QwaQwa Campus for organising the writing retreats. They encouraged me to work on my project and dedicate myself to what I was doing.

To my brother, Mr Siphamandla Joseph Shabangu, thank you for constantly reminding me to write and to rest when I felt overwhelmed. You have been a wonderful friend who has influenced my academic and personal development since our first year until now.

To my friends, Busi Mbonani, Sanele Nzima, Nhlakanipho Kunene, Thando Mazibuko, Sinethemba Mhlambi, and Philasande Zungu, thank you for your support and for always encouraging me to work hard, even when it gets tricky.

Abstract

Teaching about apartheid as one of the controversial topics in History classrooms in South Africa presents challenges, such as the inability of teachers to address every aspect of apartheid. Apartheid was a system of racial ideology that encouraged social and political segregation and discrimination, existing from 1948 to 1994 in South Africa. The study explored History teachers' understanding of the term "controversial issues" in the context of History. Furthermore, the study examined the challenges experienced by History teachers when teaching about apartheid. In addition, this study explored the teaching strategies that teachers use to enhance the teaching of apartheid, which is a controversial issue. There is a notable gap in how experienced History teachers handle the teaching of apartheid history as a controversial issue and how this has impacted the

historical understanding among learners. The study draws from caring pedagogy as a theoretical framework to explore how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms. This study used the interpretivism research paradigm and phenomenological research design. The qualitative study collected data in one of the rural towns of Bergville and Estcourt, located in the uThukela District in KwaZulu-Natal. In this study, I used semi-structured one-on-one interviews to collect data from five professional teachers who have at least five years of experience teaching History in Grade 11, alongside existing texts for History teaching in South Africa. The findings revealed that teachers understood controversial issues as topics that do not allow for a common understanding among people regarding a particular issue. Furthermore, the data suggested that teachers experience challenges such as learners' lack of interest in the importance of learning about apartheid and in acquiring historical skills. This study indicates the importance for teachers and pre-service teachers to develop effective strategies to promote learners' interest in the subject and assist them in attaining historical skills.

Keywords: apartheid, controversial issues, history teaching.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC – African National Congress

CAPS – Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements

CPSA – Communist Party of South Africa

DBE – Department of Basic Education

GHREC – General/Human Research Ethics Committee

ICU – Industrial and Commercial Workers Union

PGCE – Post Graduate Certificate in Education

FET – Further Education and Training

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background

This study aimed to explore the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms. Flensner (2020a) described controversial issues as topics that evoke varying perceptions and emotions among individuals. These issues often involve discussions about values based on social matters, where different perspectives are shaped by the reasoning and knowledge of all involved (Pace, 2022). Controversial issues are complex and lack a fixed point of view, making them challenging to navigate and understand (Pace, 2019).

History is a school subject that involves documenting and interpreting past events, focusing on the changes and developments that have occurred in societies over time (Siebörger, 2016; DBE, 2011). According to Ellis (2019), apartheid was a system of racial ideology that encouraged social and political segregation and discrimination from 1948 to 1994 in South Africa. The aim of teaching History is to cultivate historical consciousness, thinking, and reasoning in learners, encouraging them to view events from multiple perspectives and gain a deeper understanding of the past (Sakki & Pirttila-Backman, 2019). Researchers have conducted numerous studies to explore the benefits and challenges of teaching controversial issues, shedding light on best practices and effective pedagogical strategies (Iglesias, Aceituno, & Toledo, 2017; Kello, 2016).

According to Pace (2022), the essential values of teaching controversial issues include promoting critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills, social cohesion, democracy, and empathy. Flensner (2020a) notes that approaches to teaching controversial issues vary based on different countries and cultural groups due to the complexities involved. In American schools, teaching controversial issues encompasses encouraging learners' civic participation, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, and comprehension of subject content (Gusacov, 2022). Teaching apartheid as a controversial issue enables educators to help learners develop diverse perceptions through critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, allowing them to objectively analyse and evaluate information to form well-reasoned conclusions (Thotse, 2021). This approach should help learners grasp the complexities of historical events while emphasising the

importance of human rights, social justice, and equality. Learners' ability to make well-reasoned decisions supports their engagement in a democratic manner that promotes social cohesion, preparing them to act effectively and become responsible citizens in a complex world (Birdsall, 2018).

In a 2018 study conducted in the United States by Carter Andrews, Richmond, Warren, Petchauer, and Floden, it was found that participants tended to avoid teaching controversial topics during their lessons, opting to suppress classroom discussions instead. In Social Sciences education in Turkey, controversial topics are used to analyze and engage in contemporary debates, focusing on issues that are crucial for understanding the social and political dynamics of Turkish society and culture (AKAY ŞAHİN & Acikalin, 2021). Kohnert (2022) states that many West African governments have taken control of the curriculum, limiting teachers' ability to discuss controversial topics that might challenge their authority or policies. Taddese Bekele & Abebaw Degu, (2023) indicate that this could be connected to the region's colonial history, a delicate subject due to past injustices and power dynamics. Additionally, ethnic or tribal conflicts, which are especially sensitive in West Africa, may also present challenges.

Teachers in South Africa face challenges when teaching apartheid, including evoking learners' emotions, time constraints, and maintaining objectivity (Wasserman & Bentrovato, 2018). When learners debate and discuss controversial issues, classrooms can become uncontrollable due to the differing views that learners may express based on their understanding of the topic (Wolley, 2017). Teaching apartheid poses a challenge as time constraints in history classes make it difficult for teachers to address every topic from different perspectives (Pace, 2022). This situation forces teachers to carefully select which aspects to focus on during their lessons.

Over the years, significant efforts have been made to address the teaching of controversial issues in schools. Furthermore, the incorporation of digital technologies in education has provided new avenues for engaging learners in thoughtful debates and promoting diverse perspectives (Tribukait, 2021; Wasserman & Bentrovato, 2018). These collective efforts aim to create inclusive learning environments that empower learners to engage with complex societal matters, develop empathy, and become active, informed

participants in their communities and the world (Wolley, 2017). Although there is ongoing research and work ahead, the progress made thus far demonstrates a commitment to fostering well-rounded and socially conscious individuals through the education system.

1. 2 Research Problem

The research problem addressed in this study pertains to the insufficient exploration of the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in History by experienced History educators. Controversial aspects of Ghana's education system include the neglect of indigenous values in curriculum development and the sidelining of Ghanaian languages and literacies in the teaching and learning process (Crawford & Botchwey, 2020). In France, topics such as immigration and identity lead to disagreements that encompass integration, multiculturalism, and contradictions between preserving French culture and accepting diversity (Bourke & Skinner, 2022). Despite the challenges arising from multiple pedagogical approaches and potential biases (Wolley, 2017), a significant gap persists in understanding how experienced History teachers engage with apartheid as a controversial issue and its implications for learners' historical understanding. Existing research predominantly concentrates on pre-service teachers or the teaching of controversial issues within diverse classroom settings (Gusacov, 2022; Wassermann & Bentrovato, 2018), thereby creating a critical gap in understanding how seasoned History teachers successfully navigate the complexities associated with teaching apartheid while ensuring that essential information is not omitted. It is essential to note that different countries experience varying controversies that affect teaching and learning. This research aimed to investigate the strategies, challenges, and outcomes encountered by experienced History teachers when addressing apartheid as a controversial issue, with an emphasis on promoting unbiased perspectives and empowering learners to formulate their own opinions while preserving the integrity of the historical curriculum.

1. 3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is an existing theory that guides researchers in making relevant arguments in a study (Cropley, 2019). For this research, the researcher used Caring Pedagogy as the theoretical framework. Caring pedagogy is an approach that emphasises the importance of showing care towards human beings, rooted in the works

of Nel Noddings (1992; 1984). According to Tang and Walker-Gleaves (2022), Noddings believed in the ethics of care, where teachers care for their learners.

The principles of Caring Pedagogy include empathy, building positive relationships, emotional support, collaboration, agency, critical reflection, and positive discipline (Tang & Walker-Gleaves, 2022; Arriaza Westendorff, Mutch & Mutch, 2021). By incorporating these principles, teachers can create a safe space for learners to feel cared for and motivated to learn. This framework is relevant to the study because it assists the researcher in understanding the challenges teachers face when teaching apartheid as a controversial issue and how they can use the “ethics of care” to address such topics.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 Main research question

How are history teachers navigating the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in a Grade 11 history classroom?

1.4.2 Sub-questions

- a) How do history teachers understand the concept of controversial issues?
- b) What are the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in Grade 11 History classrooms?
- c) What strategies can be employed to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms?

1.5 Research aim and objectives

1.5.1 Research aim

This study explores how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms.

1.5.2 Objectives

- a) To explore history teachers’ understanding of the concept of controversial issues.

- b) To analyse the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in grade 11 History classrooms.
- c) To explore the strategies that can be used to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in grade 11 history classrooms.

1. 6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Approach

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. The research question framing the aim of this study investigates how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms. The qualitative research approach was relevant as it allowed participants to share their opinions from a subjective perspective (Cropley, 2019; Mohajan, 2018). This approach relies on words to analyse the collected data (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger, 2020); consequently, the researcher conducted the study by examining the perspectives of individuals' lived experiences.

1.6.2 Research paradigm

This study adopted the interpretivism paradigm, which assists researchers in identifying essential issues across various disciplines (Yong, Husin & Kamarudin, 2021). This paradigm was chosen because it views individuals as unique and prioritises understanding their interpretations of the world (Zarestky, 2023). Participants in this study were encouraged to share their experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

1.6.3 Research design

This study followed a phenomenological research design, rooted in the work of the German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Phenomenology focuses on meaning-making through the lived experiences of individuals as they engage with the world (Gill, 2020). This research design was relevant for the study because it allowed the researcher to investigate how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms.

1. 7 Sampling

Sampling entails the methodical selection of participants to be included in a study (Bhardwaj, 2019). This study employed purposive sampling to select knowledgeable and experienced participants teaching History in Grade 11. Purposive sampling is a nonprobability technique that allows researchers to carefully choose participants based on specific characteristics and qualities that would provide valuable information to address the research question (Etikan & Bala, 2017). The participants in this study were five teachers from five high schools who have taught History in Grade 11 for over five years.

These teachers specialised in History teaching at the university.

1. 8 Data collection

Data collection is the systematic gathering of information from participants to obtain insights and answer research questions about the phenomena under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study employed document analysis and semistructured interviews for information collection. Brooks and Normore (2015) define document analysis as a structured approach for examining and assessing various documents, including printed and electronic materials. The researcher reviewed different documents, including CAPS History Grades 10-12, History teaching materials (Learner's textbooks and Teacher's guides from New Generation and SpotOn), and research papers on History education in South Africa. These documents were evaluated to extract relevant information to support the participants' responses.

Rahman, R.B.A. (2023) defines an interview as a reciprocal conversation between an interviewer and the interviewee. The researcher utilised semi-structured interviews, allowing the interviewer to ask questions and follow up with probing inquiries to elicit detailed and insightful responses (Clark, Foster, Bryman & Sloan, 2021). The interviews were conducted in 2024, with the researcher carrying out in-person interviews. During these interactions, the sessions were recorded, and the researcher took field notes while receiving responses from the participants.

1. 9 Data analysis

Data analysis involves organising, deriving meaning from, and presenting information from the collected data (Jnanathapaswi, 2021). This study employed thematic analysis to examine the generated data, taking note of similar ideas in the responses. The researcher paid careful attention while reading the narrative texts drawn from the collected data. This data analysis method grouped the codes associated with each response, creating a network of associations among them. Thematic analysis was relevant to this study because it is designed to capture various perspectives from participants. According to Castleberry and Nolen (2018), thematic analysis aids researchers in understanding the details and sequence of how the raw data can be utilised.

1. 10 Value of proposed study

This study aimed to encourage the teaching and learning of controversial issues alongside critical thinking and communication skills. It will assist teachers in understanding the importance of controversial issues in History, helping learners become responsible citizens while training them to recognise that there is often more than one perspective on every phenomenon (DBE, 2011:9). Pre-service teachers majoring in History education will benefit from this study, as it will provide them with deeper insights into the significance of addressing apartheid as a controversial issue when teaching History in Grade 11.

1. 11 Ethical Consideration

Complying with ethical considerations was essential for this research study, as it adhered to ethical guidelines during data collection. The researcher applied for the Ethical Clearance Certificate from the GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC) of the University of the Free State (UFS-HSD2023/2286) and obtained approval prior to collecting data.

The researcher sought permission from the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and the principals to conduct the study in the selected schools. Participants were provided with a detailed description of the study and an explanation of the interview process. Additionally, if interested, participants received an informed consent form to indicate their participation by signing it (Arifin, 2018). To protect their identity and ensure their right to

anonymity, participants were allocated pseudonyms and were allowed to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable.

1. 12 Chapter layout

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 5: Findings, Discussions, Conclusion and Recommendations

2. Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study. This chapter comprises two sections: Firstly, the researcher discusses and explains the theory that informed the study, describing the theory's background, principles, purpose, and the criticisms that have been made against it. Secondly, it presents a review of the literature, focusing on the teaching and learning of controversial issues in history to demonstrate the current gap this study aims to fill.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theory is defined as a set of ideas that describes, explains, or predicts connections between or among phenomena (Kivunja, 2018). A theory clarifies the relationships among individuals. According to Larsen and Adu (2021), a theory comprises statements, principles, or ideas that contain concepts and the relationships between them, aiming to explain a particular phenomenon. Using a theoretical framework enhanced this study's understanding of teaching controversial issues by following principles and ideas of the chosen theoretical framework. Varpio, Paradis, Uijtdehaage, and Young (2020) describe a theoretical framework as a set of concepts and premises developed from one or more theories to structure a study. Alex and Wolhuter (2022:82) also indicate that "a theoretical framework is the meaningful, motivated choice of a theory, or set of theories, in which a specific research project is embedded."

Employing a theoretical framework enabled the researcher to interpret the meaning of the data, evaluate proposed solutions for addressing the research problem, and assess the researcher's recommendations for solving the problem and future research (Alex & Wolhuter, 2022). According to Kivunja (2018), it is essential to have a theoretical framework as it provides a scholarly foundation for making sense of the collected data. Furthermore, the theoretical framework guided the researcher within the research project, offering a structured data analysis approach and lending credibility to the research findings and recommendations. Larsen and Adu (2021) state that frameworks assist researchers in better understanding and conceptualising participants' experiences. A theoretical framework was vital in this study as it guided the researcher in interpreting the data collected. Additionally, it facilitated the development of an informed and specific

perspective for examining the data, conducting analysis, interpreting findings, discussing results, and making recommendations and conclusions for the study (Kivunja, 2018).

2.2.1 Caring Pedagogy as a Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the caring pedagogy theory. Caring pedagogy is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of caring, empathy, and compassion in teaching and learning. Care is a fundamental aspect of teaching because the teachers must provide knowledge to the learners while ensuring that their well-being, emotions and social needs are addressed. The theory is relevant to this study because teachers work with learners who need guidance and care from an older person, and the theory emphasizes the importance of teachers demonstrating care within education. This study utilises the Caring Pedagogy based on Nel Noddings' writings (Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education, 1984). In this book, Noddings developed her 'ethics of care' theory, which contends that empathy and caring form the foundation for goodness. Noddings' ethics of care have been influential in various fields, including education, philosophy, and feminist theory. She has argued that care should be the central principle in education and that teachers should focus on fostering caring relationships with their learners. Nel Noddings' writings concentrate on the ethics of care while addressing philosophical questions within education.

According to Christopher, de Tantillo, and Waston (2020), a caring pedagogy incorporates care using a learner-centered approach to develop healthy learning environments and genuine relationships. People are born with a "natural" capacity for caring, and an ethics of care guides both men and women. Natural caring occurs spontaneously and does not require individuals to find motivation to show care. To embody natural caring, a person must experience care, allowing them to develop a caring attitude towards others (Velasquez, West, Graham, & Osguthorpe, 2013).

2. 3 Principles of Caring Pedagogy

2.3.1 Ethics of care

According to Noddings' educational philosophy, learners and teachers should adopt an ethics of care in their classrooms. Understanding what caring means and entails for a

particular individual is essential. According to Noddings (2008), caring should be associated with sympathy, as it allows an individual to feel and pay attention when caring for another person. In different circumstances, a process of caring occurs where one person acts as the carer and the other as the cared-for (Noddings, 2012). Caring requires both the cared-for and the carer to have a connection that allows for reciprocity. Caring for and caring about hold different values. Caring-for refers to directly caring for a person, while caring-about refers to the general concern for things or people in public contexts or our societies.

To apply the ethics of care in teaching about apartheid as a controversial issue, teachers should approach the topic with sympathy, as it is filled with unpleasant events. Applying the ethics of care indicates that teachers acknowledge and pay attention to learners' responses to the new knowledge they gain from learning about apartheid. As the caredfor, learners should respond to the content presented by the teacher in a way that demonstrates an understanding of the topic's sensitivity.

2.3.2 Role Modelling as Care

According to Tang and Walker-Gleaves (2022), research shows that teachers need to demonstrate care in their lessons for better transformation and a positive impact on learners' learning and behaviour. Showing care enhances learners' engagement and increases resilience and inclusion, motivating them to learn and increase their academic achievement (Velasquez et al., 2013). Another form of care that teachers can employ in their classrooms is becoming role models. According to Grande, Berglund, and Daniels (2017), a role model is an individual who aims to become an example based on the attributes and behaviours of a person who looks up to them. Role modelling in caring pedagogy includes teachers demonstrating behaviours, values, and attitudes that promote care in the classroom (Noddings, 2002). When teachers respect their learners' learning styles and perceptions, they are more likely to reciprocate that respect towards the teacher during instruction and their peers when responding to questions.

Teachers incorporate classroom role modelling by being approachable while maintaining professionalism (Birdsall, 2018). Role modelling is not about telling learners how to behave and show care; it involves teachers portraying traits they would appreciate if their

learners copied the same traits and applied care in teaching and learning (Grande et al., 2017). Noddings (2010) argues that learners consciously and unconsciously choose their role models, making teachers a crucial influence. Furthermore, Noddings notes that "we do not 'care' to model caring; we model care by caring" (2010:147). Therefore, teachers are encouraged to become role models in caring for learners so they can learn to care.

Teachers should not show bias when teaching about apartheid as a controversial issue, as this allows learners to identify biases that may accompany the topic. When acting as role models in teaching about apartheid, teachers should present multiple perspectives on the issue. Learners are then encouraged to respond with various perceptions during discussions as they imitate the traits they observe in their teachers.

2.3.3 Reciprocity

According to Rio Poncela, Romero Gutierrez, Bermúdez, and Estellés (2021), for teachers and learners to demonstrate care, they need to reciprocate towards each other. The relationship between the carer and the cared-for is not equal; however, both individuals should contribute to maintaining the care within the relationship. According to Noddings (2008), the carer is attentive and receptive to understanding the needs of the cared-for. As a carer, the teacher should prioritise the needs expressed or presented by the learners rather than relying on the assumed needs of the school or curriculum (Noddings, 1988). While the cared-for may receive care, they should also indicate that they have received it by displaying positive energy, smiling, nodding, or asking questions about the discussion. Teachers must respect learners when they share their opinions in the classroom. In return, learners need to follow the instructions given by the teacher (Christopher et al., 2020).

Learners must show a response after receiving care, as the caring relationship would be incomplete without it. Noddings (2012) emphasises the need for teachers to listen to their learners. Reciprocity encourages collaboration between teachers and learners. Literature reveals that "care is relational rather than individual, meaning that care is reciprocal" (Moorhouse & Tiet, 2021:211). Within the classroom, teachers should express a desire to care, and learners should respond with understanding, recognising that they are being cared for and indicating that they need care (Rio Poncela et al., 2021). Noddings (1988) asserts that teachers and learners should demonstrate signs of reciprocity to establish a

mutual caring relationship. The caring teacher also encourages learners to participate in caring.

For reciprocity to be applied to the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue, teachers and learners should acknowledge that their relationship in the classroom should be reciprocal. To demonstrate reciprocity in teaching and learning, learners should ask questions when the teacher presents new information. Teachers should present the topic from different perspectives to allow learners to respond in kind. When learners ask questions about apartheid, they show their willingness to understand and acknowledge how an event can be interpreted.

2. 4 Purpose of Caring Pedagogy

2.4.1 Encouraging transformative education and understanding learners' backgrounds

Education plays a crucial role in cultivating care in our societies. Noddings (2010) defined education as a constellation of encounters that encourages growth by acquiring knowledge, skills, understanding, and appreciation of both planned and unplanned experiences. Care ethics is about understanding the morals taught by philosophy. It is a recognised approach that places relationships on an ontological basis (Noddings, 2012).

When learners share ideas, they come to understand concepts from multiple perspectives.

Caring should always reflect the roles played by the carer (teacher) and the cared-for (learner). Teachers should not only claim that they care for their learners; learners should be able to confirm that the teacher cares based on how they are treated in the classroom and school environment (Heath, O'Malley, & Tynan, 2019). Research emphasises that the home is the first environment where a child receives education through the information that parents or guardians provide (Heath et al., 2019).

Care theory focuses on the home situation of a learner and understanding what it means to be cared for, to care for, and to care about those who are not directly connected to us. To demonstrate care in a classroom environment, a teacher should understand the learners' backgrounds or home situations and explain why they are cared for. Research

emphasises that the home is the first environment where a child receives education through the information that parents or guardians provide (Heath et al., 2019).

The home situation of a learner significantly contributes to the development and performance of the child's education, which comprises four key components: modelling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation, all of which shape care ethics (Noddings, 2012). Modelling: For learners to recognise care, the teacher must allow them to see that the teacher cares as their role model. Regarding dialogue, discussing care assists in informing learners about the various ways people can show care. The care-for may grow in our societies when they understand why they are cared for. Practice: As a teacher, if you want learners to show care, you must demonstrate that you care for them and the little things they may need. Lastly, the confirmation component means that learners prefer words of affirmation that encourage them and validate that they are progressing in the right direction (Noddings, 2012).

Caring pedagogy, as a means of encouraging transformative education, is essential when teaching about apartheid, as it is a controversial issue that allows teachers to present the topic to learners without inciting further controversy. However, teachers should encourage multiple opinions, leading to transformative education. As learners, they develop skills such as critical and historical thinking. When teaching about apartheid as a controversial issue, paying attention to and understanding learners' background knowledge is essential to show care where sensitivity is required. The learners would also understand the importance of past events' roles in shaping their societies.

2.4.2 Encouraging positive relationships

When teachers care, they must attend to the needs and wants of those they care for, remembering that they do not need to approve of everything the learner desires while ensuring they lead learners towards better values (Noddings, 2012). Teachers should consider their feelings and desires and respond positively to their learners. Teachers should become attentive as carers and enable learners to feel cared for when care is demonstrated (Noddings, 1988). Teachers must engage in relational care to inspire learners to respond with smiles, wriggles, verbal gratitude, or by confidently following the teacher's guidance.

Moorhouse and Tiet (2021) argue that teachers must establish relationships with and among learners, with care as the core element for these relationships to be positive. Teachers can create positive relationships by providing feedback that encourages learners to improve and allows for further development. For instance, if a learner provides an answer that does not fully address the question, the teacher can offer positive comments, guiding the learner on how to respond more effectively.

It is crucial to note that teaching about apartheid is a controversial issue that requires teachers and learners to maintain a relationship free of conflict; however, that relationship should allow for improvement. A caring pedagogy fosters positive relationships; teachers should establish such connections with care as the primary element. If learners present inaccurate information about apartheid, the teacher should guide them in the right direction by providing constructive feedback.

2.4.3 Encouraging self-care

Caring involves showing concern and engaging in relational practices that foster mutual recognition, development, and growth (Moen, Westlie, Gerdin, Smith, Linner, Philpot, Schenker, & Larsson, 2020). Self-care is crucial for teachers because when they care for themselves, they are better able to show care towards their learners (Tang & WalkerGleaves, 2022). Research indicates that when teachers prioritise their well-being and address the challenges they face in the classroom, they become more resilient and better equipped to manage their classrooms effectively (Noddings, 2002; Christopher et al., 2020).

Teachers should also encourage learners to care for themselves, their peers, and their schoolwork, which in turn helps them care for the people in their society and country. It is essential to note that listening plays a crucial role in Caring Pedagogy, as it allows learners to express their ideas, and the teacher must actively listen. Allowing learners to think out loud in a history classroom enables them to articulate their perspectives.

Research has shown that teaching apartheid comes with sensitivity and the rise of emotional connections such as guilt and anger among learners (Maluleka, 2023). Caring pedagogy in a history classroom can encourage self-care for teachers and learners.

Teachers can ensure that by using care, their learners' emotions do not affect how they present their lessons about apartheid; in this way, they would be caring for their mental well-being. The teachers can remind the learners about the connections between history and their wellness; they can discuss the impacts of apartheid in the classroom and remind learners not to take everything they learn about using emotions.

2. 5 Relevance of Caring Pedagogy to the study

The caring pedagogy is relevant to this study because of the nature of the topic. Apartheid causes significant controversy among individuals (in this study, teachers and learners), and this topic requires people who approach it with care to maintain a positive learning environment. Care is essential for both teachers and learners as it enables them to uphold respect for each person's perspective. Teachers must be cautious when addressing this topic, as learners may experience a range of emotions in the classroom. Furthermore, when teachers demonstrate care for learners' emotions, they can more effectively engage in classroom discussions (Rio Poncela et al., 2021). This theory is pertinent because the researcher needed to approach the teachers with sensitivity. When conducting the interviews, the researcher had to show care for the responses provided by the participants.

2. 6 Criticism of Caring Pedagogy

According to Hassan (2008), the ethic of care as a theory is formulated with a feminist approach, as it encourages caring, which is the most common trait among women. Conversely, Noddings (2012) stipulates that the ethic of care is not associated with gender; however, the ability to care comes naturally to individuals. Tang and WalkerGleaves (2022) argue that certain areas cannot utilise the ethics of care due to the complexities that may arise from particular topics, whereas Noddings (1988) states that classrooms should discuss the moral problems that form part of the daily lives of learners to demonstrate care. Research indicates that the caring pedagogy focuses more on emotion and the individual without incorporating reasoning and the role of society and social structures in an individual (Hassan, 2008; Velasquez et al., 2013; Heath et al., 2019).

2. 7 Literature Review

2.7.1 Teaching controversial issues in History

This research study explores the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms. Much has been written about controversial issues; however, limited research has investigated teachers' views on the teaching and learning of apartheid within a history classroom. Despite the lack of adequate research regarding apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms, studies indicate that teaching controversial issues is fundamental to enhancing learners' skills, habits, and understanding (Pace, 2021a).

According to Pace (2019), the United States' approach to teaching controversial issues is not always inclusive, as the freedom of speech can sometimes prioritise specific opinions over others, leading to further opposition and division within society. Research reveals that teaching controversial issues can be challenging in international contexts, and individuals need to understand the historical context of an issue (Wassermann & Bentrovato, 2018).

It is essential to approach apartheid as a controversial issue with sensitivity and respect, as it is likely to evoke strong emotions and opinions from learners. Introducing the topic in a balanced and objective manner is crucial, providing learners with various perspectives. Despite the challenges, it is vital to engage learners in meaningful and critical discussions about the legacy of apartheid and its impact on South Africa (Greenstein, 2019; Dubow, 2017).

2.7.2 School History

Chimbi and Jita (2023) indicate that history is defined differently by individuals; some view it as a continuous dialogue about the past, present, and future, while others see it as a means of renewing painful memories from events that occurred long ago but still affect their present. According to the CAPS (2011) document, history is the study of change and development that occurs in different societies over a certain period. Additionally, Khoza and Dube (2020) define history as a subject that assists learners in understanding the past and its influence on present and future occurrences.

School history can be understood differently across various countries, with curricula designed to benefit each nation. In Sweden and Canada, school history focuses on teaching historical knowledge, where learners interpret past events through subjective meaning-making (Åström Elmersjö & Zanazanian, 2022). Additionally, the aim of teaching history in Sweden is to help learners develop a deeper understanding of historical events and their significance to the country; the goal of the subject is to cultivate research, critical thinking, and communication skills (Flensner, 2020a).

In Finland, school history refers to the traditional subculture used to teach the subject, emphasising content-oriented history teaching and learning (Tallavaara & Rautiainen, 2020). The Finnish history curriculum focuses on the nature of history as a discipline, presenting the teaching and learning of past events (Rautiainen, Räikkönen, Veijola, & Mikkonen, 2019). Furthermore, scholars have pointed out that the curriculum prioritises the basic construction of knowledge in history, using critical thinking to assess the validity and reliability of information and encouraging teachers and learners to explain events from multiple perspectives (Rautiainen et al., 2019).

School history in Ghana focuses on equipping learners with knowledge and skills that enable them to develop a historical understanding of past events by exploring evidence, crafting narratives, and interpreting the past (Boadu, Donnelly, and Sharp, 2020). In Tanzania, the history syllabus encourages teachers to develop learners' reasoning skills, involving critical and analytical thinking while understanding human evolution, social organisation, culture, and society to make sense of relativity (Namamba & Rao, 2017).

Research indicates that history teaching in Zimbabwe is a process of inquiry in which teachers and learners ask questions about the past and critically retell people's stories (Sibanda & Blignaut, 2020). Moreover, in the aftermath of British colonial rule, the Zimbabwean school curriculum has been an ongoing project to deconstruct the cultural and epistemological Eurocentrism found within it (Sibanda & Blignaut, 2020).

In South Africa, history is a subject that learners are encouraged to study because it helps them understand both the past and the present of the country (Dube, 2022). Research indicates that school history in South Africa encompasses more than learning about past

events; the curriculum aims to develop learners with historical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and multiperspectivity (Ndlovu, Malinga, & Bailey, 2019; Dube, 2022; Bertram, 2020). Unfortunately, South Africa's school history is filled with debates that cause disagreements regarding issues of race and ethnicity. It is evident from Wasserman's study that learners noted that historical figures in South African history are often viewed through the lens of race and ethnicity (2018). School history primarily aims to encourage learners to develop essential historical and critical skills that enable them to become better citizens of their countries.

2.7.3 Developments in teaching and learning History

According to Wassermann and Bentreovato (2018), there is a difference between the history curriculum under colonial rule and that of the post-apartheid era. Research indicates that the teaching and learning of history aim to achieve three objectives: firstly, ensuring that teachers and learners acquire historical skills to engage with the past; secondly, history is taught in schools to enable individuals to "develop a common national identity" and bring together diverse groups (Maluleka, 2023:34). Lastly, learners need to be taught social cohesion in a multicultural society (Pace, 2021b; Maluleka, 2023; Wassermann & Bentreovato, 2018). Developments in the teaching and learning of history create opportunities for controversial topics, such as apartheid, to be addressed in classrooms, as it is essential that these subjects are taught in an environment that encourages learners to develop historical skills to understand past events.

Historical consciousness can be employed to teach apartheid in Grade 11, as it refers to the interpretation of the past through an understanding of the present, how the past influences it, and how the past will shape the future (Maluleka, 2023). According to Wassermann and Bentreovato (2018), the British Historical Association asserts that the teaching and learning of history can be passionate and controversial when there is perceived injustice in the past. History classrooms and the curriculum encompass uncomfortable issues that must be addressed by both inexperienced and experienced teachers alongside their learners. When teaching history, controversial issues cannot be avoided. As a student-teacher, I had the opportunity to teach history in Grade 11, delving into sensitive and controversial topics. I was determined to create a classroom

environment that cared for the learners and encouraged critical thinking, allowing them to share their perceptions openly.

According to Bertram (2020), the purpose of teaching and learning history is to understand what happened, when, and why (referred to as substantive knowledge or firstorder knowledge) while developing thinking skills (second-order knowledge), such as the ability to analyse historical information. Langa, Wassermann, and Maposa (2021) indicate that history plays a crucial role in shaping the identity of a society, which is why school history is often used to promote government ideologies and influence identity formation. However, Khoza and Dube (2022) observe that history has become a subject deemed unimportant by learners compared to other subjects. This perception arises from the lack of effective content delivery, leading learners to believe that the purpose of studying history is merely to remember dates of events. Consequently, history education focuses more on developing learners' essential historical skills rather than encouraging them to memorise facts or simply absorb extensive historical knowledge (Thorp & Persson, 2020).

As the aims of teaching history have been outlined above, it is crucial to note that addressing controversial topics, such as apartheid, requires both teachers and learners to develop historical skills, as such topics necessitate critical thinking and reasoning that considers other people's perspectives.

2.7.4 Challenges in teaching and learning

2.7.4.1. Content Knowledge

According to Ndlovu et al. (2019), teachers seem to lack basic content knowledge, particularly in higher grades. Tuithof, Logtenberg, Bronkhorst, Van Drie, Dorsman, and Van Tartwijk (2019) define content knowledge as encompassing first-order knowledge (historical events), second-order knowledge (the significance, causes, and changes of events), and strategic knowledge (how history should be learned). Content knowledge refers to teachers' understanding of historical knowledge as a subject (Tallavaara & Rautiainen, 2020). Teachers who lack experience in the content knowledge of history do not provide learners with the opportunity to learn in a manner that fosters historical thinking skills (Harford & Fleming, 2023).

Studies have revealed that some teachers (non-specialists) are assigned to teach subjects for which they do not possess the appropriate qualifications and training, creating challenges in the teaching and learning of history (Ndlovu et al., 2019; Harford & Fleming, 2023). Non-specialist teachers encounter difficulties in delivering content knowledge that aligns with the curriculum, rendering their teaching less effective (Tallavaara & Rautiainen, 2019). Research indicates that teachers who lack content knowledge pose a risk when tasked with teaching controversial topics, such as apartheid; they may struggle to deliver content effectively and engage with learners in a manner that does not exacerbate controversy (Tuithof et al., 2019). Furthermore, some history teachers need to learn how to facilitate discussions, as they require the skills to engage with learners effectively (Ndlovu et al., 2019).

2.7.4.2. Pedagogical Knowledge

Presenting history lessons is a challenge for some teachers due to a lack of pedagogical knowledge. Research indicates that pedagogical knowledge refers to teachers' ability to deliver the content of a subject using effective teaching methods and strategies (Flensner, 2020b). Kello (2015) emphasises the importance of how teachers address controversial issues, as this affects learners' perceptions of how to react and interact with the content. Studies have shown that when it comes to teaching and learning controversial issues, teachers often avoid addressing these topics with learners because they lack proper training in presenting the content (Sibanda & Blignaut, 2020). Teaching history involves the complexity of historical events and issues, which may cause learners to experience tension when national and global issues are discussed (Flensner, 2020a).

Despite the complexities of history, research has shown that teachers may lack dialogue and discussion when addressing controversial issues (Hermann, 2008). The aim of teaching history is to equip learners with critical and historical thinking skills; however, many teachers struggle to implement strategies that encourage the analysis and evaluation of sources in a historical context to promote critical thinking (Tuithof et al., 2019). Voet and Wever (2017) argue that some history teachers do not possess strong pedagogical knowledge when teaching history, as they fail to use approaches that enable learners to develop historical skills. Tuithof et al.'s (2019) study recommends that teachers

acquire pedagogical knowledge to support their content knowledge when teaching history in secondary schools, as this will allow learners to engage fully with the curriculum.

2.7.4.3. Resources

When teaching and learning history in developing schools, learners face challenges related to resources and shared history textbooks (Mqadi, 2020). Fauzi (2023) noted that schools lack access to teaching resources that enhance the teaching and learning of history. Most schools use textbooks as the primary resource to provide information to learners, as teachers believe these materials assist in understanding historical content (Girard, Harris, Mayger, Kessner, & Reid, 2021). In contrast, Bertram (2020) argues that some history textbooks are filled with bias and may present history from a single perspective. Mqadi (2020) contends that a textbook alone cannot fully assist learners in independent understanding and cannot improve their performance if they are not exposed to multiple perspectives.

The current era requires teachers to incorporate technology into the classroom; however, some schools still struggle to access technological resources such as projectors, computers, laptops, or tablets to enhance learners' skills in the digital world (Oyewale & Oluropo Familugba, 2021). Loewen (2013) argued that textbooks should not be the only resource teachers rely on for teaching and learning history. Fauzi (2023) asserts that teachers' lack of competence in using technology hinders learners from being introduced to technological devices that enhance teaching and learning.

2.7.4.4. Contextual Challenges

Teachers face contextual challenges in the classrooms that make it difficult to deliver content effectively. The teachers encounter the challenge of language, as most learners in South Africa are African-language speakers, and learning history in English is a challenge for them as they understand better when they learn in their own language (Chimbude, Lekhethe, & Moreeng, 2024). Research indicates that learners do not engage in classroom discussions because of their difficulty with English (Adamson, 2024).

Teachers opt for code-switching in their lessons when learners do not fully understand the content presented in English, as it makes the learning process easier and more

understandable for them (Mqadi, 2020). Teachers code-switch using the learners' home language as they communicate with their peers in the classrooms.

Secondly, teachers are challenged by learners who lack background knowledge. Research has indicated that learners lacking background knowledge are likely to bring biases or misinformation into the classroom (Ponono, 2020). Learners acquire their background knowledge from their parents and community members when they learn about apartheid, and the information they receive can lead to controversy in the classroom when it is being discussed (Khoza & Dube, 2022). Notably, learners in this current generation do not understand the importance of learning history because they struggle to see its relevance in their lives, which contributes to their lack of prior knowledge (Ndlovu et al., 2019). Furthermore, when learners learn about apartheid, it becomes hard to make the connection between the event and present society because of the generational gap between the event and today.

Lastly, emotional connections may develop once the teacher delves into the teaching of apartheid, resulting in learners showing anger and guilt (Åström Elmersjö & Zanzanian, 2022). These connections disturb the teaching and learning process because the teacher must address these emotions to ensure learners are comfortable in the learning environment. Ndlovu et al. (2019) argue that the challenges faced in teaching and learning history must be overcome for the learning environments to be conducive, allowing learners to develop better historical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and empathy within their societies.

2. 8 Controversial Issues.

2.8.1 Conceptualisation of Controversial Issues

Research drawn from different disciplines indicates that controversial issues are those issues that cannot rely only on facts, as different opinions impact the rise of conflict or division that comes with controversial issues (Pace, 2021a). Controversial issues refer to topics that evoke strong emotions and tension. Discussing controversial issues may create tension and result in intense emotions due to differing perceptions (Alvén, 2024; Jerome & Elwick, 2020). Research defines controversial issues as topics or problems that

divide societies due to the differing views and solutions to issues that involve their values (Pace, 2019).

Research has shown that identifying a controversial issue is itself controversial, as different people may view different issues through varying perceptions, much like countries do (Jerome & Elwick, 2020; Hermann, 2008). Geographical context must be considered when dealing with controversial issues because what might be controversial in South Africa may not be controversial in Zimbabwe, America, China or Israel. In American schools, learners with an African American background in a history classroom are not interested in history because they do not relate to American history; however, only a few historical events relate to them (Tang & Walker-Gleaves, 2022).

Flensner (2020a) argues that controversial issues should be addressed to allow learners to become democratic citizens by learning about controversial issues in the history classroom. In addition, Alvéen (2024) stipulates that in historical education, controversies are rooted in topics of national, social, ethnic, and gender identities. Moreover, Ai-Adeimi and Baumann's (2024) study indicates the importance of learning about controversy in history classrooms because it enables learners to avoid being comfortable in their education and use multi-perspectivity to understand history. Learning about controversial issues enables learners to see their understanding of the past while recognising different ways of understanding history (Ai-Adeimi & Baumann, 2024).

2.8.2 Purpose of teaching controversial issues in history.

According to Wassermann (2011), learners are first introduced to the term "apartheid" in grade 6 when discussing democracy in South Africa. By grade 9, they gain a deeper understanding of the policy. In grade 11, students need to comprehend how unique apartheid was to both South Africa and the world. Finally, in grade 12, learners study the various protests and resistance to apartheid.

2.8.2.1. Developing critical thinking and debate skills

Teaching and learning controversial issues in history classrooms aim to promote the development of critical thinking skills (Flensner, 2020a). The CAPS document indicates that one of the skills history should promote is critical thinking, as it enables learners to critically assess the information they receive. Engaging learners in discussions of

apartheid as a controversial issue positions them to become agents of change by enhancing their critical thinking and historical skills (Misco, 2011). Learners can develop these skills by analysing, evaluating, and interpreting historical sources to gain insight into events like apartheid.

Barton and McCully (2007) argue that teaching controversial issues also promotes engagement in respectful discussion, fostering debate skills that learners can use both in the classroom and in life. Learners who engage in debates and discussions enhance the skills outlined in the CAPS document, which states that history should allow learners to participate in constructive and focused debate as they carefully evaluate historical evidence (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011).

2.8.2.2. Historical perspectives

History is about knowing that there are two sides to every story, and developing historical thinking skills is crucial to fostering historical consciousness. Learning about apartheid helps learners examine the event from differing perspectives and to avoid being led by emotions (Jay & Reisman, 2019). Learners are taught to engage with the information they receive as historians, avoiding bias and misinformation (Keulen, 2023). Analysing apartheid through historical perspectives enables learners to understand how the past circumstances of the event affected and shaped the present (Jay & Reisman, 2019). It is evident from Marcus and Stoddard's study (2009) that using resources such as films aids in exploring multiple perspectives, which is a valuable approach to teaching controversial issues to learners. The CAPS document encourages us to examine events through the lens of cause and effect, which enables learners to grasp the causes and outcomes of apartheid policies by considering both the immediate impacts at the time of implementation and their long-term effects over time (DBE, 2011).

2.8.2.3. Encourages empathy and understanding

The learners may not have experienced the apartheid system; however, its legacy serves as a reminder of how South Africa was governed during that era, affecting their families and community members (Wassermann, 2018). Learning about apartheid as a controversial issue helps learners develop empathy for how Black or African people were treated during that time (Iglesias, Aceituno & Toledo, 2017). Teaching controversial issues

provides learners with a deeper understanding of societal matters with multiple interpretations, which can strengthen their citizenship in a democratic country (Iglesias et al., 2017).

2.8.2.4. Open-mindedness and multi-perspectivity

Tribukait (2021) revealed that the purpose of teaching controversial issues is to open learners' minds so they can acknowledge different perspectives and support their points of view. The CAPS document encourages teachers to approach controversial topics with open-mindedness, fostering learners' ability to view historical content from various angles (DBE, 2011). Employing multi-perspectivity enables learners to understand that there are multiple ways to interpret an event. Apartheid, as a controversial issue, should not be viewed solely as an event that was harsh to black or African people; it should also be understood as an event that affected other racial groups opposed to the system (Bentrovato & Wassermann, 2018).

2.8.2.5. Promotes citizenship.

According to Khoza and Dube (2022), learning about controversial issues in history assists learners in understanding their identities through their country's beliefs, values, and customs, creating awareness of their origins and common inheritances. Teachers must address controversial issues with their learners because they prepare them to become active citizens who understand the importance of dealing with issues affecting their communities, where people have different perceptions of issues (Pace, 2019; Alongi, Heddy, & Sinatra, 2016). Misco (2010) states that teaching apartheid as a controversial issue can prepare learners to become citizens who can make informed judgments where there are discussions that involve issues that bring controversy.

2.8.3 Challenges experienced when teaching controversial issues.

According to Maluleka (2023), the curriculum embedded in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011) includes sensitive and controversial topics. It needs to provide teachers and learners with approaches that can be used to discuss these contentious issues. Research indicates that the lack of appropriate pedagogical frameworks results in unfair or dishonest teaching of history, as it contains controversial topics (Pace, 2021a).

Learning about controversial issues is inherent to history as a subject, and it cannot be avoided since history requires different interpretations and perspectives (Wassermann, 2011). Maluleka (2023) argues that the CAPS curriculum introduced in 2011 must equip teachers and learners with historical skills to engage with sensitive and controversial topics in history. The CAPS document states that history is a rigorous process of enquiry that prepares learners to acquire eight skills. However, these skills do not specify how to apply them when dealing with a controversial topic like apartheid.

Schools reflect the societies teachers need to serve, which may influence how history classrooms and curricula are constructed to address sensitive and controversial topics (Pace, 2021b). In a multiracial school, when apartheid is taught, white learners may feel guilt for what was done by their race. In contrast, black or African learners may experience anger about the "past and present racism that is historical" (Maluleka, 2023:36). Learners do not experience knowledge about the past solely from the history classroom; rather, they encounter it through their homes, social media, and communities that play a role in teaching about the past (Flensner, 2020a). The information these learners bring to the classroom generates multiple perspectives; however, teachers often dismiss learners' attempts to construct their understanding of controversial issues.

Research indicates that the life histories and experiences of community members and learners' families are part of the narrative of apartheid, impacting the teaching and learning of this topic (Wassermann, 2011). Some individuals use race cards today to demonstrate that they have not moved on from the past. The findings of Wassermann's study in 2011 revealed that, in the context of school history, apartheid was identified as the most prominent topic of controversy. Research indicates that when teaching apartheid as a controversial issue in grade 11, it is crucial to consider the type of learners you are dealing with and to avoid taking two sides, allowing for a civilised critique of the topic (Pace, 2019).

Research indicates that sidestepping the teaching of a controversial topic like apartheid leads to teachers instructing learners not to consider the implications of histories of legislated racism in the present day, in order to avoid conflict in a history classroom. Wassermann and Benvato (2018) argue that history teachers must receive more

training to teach controversial topics, which may lead them to present history neutrally or uncritically. According to Pace (2019), both teachers and learners must respect and listen to individuals' perceptions and allow for reflection on their interpretations. To maintain effective learning, teachers must incorporate tolerance and respect when dealing with controversial topics like apartheid (Greenstein, 2019). Research indicates that teaching controversial issues is essential as they are relevant to learners' lives and address "social, political, economic, and moral problems" (Wassermann, 2011:134).

2. 9 Apartheid as a controversial issue.

2.9.1 Traumatic Legacy of Apartheid

World War I and II laid the groundwork for the implementation of apartheid in South Africa due to the racial segregation taking place during this time (Simpson, 2021). Research indicates that apartheid began after the National Party's victory in the 1948 election, which led to a system of racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa that lasted until 1994 (Dubow, 2017). The National Party adhered to the ideology of apartheid, focusing on maintaining white minority rule and enforcing strict racial separation (Dubow, 1989). In Afrikaans, apartheid means "apartness," as people of different races in South Africa were forced to live in a segregated society (Mogadime, 2019).

The legacy of apartheid remains a contentious issue in South African society and the education system, as learners are required to study the topic to ensure that the past is not forgotten and to encourage discussions about human rights and social justice (Christian & Stamat, 2024). Mogadime (2021) argues that the realities of life under the apartheid regime are still present when teaching and learning about the system, evoking unsettling feelings due to the lack of fairness and the oppression experienced. Teaching this topic requires educators to navigate the events carefully to avoid perpetuating biases (Wassermann & Bentrovato, 2018). The topic of apartheid in the Grade 11 history curriculum is controversial because learners must study the foundations of the system, which includes the racism and segregation directed at non-whites during the 1920s and 1930s (Frank, Sikhakhane, Subramony, Stephenson, Mbansini, & Pillay, 2015a).

Research indicates that the legacy of apartheid continues to affect the people of South Africa today, as ongoing discussions highlight issues of inequality and social justice (Tewolde, 2024).

2.9.2 Social and Economic Impact

According to Dubow (2017), apartheid was a combination of ideas and policies aimed at establishing and legitimising white domination in South Africa, with the policies of segregation intended to suppress and control the black population. When apartheid was implemented, the country was divided into four racial groups: white, black, coloured, and Indian. The white minority held political power and controlled the country's economy, while the black majority was constrained and oppressed (Wassermann & Bentrovato, 2018). Apartheid policies limited black and coloured people in both the education and employment sectors based on laws passed to segregate them from whites (Tewolde, 2024).

Gallo (2020) argues that the South African education system and society are still affected by the legacy of apartheid, as there are ongoing inequalities that the people of the country continue to experience. He further noted that the legacy of apartheid disproportionately impacts most black people regarding socioeconomic factors such as living conditions, educational inequalities, economic imbalances, health disparities, and unemployment (Gallo, 2020).

2.9.3 Historical trauma

The apartheid regime inflicted many traumas on individuals who were black/African and coloured, leaving them with profound scars (Adonis, 2016). Segregation in South Africa was not new when apartheid was introduced; the Union of South Africa had already passed laws aimed at regulating class and race relations (Frank et al., 2015a). It is evident that black people, along with three prominent organisations—the ANC (African National Congress), the ICU (Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union), and the CPSA (Communist Party of South Africa)—began resisting segregation policies as early as the 1900s (Frank et al., 2015a). Apartheid in South Africa was primarily based on racial segregation and discrimination, resulting in profound societal differences that still exist

today. The ongoing effects of these divisions continue to fuel debates over race relations and affirmative action, leading to varied perspectives among people (Tibbitts & Weldon, 2017).

2.9.4 Racial identity

Apartheid policies included the forced removal of black people from urban areas, restrictions on where people could live and work, and the denial of fundamental rights to the black majority (Frank et al., 2015a). The policies implemented by the apartheid government continue to affect learners in schools, as some may question the reasons behind their geographical locations when they learn about laws such as the Native Land Act of 1913, the Urban Areas Act of 1923, the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1937, and the Bantustans (Homelands) policy, which were central to apartheid legislation (Frank et al., 2015a). Teaching history becomes controversial due to the responses or triggers that learners may encounter based on their geographical area and racial groups (Maluleka, 2023).

During the apartheid era, the government regulated the division of people in order to protect their identity and uniqueness, maintaining unity by segregating individuals according to their racial groups (Christian & Stambach, 2024). Teaching apartheid as a controversial issue evokes strong emotions in learners because of the connections they experience when learning about the topic from their parents (McKeever, 2017).

2.9.5 Differing perspectives on accountability

Teachers and learners may interpret history from different perspectives, as encouraged by the South African curriculum (CAPS); however, the South African community still has differing views on the accountability for apartheid (Brankovic, 2013). Research has shown that the effects of post-apartheid continue to elicit varied perceptions about apartheid, making it a controversial issue (Tibbitts & Weldon, 2017; Wassermann & Bentrovato, 2018; Tewolde, 2024). It is evident that black South Africans, when learning about apartheid in the present context, view it as a symbol of oppression, segregation, suffering, and a struggle for black liberation (Tewolde, 2024). Conversely, some Afrikaners do not see anything wrong with the enforcement of the apartheid system, as they believe it aimed

to build Afrikaner cultural heritage and national identity (Mogadime, 2019). The signs and monuments associated with the apartheid system evoke painful and sensitive memories for black South Africans, while they may create pride rather than shame for Afrikaners (Teeger, 2015).

Researchers have noted that the legacy of apartheid continues to shape the South African community, which includes educational inequalities; some schools remain underdeveloped and face challenges such as lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, and low pass rates (Tibbitts & Weldon, 2017). This situation may lead to controversy, as some community members may call for the government to take accountability for the country's inequalities (Tewolde, 2024). According to Flensner (2020a), an issue that causes people to hold differing views is regarded as a controversial issue; thus, apartheid remains controversial because people continue to engage in debates about accountability for its consequences today.

2.9.6 Apartheid as a symbol of racism

Apartheid remains a symbol of racism throughout the world, making it a controversial issue due to ongoing debates about the system (Mogadime, 2021). When resistance to apartheid began, the international community became aware of the inhumane treatment of Black people in South Africa (Adonis, 2016). Apartheid has become known globally as a racial ideology where a dominant group rules over the majority, leading others to apply the term in contexts unrelated to South Africa due to the ill-treatment of individuals (Tibbitts & Weldon, 2017). Furthermore, the international community condemned apartheid as a violation of human rights, contributing to the topic's controversy (Frank et al., 2015a).

The traumas of apartheid serve as a reminder of the long-lasting effects of racism in South African communities (Christian & Stach, 2024). The topic remains controversial because the debates surrounding it highlight the role of the system in enforcing racism in the country and violating the rights of Black people, who continue to suffer from the system's effects and the increased rates of crime that infringe upon their human rights (Bentrovato & Wassermann, 2018).

2. 10 Possible strategies for teaching apartheid.

2.10.1 Create a safe and supportive environment

Teaching controversial issues requires teachers to develop strategies that encourage open and respectful discussions among learners, fostering understanding and empathy towards these topics (Pace, 2019). Gusacov (2022) states that teachers must create a safe and supportive classroom environment where learners feel comfortable voicing their opinions without fear of judgement. Teachers have many roles, and when it comes to teaching and learning about apartheid, they need to cultivate a safe, trustworthy, and positive atmosphere that allows for multiple ideas and perspectives within the classroom (Keynes, 2019; Cassar, Oosterheert, & Meijer, 2021). Barton and McCully (2007) argue that teachers should engage learners in discussions about controversial issues, be prepared to address learners' emotional responses, and acknowledge these emotions to prevent barriers to open dialogue about differing opinions in the learning environment.

2.10.2 Critical thinking

Critical thinking is essential to teach learners when teaching controversial issues because it allows them to express their views by stating their opinions, questioning things critically, and learning to support their reasoning. Alongi et al. (2016) argue that critical thinking should be incorporated into learners' education by allowing them to express their conceptions and misconceptions about a controversial issue, as this enables them to relate the content to their views of the world. Using critical thinking assists learners in engaging in discussions that involve criticism, allowing them to examine these criticisms with the aim of considering an issue from multiple perspectives. Studying apartheid can help learners develop critical thinking skills, as it requires examination from different points of view (Flensner & Von der Lippe, 2019).

2.10.3 Multi-perspectivity in Discussing Controversial Issues

Teaching learners to incorporate diverse perspectives when discussing controversial issues allows them to develop critical thinking skills and form their own informed opinions (Pace, 2021b). Not all learners will oppose the apartheid policy, and they should be allowed in the classroom to argue why they see merit in the policy. According to Pace

(2019), teachers and learners must respect and listen to individuals' perceptions and allow them to reflect on their interpretations. To maintain effective learning, teachers must incorporate tolerance and respect when addressing controversial topics like apartheid (Greenstein, 2019). Research indicates that teaching controversial issues is essential, as they are relevant to learners' lives and address "social, political, economic, and moral problems" (Wassermann, 2011:134). Teachers have many roles, and when it comes to teaching about apartheid, they create a safe, trustworthy, and positive environment that accommodates multiple ideas and perceptions in the classroom (Keynes, 2019; Cassar, Oosterheert, & Meijer, 2021). In addition, Pace (2019) further states that learners can be taught to participate actively and respectfully by working in pairs or engaging in group discussions where every member contributes to the conversation.

2.10.4 Reduce controversy

According to Flensner (2020a), teaching controversial issues in history education should be approached in a way that does not exacerbate controversy. Methods such as discussion, personal narratives, and role play can serve as positive strategies to address these topics. Tribukait (2021) and Pace (2022) recommend employing approaches that address learners' preconceptions with empathy to enhance their understanding of controversial issues. History education should encourage both teachers and learners to view themselves as social, inclusive, transformative, creative, respectful individuals with strong critical and historical thinking skills (Handang, 2022). Wojdon (2014) argues that controversial issues should be presented objectively, focusing on interpreting the facts that have been substantiated regarding the topic.

2.10.5 Learning material and resources

Another strategy teachers can use to teach controversial issues is to provide learners with diverse resources and learning materials that present multiple views on a topic, allowing them to develop their own perspectives (Gusacov, 2022). Wojdon (2014) argues that using varied resources when teaching controversial topics is crucial because interpretations of events can differ. Additionally, as history encompasses many sources, including primary and secondary sources, learners need to analyse and evaluate these sources independently to develop the skill of historical consciousness (Thotse, 2021).

Hung (2018) indicates that employing various resources, such as textbooks and literature, enables learners to view events from different angles. The South African curriculum, as outlined in the CAPS policy, encourages teachers to utilise a range of learning resources, including printed texts, video or film, photographs, drawings, paintings or cartoons, and oral resources (DBE, 2011). These strategies can help create an inclusive learning environment where learners feel valued, respected, and empowered to engage in thoughtful discussions about controversial issues (Marcus & Stoddard, 2009).

2. 11 Chapter Summary

This chapter examined the theoretical framework that guided this study and provided a review of the literature on the teaching of controversial issues. The discussion covered international, regional, and national research on controversial issues. While much research has been conducted internationally, there has been minimal research on the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in the regional and national contexts. The literature the researcher engaged with indicates that addressing controversial issues can itself become contentious, impacting the teaching and learning of apartheid. The findings from the literature motivated research into exploring teachers' understanding of the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms.

3. Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3. 1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on understanding and analysing the literature on the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue, as well as unpacking the theoretical framework that guides this study. This chapter explains the research methodology used to address the research aim, objectives and questions. Firstly, the researcher will remind readers of the aim and purpose of the study. Secondly, a detailed explanation of the research design is provided. Thirdly, a comprehensive description of the methods employed in this study is presented. Fourthly, the ethical considerations that

were adhered to are explained. Finally, an explanation of how the quality criteria were met is provided.

3.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms, identify the challenges teachers face, and determine how they employ various strategies to teach the topic to learners.

3.2.1 Aim of the study

This study explores how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms.

3.2.2 Objectives of the study

- c) To explore Grade 11 History teachers' understanding of the concept of controversial issues.
- c) To analyse the challenges experienced by Grade 11 history teachers when teaching apartheid in history classrooms.
- c) To explore the strategies that can be used to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms.

3.2.3 Research paradigm

Dahal (2023), Mwita (2022), and Junjie and Yingxin (2022) define a paradigm as a collection of beliefs that create a set of agreements regarding the understanding of a phenomenon. Additionally, Erciyes (2020) defines a paradigm as a way of viewing, building knowledge, and gaining information about the world. Furthermore, paradigms represent the philosophical assumptions underlying our perspective on the world. Consequently, the researcher is guided by the chosen paradigm for the study (Muzari, Shova, & Shonhiwa, 2022). Moreover, Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) indicate that a paradigm comprises components that shape how the researcher understands and interprets the nature of reality, methodology, and study methods.

In line with the above, this study adopts the interpretivism paradigm to help the researcher understand History teachers' perceptions of controversial issues. The interpretivism paradigm aims to comprehend the behaviours, beliefs, and perceptions of individuals experiencing the world (Pervim & Mokhtar, 2023). In addition, interpretivism assumes that interacting with individuals experiencing the phenomenon is the best way to obtain proper knowledge (Dahal, 2023). To align the methodology, methods, and the researcher's interpretation, interpretivism is selected alongside a variation of phenomenology.

The interpretivism paradigm is more associated "with the meaning, voice, standpoint, experience, thoughts, and feelings" of human beings experiencing the world (Junjie & Yingxin, 2022:11). Interpretivism is relevant for this study because it requires teachers to explain their thoughts, experiences, and insights on teaching apartheid as a controversial issue.

Interpretivists view the world as socially constructed and recognise that individuals may have multiple perceptions of reality. Additionally, interpretivists assume that the reality experienced by individuals is subjective and varies. Using this paradigm aligns with the study, as teachers explained their experiences differently and subjectively. Hence, individuals interpret the phenomenon and experience reality differently (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Likewise, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and document analysis as data collection tools to understand the reality of the participants. It is essential to note that the interpretivism paradigm influences the data analysis process to ensure that the interpretation of the collected data does not become generalised (Erciyes, 2020). For this reason, this study focused on considering multiple factors to describe the reality presented by the participants (Mulatu, Negash, & Asrat, 2024).

3.2.4 Ontological and Epistemological

Moroi (2021) defines ontology as the study of the nature of reality. Additionally, Norton (2023) defines ontology as an understanding of what knowledge is. Alharahsheh and Pius (2023) indicate that ontology focuses on finding an answer to a research question while understanding the nature of reality. In this study, the ontological assumptions maintain that knowledge and reality are socially constructed through interactions with other individuals. History teachers have developed knowledge about teaching apartheid as a

controversial issue by engaging with different learners over several years. These teachers were allowed to describe their reality during interviews to elucidate their understanding of the subject.

Al-Ababneh (2021) and Moroi (2021) define epistemology as how reality is known and how knowledge is represented. Epistemology concerns the researcher's ability to uncover knowledge to reach an understanding of reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2023). The epistemological assumptions associated with this study are focused on how the researcher perceives the world around them. Furthermore, the epistemological assumption posits that there should be an interconnection between the researcher and the participants to ensure that an insightful perception of lived experiences is captured (Junjie & Yangxin, 2022). The participants were given the opportunity to provide a detailed account of their lived experiences and knowledge regarding the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue. The researcher interviewed the participants on different occasions to ensure that this insightful knowledge was captured accurately, thereby identifying the different interpretations of teaching and learning apartheid as a controversial issue.

3.2.5 Research approach

The study adopted a qualitative research approach based on the main research question: "How are history teachers navigating the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in a Grade 11 history classroom?" This research approach is appropriate for understanding how teachers teach the topic. Cropley (2022) defines qualitative research as an approach that allows the researcher to examine how people make meaning of their lived experiences. According to Ellis and Hart (2023), the qualitative research approach aims to answer the questions 'what,' 'when,' 'how,' and 'why' to make meaning of the phenomena and the experiences. This approach is suitable for this study because it assists the researcher in answering the research question and encourages intervention improvement (Busetto, Wick, & Gumbinger, 2020; Mwita, 2022).

In addition, Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger (2020:2) assert that qualitative research is "characterised by flexibility, openness, and responsivity to context," allowing the researcher to address the phenomena to provide improvement. Undoubtedly, this

approach is suitable for this study as it encouraged the researcher to gain information from the history teachers through open and flexible interviews. Moreover, it is essential to understand that people react differently in situations, which is why “enlarging knowledge and understanding these differences is the task of a researcher in the social and behavioural sciences” (Cropley, 2022:12). This study seeks to understand the experiences faced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in their classrooms.

Seboholi (2023) states that qualitative research aims to understand the world and why things happen the way they do. Hence, this study used qualitative research to explore how the selected participants, teachers at secondary schools in the uThukela District, navigate the challenges of teaching and learning about apartheid as a controversial issue. Researching in the uThukela District will help teachers in the area provide learners with unbiased information when it comes to teaching controversial issues. It has been revealed that using a qualitative research approach aids researchers in gaining a deeper insight into the participants' views of their everyday environment and explaining why individuals do certain things in specific ways. Therefore, the approach assisted the researcher in gaining insightful information from the participants and the analysed documents in this paper.

3.2.6 Research Design

A research design is a detailed process that outlines the study and guides data collection, analysis, and interpretation in a research paper. When conducting qualitative research, choosing a research design should be based on the research problem, research questions, and the knowledge being studied (Ellis & Hart, 2023). For this study, the phenomenology research design is adopted. Williams (2021) defines phenomenology as a research design rooted in philosophy and psychology that aims to explore individuals' lived experiences and how they make sense of the world through their subjective views. Gill (2020) and Heotis (2020) both show that phenomenology focuses on meaningmaking through the lived experiences of individuals as they navigate the world; however, Patel and Patel (2019) have demonstrated that phenomenology has been criticised for being overly philosophical and challenging to implement.

Moreover, phenomenology is best utilised in studies aimed at understanding individuals' interpretations of the world through data collection methods such as interviews (Williams, 2021). The phenomenology research design is appropriate for this study because it aims to interpret how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue. According to Williams (2021), phenomenology serves as the research approach within the interpretive paradigm, assisting researchers in exploring and understanding phenomena by examining human experiences. Employing phenomenology and interpretivism paradigms to understand the experiences of history teachers teaching apartheid as a controversial issue allows the researcher to study how these teachers illustrate the experiences associated with controversial issues in their classrooms.

3.3 Sampling procedure

According to Indrayadi (2020), sampling refers to the selection of participants for a study that provides information relevant to the research problem and questions. It is a technique used to choose individuals from a targeted population (Rahman, M.M.; 2023). The study population consists of Grade 11 history teachers. For this study, it was only possible to include some history teachers from the uThukela District. Consequently, the researcher needed to select a specific group of participants to involve in the study. To achieve this, the researcher employed purposive sampling.

3.3.1 Purposive sampling

According to Obilor (2023) and Indrayadi (2020), purposive sampling refers to a nonprobability sampling method that pays attention to the features needed from the population, the study's objectives, and the participants' availability. Moreover, in purposive sampling, the sample is approached with regard to the prior objective (Kapur, 2018:45). Furthermore, purposive sampling is convenient for the researcher because it is used for small samples, which allows the researcher to filter the relevant population that fits the context of the study (Obilor, 2023). For this study, purposive sampling would be employed to select participants because it enables the researcher to choose history teachers who have taught about apartheid, as they are easily accessible.

In the scope of this study, the researcher chose five (5) Grade 11 history teachers from five (5) different secondary schools, meaning one teacher from each school was selected. These teachers have taught History in Grade 11 for over five years. This experience indicates that the teachers have explored various teaching methods that work well with their learners and must have encountered different learning styles and challenges. The study sampled only history teachers who studied history education at the tertiary level.

Gender proportions	Qualification	Majored in History	Experiences in years
Teacher 1 Female	Bachelor of Education (History & Geography) Bachelor of Education Honours (Social Sciences)	Yes	10 years
Teacher 2 Male	Bachelor of Arts (Economics, Geography, and History) Secondary Teacher's Diploma (Geography and History)	Yes	20 years
Teacher 3 Male	Bachelor of Education (History, English, & Geography)	Yes	5 years
Teacher 4 Male	Bachelor of Arts (English, Political Science and History) PGCE (English and History)	Yes	12 years
Teacher 5 Male	Bachelor of Arts (IsiZulu, Geography, & History) Secondary Teacher's Diploma (IsiZulu and History)	Yes	22 years

Table 1: Details of participants.

3.3.2 Site selection

Research site selection refers to choosing the most appropriate study location (Seboholi, 2023). This selection is crucial because it impacts the quality and validity of the findings (Seboholi, 2023). Therefore, the chosen site for this study is an educational setting in South Africa. This study focuses on the teaching and learning of apartheid in history classes for grade 11, which means the participants should be selected from secondary schools. The five schools from which the teachers are selected are located in the uThukela District, specifically in Ladysmith and Estcourt. These schools are situated in rural and township settlements.

	Location	Number of Learners	Number of Grade 11 History Learners	Grade 11 History Pass rate	Number of History Teachers
School A	Estcourt town	960	144	78%	1
School B	Loskop, Estcourt	588	77	52%	1
School C	Bergville	550	44	75%	2
School D	Bergville	860	99	74%	1
School E	Bergville	650	67	61%	1

Table 2: School information

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection is essential for answering the research question; this study utilises document analysis and interviews as methods of data collection. In qualitative research, it is crucial to use a data collection tool that aligns with both the research paradigm and the research design. This study adopts phenomenology as its research design, focusing on individuals' lived experiences. Simultaneously, it is framed within an interpretive paradigm that emphasises the subjective meanings and interpretations that participants bring to their societies.

3.4.1 Document Analysis

According to Bussetto et al. (2020), document analysis is a method of data collection that involves reviewing materials. Additionally, Brooks and Normore (2015) define document analysis as a structured approach for examining and assessing various documents, including printed and electronic materials. Documents are contextual sources and social products that present facts about a phenomenon and are typically analysed in research (Karppinen & Moe, 2019). These documents encompass a range of sources, such as written reports, pictures, letters, policy documents, meeting agendas, press releases, newspapers, research papers, and textbooks (Kabir, 2021). Therefore, when conducting research involving document analysis, it is essential to select appropriate documents that address the research questions (Morgan, 2022b).

For this investigation, the researcher analyses the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) policy document for History Grades 10-12. Examining the CAPS document provides insight into how teachers should instruct topics to develop historical skills in their learners. The teaching and learning materials examined included the learners' textbooks and teachers' guides from the New Generation and SpotOn resources, focusing on the sections addressing Topic 5: Apartheid South Africa, 1940s to 1960s in each textbook. These materials assist in understanding teachers' expectations when addressing a controversial topic such as apartheid. Lastly, Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) stipulate that the use of document analysis in qualitative research should focus on ensuring that the information provided is trustworthy. The researcher analysed lesson plans, learning activities, and assessments related to apartheid to determine how teachers present their lessons, whether they apply principles of controversial issues, and how they assess students to allow for the expression of differing perspectives.

Research indicates that employing multiple data-gathering tools contributes to a more complex understanding of the phenomena (Bloomberg & Velpa, 2019). The researcher utilised interviews and document analysis, as these methods enhance the in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. Document analysis facilitates the process of triangulation, as using two data-gathering techniques helps to increase the trustworthiness of the study and minimises potential biases (Morgan, 2022b).

3.4.2 Interviews

According to Makena and Mpiti (2020), interviews are a two-way interaction in which the interviewer (researcher) asks questions that need to be answered by the interviewee (participant) experiencing the phenomenon. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews to generate data. This investigation uses semi-structured interviews to gather information from history teachers. Semi-structured interviews include open-ended questions that allow the interviewer to probe further (Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger, 2020). The researcher chose this type of interview because it allows for flexibility, the explanation of questions, and the exploration of interesting and essential areas that arise (Makena & Mpiti, 2020). Furthermore, this method does not force participants to answer questions when they feel uncomfortable, enabling the interviewer to reconstruct questions for better understanding by the interviewee (Mwita, 2022).

Research indicates that semi-structured interviews are not intended to be conducted in a written format, as they form part of qualitative research, which aims to understand individuals through interaction and allows for note-taking during the interview (Busetto, Wick, & Gumbinger, 2020). The face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to read and interpret the interviewee's body language (Mwita, 2022). They also allowed the researcher to audio record the interviews and take notes on critical information provided by the participant, facilitating a smooth and reliable transcription process.

The interview sessions were scheduled based on the participants' preferred times to avoid disrupting teaching and learning. The researcher prepared open-ended questions, followed by probing questions based on the participants' answers. Interviews took place inside a history classroom at the selected school and lasted between 40 and 60 minutes. The researcher used an audio recorder to capture the interviews and took notes using a designated notebook. Before the interviews began, participants were provided with a leaflet about the study and a consent form to read and sign. To protect the participants' identities and right to anonymity, the researcher ensured that the information collected could not be traced back to individual participants or the school.

3. 5 Data Analysis

Data analysis involves organising and presenting the importance of collected data to the study based on the principles of qualitative research (Kapur, 2018). This section focuses on unpacking what data analysis is and its purpose in a research study. It also defines the chosen data analysis method, thematic analysis, and its relevance to the study.

Data analysis is an integral part of research that provides findings based on participants' information. Moreover, studies have shown that data analysis requires scholars to structure data in a meaningful order (Morgan, 2022a; Kapur, 2018; Christou, 2024). Additionally, data analysis suggests that the collected data should enable the researcher to combine multiple findings from different participants and establish a connection between the results and the information from the reviewed literature (Trombeta, 2022). This aspect of research is crucial in qualitative studies because it is where the researcher presents the collected data from participants and analysed documents. It is essential to analyse data following the correct procedures to recognise “consistencies, inconsistencies, and associations” in the data (Kapur, 2018:53).

The purpose of data analysis is to derive significant insights and produce knowledge from a vast amount of information gathered through the qualitative research methods employed in this study, which include semi-structured interviews and textual documents (Christou, 2024). Therefore, the data analysis must adhere to a structured process to ensure that the analysed data is accurate and valid. The data analysis for this study explores the challenges of teaching apartheid as a controversial issue and the strategies teachers use to address such issues. This study employs thematic analysis to analyse the generated data.

According to Lochmiller (2021), thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that helps identify, analyse, and interpret patterns and themes within the data. Additionally, studies demonstrate that thematic analysis focuses on the similarities and contradictions in the patterns found in the raw data (Morgan, 2022a; Lochmiller, 2021; Christou, 2024). In Lochmiller's view, “[t]hematic analysis enables scholars to define and describe what a participant's reality is using [the participant's] own written or spoken account” (2021:2031). To analyse the documents, the researcher first read and reread the documents to be

familiar with the content while taking notes. Secondly, the researcher identified codes from the information found in the documents. Thirdly, after coding the information from the documents, codes were collated into potential themes. Fourthly the researcher was able to refine the themes to match with the data from semi-structured interviews. Fifthly, the researcher named the themes into the *definition of the term controversial issues, pedagogical understanding of controversial issues, understanding apartheid as a controversial issue, lack of learner engagement and understanding of bias, emotional connections, interactive engagement as a strategy discussion method, educational resources, and multimedia resources*. And lastly, the themes were woven together to provide a detailed analysis along with data from semi-structured interviews.

The purpose of thematic analysis is to transform raw data into meaningful, understandable units that address the research problem and questions (Christou, 2024). Inevitably, thematic analysis aims to report the experiences and realities of participants based on their expressions during data collection (Trombeta, 2022). It is relevant for this study because the researcher will identify codes within the data to formulate themes that reveal patterns. Codes may be assigned to sentences, paragraphs, or words within the generated data. Research indicates that, within thematic analysis, it is fundamental to identify codes in order to effectively discern patterns within the data (Morgan, 2022a; Trombeta, 2022).

Lochmiller (2021) notes that patterns form the foundation for themes and are operationalised within data analysis as categories. Thematic analysis requires the researcher to transcribe interview data to categorise and connect the data in order to identify themes (Morgan, 2022a). This investigation follows Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of thematic analysis. First, familiarisation with the data is achieved through transcription, reading, and rereading the data, the researcher transcribed the collected data and familiarised herself with the data by reading it multiple times. Secondly, initial codes can be generated by searching for interesting features within the data. The researcher was able to generate codes from the transcribed data by associating similar information together. Thirdly, themes are identified by collating the codes established in the second step, the research did this by identifying the information that addressed the

same question and developed themes from the data. Fourthly, the themes should be reviewed to assess whether they cohesively work together. The researcher was able to group the appropriate information together to make the themes work cohesively together. Next, the themes should be defined and named to refine their specifics. The themes were defined and named according to information they provide. Lastly, the final report will be produced by analysing extracts related to the research questions and literature, the researcher accomplished this step by ensuring that appropriate information was grouped together to address the research question with the support of literature that was analysed. The thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify connections and contradictions within the responses from the teachers' interviews and the analysed documents.

3. 6 Ethical consideration

Newman et al. (2021) believe that a research study requires a careful ethical evaluation of procedures and the risks that might arise when collecting data. Furthermore, ethics is essential because it involves respecting the rights and dignity of participants (Arifin, 2018). As a result, this project seeks to protect participants and ensure that it upholds the image of the University of the Free State by following its protocols and rules during and after the study. The researcher applied for an Ethical Clearance certificate from the General/Human Research Ethics Committee (GHREC) and received approval: HSD2023/2286 (Appendix A). Additionally, the study was approved by the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education (Appendix B). The researcher also requested permission from the principals of the schools that were part of the research site (Appendix C). Participants were individually invited to take part in the study and were informed that the aim was to understand how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid and the strategies they use to teach the topic. The researcher provided the participants with consent forms (Appendix D) to sign before proceeding with the interview.

As this study seeks to explore how history teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid, the researcher ensured that no controversial questions were raised, given the sensitive nature of the topic. Participants' information would be used solely for this study's findings and would not be shared with anyone else. To protect the participants' identities and ensure their right to anonymity, pseudonyms were allocated to them (Nii Laryeafio &

Ogbewe, 2023). They were also permitted to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable continuing. Participants were assured that the data would be kept secure and destroyed after five years. Their responses to the interview questions were recorded using an audio device, and a copy of the recording would be made available to them if they wished to listen to it. The credibility of the study was attained.

3. 7 Quality Criteria

3.7.1 Trustworthiness

Qualitative research must be trustworthy, meaning that the generated data should be truthful and believable based on the researcher's interpretation (Mqadi, 2020). To ensure the trustworthiness of the research outcomes, the researcher adhered to the critical components of trustworthiness: credibility, conformability, transferability, and bias.

3.7.2 Credibility

According to Ahmed (2024), credibility refers to how well the study aligns its research findings with participants' authentic voices, experiences, and meanings, ensuring that they reflect their truths and realities. Credibility also pertains to the accuracy of the data in relation to the researcher's interpretation and representation (Bloomberg & Velpa, 2019). It is crucial to present participants' responses in a manner that aligns with their experiences. To ensure credibility in this study, the researcher engaged with participants through semi-structured interviews, allowing them to express their views on the challenges and strategies of teaching and learning about apartheid as a controversial issue. This data collection method enabled participants to discuss their experiences with the phenomenon by responding to open-ended questions guided by the researcher

To further support the credibility of this study, the researcher employed two data collection tools: semi-structured interviews conducted individually and document analysis. This analysis involved examining the teachers' and learners' books, CAPS documents, and research papers on history education in South Africa to compare these sources for analysis and interpretation. Using these two data collection tools enhanced the credibility of the interpretations and reduced potential bias.

3.7.3 Conformability

Seboholi (2023) indicates that conformability refers to the extent to which the study's findings are linked to the data generated. Conformability aids in evaluating the accuracy of the findings. For this study, the responses from the semi-structured interviews and information from the analysed documents are presented in a manner that avoids assumptions about the challenges and potential strategies for teaching apartheid as a controversial issue. The researcher explained how conclusions and interpretations were developed to demonstrate conformability in this study and to show that the findings were derived from the collected data.

3.7.4 Transferability

Research indicates that transferability involves establishing connections across studies to demonstrate the applicability of the research in another context (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) state that transferability is the degree to which “research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents.” To ensure transferability for this study, the researcher provided a thorough description of the findings of this study.

3.7.5 Bias

It is crucial to note that bias can occur in any research study (Ahmed, 2024). Personal beliefs and assumptions of the researcher can introduce bias during the findings of the study. For this research, the researcher aimed to be fair when conducting the interviews and to avoid favouritism towards participants in order to obtain answers that do not favour the researcher's particular point of view. To eliminate bias, the researcher systematically assessed all the data and verified the conclusions through evidence derived from the data.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains the research methodology adopted in the study. The descriptions of the methodology and methods provide insight into the reasons for their selection. Initially, the researcher ensured that the research methodology aligned with the study's objectives. Finally, the researcher discusses the data analysis and the ethical considerations that

guided this study. The following chapter addresses the data findings and the analysis of the data.

4. Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology and methods for generating and analysing the collected data. This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) documents and three History textbooks. Additionally, it presents the findings from the semi-structured interviews.

This study explored how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms. The following objectives emerged:

- To explore History teachers' understanding of the concept of controversial issues.
- To analyse the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in grade 11 history classrooms.
- To explore the strategies that can be used to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in grade 11 history classrooms.

4.2 Data addressing the first objective: History teachers' understanding of controversial issues.

This section addresses the first objective of the study, which involves teachers' conceptualisation of the term "controversial issue." The question to be answered is: *How do history teachers understand the concept of controversial issues?* There is no specific definition of what a controversial issue is, leading people to defining it according to their own understanding. The following sub-themes were identified from the semi-structured interviews, where participants expressed their understanding of controversial issues as:

- Definition of the term controversial issues.
- Pedagogical understanding of controversial issues.
- Understanding apartheid as a controversial issue.

4.2.1 Definition of the term controversial issues

teachers' perspectives suggest that controversial issues are complex and that individuals may have differing viewpoints on a phenomenon. They asserted that controversial issues

can be defined as those that elicit diverse opinions and perspectives. The participants were asked the following questions:

What do you understand by controversial issues?

Teacher 1 responded by saying:

Controversial issues basically mean where there is debate around an issue. That can raise arguments. Everyone has different opinions in a game trade debate because of disagreement over an issue.

Teacher 2 made an insightful contribution by indicating that:

The word controversial issues cannot have a specific definition.

The response from Teacher 2 indicated that defining the term "controversial issues" in a way that fits all contexts is complicated. According to Flensner (2020b), the definition of controversial issues varies based on the knowledge and aspects that make an issue challenging to delineate clearly between perceptions. Teacher 2 further elaborated on this response by saying:

It is a discussion after misconceptions, misunderstandings and idea of different dimensions.

Similarly, the above response was supported by Teacher 3, who shared that:

These are issues that different people have different perspectives or different opinions on.

He further added that...

It can be a diverse issue that cannot have one perspective. Someone can have his own opinion or perspective.

Teacher 5 responded by saying...

We are looking at issues that cause division in a particular community. We are talking about issues that cannot be understood by some parts of the community.

This response highlighted that controversial issues create division among individuals due to differing perceptions of the same issue. Teacher 5 indicated that it is those who do not understand an issue who contribute to the division.

From the quotes provided by participating teachers, the researcher realised that the definition of controversial issues varies according to an individual's understanding and the context surrounding the issue in question. According to the teachers' explanations, defining the term "controversy" is as complex as defining the issues themselves. Teachers 1, 3, 4, and 5 emphasised that controversial issues often stem from misunderstandings, where individuals hold different interpretations.

4.2.2 Pedagogical understanding of controversial issues

Understanding the controversial issue of history as a subject is essential because individuals have different interpretations. The *New Generation* learner's textbook does not include the term 'controversial issues'; however, the CAPS (DBE, 2011:5) curriculum outlines the issues that teachers should explore, as they bring controversy:

In teaching History, teachers should explore issues of race, gender, class, xenophobia and genocide and the impact that these have had in the past and present.

The issues mentioned in the CAPS policy document are those that generate controversy in classrooms because teachers and learners may have different perceptions during the teaching and learning process.

The teachers involved in semi-structured interviews shared various perspectives on how they understand controversial issues when applied to history as a subject. The participants were asked: *What do controversial issues mean to you in the context of history teaching?*

Teacher 1 responded that:

With history, I feel there are a lot of topics that can be controversial, depending on you as a person. History has always had different perspectives. And you have to accommodate different perspectives.

Teacher 3 responded by saying:

Having different perspectives on specific topics.

The participants assert that History encompasses many topics that evoke different perceptions because people interpret it from various perspectives. The teachers' description of controversial issues in teaching History is also supported by the CAPS curriculum, which stipulates that "there is often more than one perspective of a historical event" (DBE, 2011:9). Furthermore, in History, there are multiple topics that highlight these differences.

Teacher 2 responded saying:

That can refer to issues that people cannot have one common understanding, an issue that needs a thorough debate until we come to a solution. These may be what you call social, political, and economic issues in teaching history.

Teacher 5 added:

If something is controversial in history, it will depend on which angle you are looking at. Two people can narrate the same story, but at the end of the day, it won't be the same. So that will bring about controversy. So, when you speak about controversy in history, I will talk about precisely that.

As indicated by Teacher 5, History depends on the perspective a person takes on a particular topic, as two individuals can recount a story using multiple descriptions. When presenting History lessons, teachers narrate topics differently based on their views and how they interpret the curriculum. According to Efimova (2024), teachers are not restricted from avoiding or including controversial issues in their lessons; rather, they are encouraged to address these issues openly, fostering the development of historical skills.

4.2.3 Understanding apartheid as a controversial issue

Teachers may understand the topic of apartheid in South Africa differently, and their presentations to learners may vary. The teachers responded as follows when asked whether apartheid is a controversial issue:

Teacher 1 said that:

Oh yes. Apartheid is a controversial topic. Uh yeah, I think everyone has got different opinions about apartheid.

Teacher 4 supported the above participant:

Yes, it is a controversial topic.

He further states that the topic is controversial because:

Maybe in a sense that, let's say, the information is being written by a white person. He will write things that will be biased based on their side. Then, if maybe the information is from the blacks, the people who suffered during that period, they will write about their sufferings, their views, all that stuff. But if maybe the information is written by those who were doing it, who were imposing the system on the blacks, maybe their views will be different.

Teacher 5 also indicated that he understands apartheid as a controversial issue:

I will say so. It is a controversial topic.

Teacher 5 supported his statement by saying:

Because if you ask someone who is from the white community when you speak about apartheid, to him, it won't be something terrible because it's part and parcel of the culture of the whites. And, if you come to black people, it will offend them. They won't be happy about it because it caused a lot of damage to them. So, it will cause controversy at the end of the day.

According to Teachers 1, 4, and 5, it was agreed that apartheid is a controversial topic. The teachers expressed differing views on whether apartheid in South Africa is a

controversial topic for grade 11 History classrooms. As stated by Teacher 1, every individual has their own opinion regarding apartheid.

Contrary to Teachers 1,4 and 5, Teachers 2 and 3 stated the following:

Teacher 2 said that:

No, it is not a controversial issue.

Teacher 3 responded saying:

I would say no. It's not that controversial. It wasn't controversial. It was something that happened, and the effects that did happen. Maybe it can be controversial when being portrayed or taught in class. Maybe different syllabuses may make it controversial.

Teacher 2 states that apartheid is controversial as an event, but as a topic for Grade 11 learners, it is not controversial to him. Teacher 3's response contradicts Teacher 2's statement. Teacher 3 indicates that apartheid, as an event, is not controversial because it is something that happened and still has an effect; however, when it is taught as a topic in a Grade 11 classroom, it becomes controversial. The teachers understand that there are controversial issues, and it is essential to acknowledge them in History as a subject. The quotations from Teachers 2 and 3 emphasise how apartheid is controversial, as these teachers have different views on whether it is controversial.

4. 3 Data addressing the second objective: Challenges experienced by History teachers

Teachers face different challenges when they teach the topic of apartheid in classrooms. The question asked was: *what are the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in Grade 11 History classrooms?* This section identifies challenges faced by Grade 11 History teachers who participated in the study and the literature that complements their views. The following sub-themes emerged from the collected data:

- Lack of learner engagement and understanding.
- Bias

- Misinformation
- Emotional connections

4.3.1 Lack of learner engagement and understanding

Dong, Jong, and King (2020) argue that learner engagement may be influenced by the learner's prior knowledge of the topic being studied, as this knowledge reflects the learner's behaviour, attention, and effort to participate in the lessons. Teachers in the semi-structured interviews responded as follows:

Teacher 2 responded saying:

If you are teaching apartheid, it is like another topic to them because they do not understand what was happening back then.

Additionally, Teacher 3 said:

Learners do not have a specific background about what really happened because it would be easy for the topic to develop if they have a prior background, but they do not have a background of this. To them, apartheid is just a topic.

Teachers 2 and 3 indicate that the learners lack background information on the impact of apartheid on our present society, which may result in a lack of critical engagement.

Teacher 4 responded saying:

I would say maybe out of 10, two or three learners, who can, I mean, who can maybe do the thing we call critical thinking based on what you are teaching about during that time. Still, most of them will take what you are telling them as it is without maybe analysing the information critically.

Teacher 4 stated that very few of his learners would engage with him during lessons while applying critical thinking without being reminded to do so. Teachers further indicated that learners refrain from participating in activities that allow them to showcase their understanding. Instead, the learners tend to accept the information provided by the teachers without challenging it.

Additionally, Teacher 5 said:

They don't understand exactly what happened. I have noticed that when you speak, you can speak about the same topic, but understanding is different.

The teacher emphasised that it was difficult to engage the learners in discussions about apartheid because they had little knowledge of the events that occurred during the 1940s to 1960s.

Teacher 1 said:

It is a real struggle in the classes, and not only me as a history teacher, but all teachers have this problem where children do not open in the class; they do not talk. Our children do not read. And I think it stems from English, you know. English is a big problem in this school. They really struggle with English because it's a school instruction medium. It's tough.

The teachers express concerns about how the learners react to History, which may indicate a lack of historical understanding. Teacher 1 observes that the learners' limited understanding of English contributes to their inability to comprehend the subject. This response suggests that the lack of engagement and understanding among learners stems from their difficulty with English as the medium of instruction. Adamson (2024) argues that low learner participation results from a lack of understanding of the medium of instruction used in schools, which causes learners to feel fear and shame about making mistakes when speaking the language.

4.3.2 Bias

Controversial issues are complex, and teachers may exhibit bias when presenting lessons to their learners. Similarly, learners may arrive with misinformation that influences their own biases (Larsson & Larsson, 2021). This observation is reflected in the responses provided by the teachers during the semi-structured interviews.

Teacher 2 states that

Biasness comes in here. For example, if apartheid is taught by an educator of a certain group or ethnic group, they will make sure that must bring some good part or bad experience of their own group

The above statement is supported by Teacher 4 saying:

The issue of biasness, I would say it is always there because when we teach this topic, it is us who have empathy and indicate that black people were harshly treated, not noticing that there were some whites who were treated harshly. We tend to see it from a one-sided view because of experiencing segregation during those times.

Teacher 5 further added that:

If you are like me, as a black person who was affected by apartheid, whenever I taught apartheid, I became biased.

The History curriculum does not encourage teachers to be biased in their classrooms (DBE, 2011). The teachers mentioned that being biased comes with teaching the subject. Teacher 2 indicated that a History teacher became biased because of their ethnic group, putting them in a specific position on a particular topic. This statement was supported by Teacher 4, who is a Black teacher. He mentioned that the reason that made him biased during his lessons was having empathy for how Black people were treated during the apartheid era, as he experienced the system. However, he states that it became wrong of him if he did not mention the role played by other whites who were treated harshly while trying to fight for segregated people. Teacher 5 also admitted to becoming biased when teaching the topic of apartheid because he experienced the system.

The response from Teacher 1 said:

Biases arise with topics, within topics, depending on what side you are on.

The above response indicates that teachers can become biased based on their stance when teaching topics in their classrooms. According to Wassermann and Bentrovato's (2018) study, teachers advised their pre-service teachers not to alter their presentation of

information to students. Even when they recognised the potential for bias, they felt it was necessary to present information in a way that maintained respect.

4.3.3 Misinformation

The responses from the semi-structured interviews indicate that another challenge teachers faced during the presentation on apartheid in South Africa was learners who were misinformed about the events.

Teacher 3 said:

They know little about apartheid, and some of them know some of the things that didn't seem to happen during apartheid, so they are misled. And at some point, if they come up with something that even myself, you know, I know that it didn't happen or misinformation. So, I need to do more research.

Teacher 5 supported Teacher 3 by saying:

I have noticed that when you speak about something, you can speak about the same topic, but your understanding is different. You will find misinformed people and have misinformation, especially for the learners. However, as an educator, you must answer correctly based on what happened and the syllabus.

Teachers 3 and 5 mentioned that their learners may arrive in the classroom with misinformation about apartheid. Teacher 3 indicated that some of his learners bring information he has never encountered, which challenges him to conduct further research. Teacher 5 stated that learners need to be better informed by the information they receive from people in their communities.

Furthermore, Teacher 2 highlighted that learners do not try to get information on their own, he said:

Not exactly. The learners do not bother themselves by asking what has happened before. In other words, as I have said in our previous conversations, teaching this topic is like teaching them a new topic.

Teacher 2 stipulates that learners should refrain from bringing misinformation into their classrooms, as they do not consult elders about the topics they are studying. Even

regarding subjects that directly involve them as South Africans, the learners are not initially concerned with gaining a deeper understanding of what is happening in the country.

4.3.4 Emotional connections as a challenge.

According to Maluleka (2023), the History curricula are filled with sensitive and controversial topics in the curriculum knowledge base, which fails to provide teachers with creative approaches for engaging learners in these issues. Controversial topics can be particularly discomfoting, especially when they involve collective trauma or touch on a learner's identity (Efimova, 2024). Such issues lead to diverse opinions in the classroom that may be unsettling for learners, and teachers must exercise care when addressing these topics.

Teacher 1 responded by saying:

Sometimes, I think when people think about talking about apartheid, teaching apartheid is when you start stirring up emotions. Children are going to start getting, you know, all angry about what happened in the past, how black people were treated.

She further said:

There are some emotions with them, just, you know, anger towards the white people for poorly treating black people.

Teacher 4 asserts that:

The emotions do arise; you can see when you talk about the violence, what happened during those days, and the emotions that arise from the kids.

Teacher 3 responded by saying he does not become emotional when he teaches the topic; the topic is emotional based on the events that took place.:

At some point, you become emotional when you are old, but when you teach the topic, no.

He further argued that:

Judging by learners' responses, I would say yes. They develop that emotional sensitivity when you unpack the topic and tell them what and how South Africans were separated. Then, you identify from their responses that it touches their hearts. Teacher 2 responded that his learners did not have any emotional connection:

Not precisely, because, as I have said, the case here is a generation gap. For our learners today, teaching these topics is like teaching history without impacting them. In other words, that feeling, that momentum does not rise.

The participant's response indicates that learners do not understand the history of South Africa, the impact of current events, and the influence of the past on the country's future. The learners not showing any feelings towards historical events suggests a lack of comprehension of the content they are studying. From the participants' responses, it is evident that history teachers address emotional connections. Teachers 1, 3, 4, and 5 mentioned that their learners do exhibit emotions when taught about apartheid, as it evokes painful memories for some parents. In contrast, Teacher 2 argued that his learners do not display any emotions due to a generational gap between them and the events, which diminishes their engagement. Teacher 3 indicated that he does not experience any emotions while teaching the topic; rather, it is only his learners who show emotional responses.

4. 4 Data addressing the third objective: Strategies that can be used to enhance the teaching of apartheid

This section addresses the third objective of the study, which is to determine the strategies teachers use to enhance the teaching of apartheid in Grade 11 History classrooms. The participants were asked: *What strategies can be employed to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms?* The researcher reviewed literature that supports the participants' views. The following subthemes were identified:

- Interactive engagement as a strategy
- Discussion method as a strategy to teach apartheid
- Teaching resources as a boost to the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue

- o Educational resources o
- Multimedia resources

4.4.1 Interactive engagement as a strategy

Engaging learners in lessons is essential in modern classrooms because it helps to motivate them and fosters their involvement in learning. Research indicates that effective classroom learning occurs when learners are engaged; those who participate actively in lessons tend to pay attention and contribute to discussions (Havik & Westergård, 2020). Teachers have noted that encouraging learners to engage in the classroom is a crucial strategy.

Teacher 3 responded saying:

Firstly, I acquire the learners to bring their background knowledge as they are South Africans and something that touches our history. So, to start the topic is just to get their primary knowledge, what they know about apartheid, and what parents or grandparents told them about apartheid.

The teacher indicates that bringing learners' prior knowledge is essential when studying their country's history, as it builds the foundation for their engagement. The knowledge that learners acquire from their parents plays a significant role in the history lessons.

He also said,

The strategy is mostly useful because it is learner-centred in the early stage, where I get their prior knowledge. There are classroom discussions. We engage with them. Then, it is through question and answer, explaining the content, and unpacking it.

A learner-centred approach requires learners to participate in the lessons while teachers facilitate the classroom. According to Du Plessis (2020), a learner-centred approach to teaching requires teachers to impart multiple skills to learners. The first thing teachers can do is ensure that learners not only understand the subject knowledge (content) but also organise information and develop learning skills effectively.

Teacher 1 also indicates that gaining the learners' background knowledge is essential:

I think it is essential that when you start teaching, you do not just dive into apartheid. You have got to start back to colonisation, you know, and then segregation. All of that made the foundation for apartheid. Apartheid was more forceful because now it was institutionalised, and some laws were put into place to ensure that people knew their place in society, politically and socially.

The teacher argues that learners need to know what constructed the foundation of apartheid as a system in the 1940s.

Teacher 4, from the semi-structured interview, responded by saying:

You need to introduce it to the learners. Let us say I will be teaching tomorrow; I will then maybe tell them just to go and ask their parents the meaning of the term apartheid so that maybe when they come the following day, they will know what we will talk about. Then, I will break down the word apartheid with the learners.

Teacher 5 elaborated by saying:

I gave them an activity where they had to go home and ask their parents because their parents were affected. What I usually do is I first ask questions to get how much the learners know. The background information, how much they know. Then, I can give homework, go home, give a topic, and research this before giving them new information. They returned, and we discussed the information they had gotten from home.

Looking at the teachers' responses and encouraging learners to have background knowledge laid the foundation for classroom discussions, making the lessons more interactive.

Teacher 2 mentioned that it is essential to provide learners with background information by informing them about the course and its context:

I introduce the topic. I give the background, the course, and the cause. The cause is C-A-U-S-E, and the course is C-O-U-R-S-E. And the results. From there, I now go topic by topic.

According to the New Generation Teacher's Guide, teachers are required to incorporate certain concepts into their lessons, including "cause and effect: the reasons for events and their results. The consequences of something drive future events and help explain human behaviour" (Frank, Sikhakhane, Subramony, Stephenson, Mbansini, & Pillay, 2015b:11).

4.4.2 Discussion method as a strategy to teach apartheid

Discussions in history classrooms are essential for encouraging learners to engage in the learning process. According to Maluleka (2023), discussions enable learners to analyse topics while gaining multiple perspectives. The responses from the semi-structured interviews were as follows:

Teacher 1 gave insight as follows:

I do try and like to pair, a pairing activity, I would say that, yeah. But in group work, I seem to need to improve to win with that, especially in history.

According to the above response, the teacher prefers to allow her learners to work in pairs because using group discussions has never worked in her classrooms.

Teacher 3 answered by saying:

Through class discussions, I always ask them to allow each other to express themselves or share their knowledge about apartheid.

Teacher 4 responded saying:

In most cases, we use narrative in history. It's narrative; maybe after that, we used to group them, and then we would give them some topics, maybe two to three, sort of debate. They will help them more, especially when writing essays.

Teacher 4 uses discussions in the form of debates among the learners. He stated that using debates helps him teach apartheid because they enable learners to prepare for writing essays by providing multiple ideas related to the topic.

Teacher 5 supports the use of debates within the history classroom:

Very, very useful. It helps with debates and group work. It makes people from different backgrounds work with one another, even though they come from different backgrounds.

According to the New Generation Teacher's Guide (Frank et al., 2015b), multiperspectivity should be included in history lessons. The researcher notes that discussions can be an excellent way to encourage learners to engage in multiperspectivity. This concept involves recognising that "they may involve the different points of view of people in the past according to their position in society, the different ways in which historians have written about them, and the different ways in which people today see the actions and behaviour of people in the past" (Frank et al., 2015b:11).

4.4.3 Teaching resources as a boost to the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue

The responses from the semi-structured interviews indicated that teachers utilise two types of resources in their grade 11 History classrooms to address the topic of apartheid: educational resources and multimedia resources. The CAPS policy document states that teachers can enhance learners' interest "by finding as many of the following kinds of sources as possible: manuscripts (handwritten diaries, letters and notebooks), printed text (books, newspapers and websites), video or film, photographs, drawings, paintings or cartoons, and oral sources (interviews, stories and songs)" (DBE, 2011:9).

4.5.3.1. Educational resources

Teachers could choose from multiple educational resources to enhance the teaching and learning of apartheid, a controversial issue. Their responses regarding the resources that assist them in the classroom varied. The responses were as follows:

Teacher 1 said the best way for her to include educational resources was as follows:

You can show them a short documentary on it. So, they could better understand what happened and what took place. I use a textbook. We mainly look at pictures from textbooks or other sources.

For the learners to understand, Teacher 1 uses short documentaries, textbooks and pictures, especially those found in the textbooks.

Teacher 2 supported the above statement as he stated:

I use the textbook.

Teacher 3 responded by saying:

Mostly, I use New Generation; we also have Focus History. I also have study guides for grade 11.

Teacher 4 said that:

There is information from the New Generation, but it is small. So, I must take that one, and I would know this one is relevant. I also compile my notes using different sources.

Teacher 5 contradicts the above participants as he argues that he uses the *New Generation* textbook because it has much information:

I usually use New Generation. It is very informative. It has sources that give information. So it makes it easy for learners to study. They have also created study guides that summarize the information. So, it makes it easy for learners to study, and it is user-friendly. Charts also help show learners the people who are part of the topic.

Teachers indicated that they use the following educational resources: textbooks, study guides, articles, charts, documentaries, and museums, which are recommended for learners. Teacher 5 emphasises that the *New Generation Learner's* textbook is very informative, making it easy for learners to study history.

The *New Generation Learner's book* provides sources of information accompanied by pictures of people who played different roles during apartheid, as well as graphs and cartoons. In contrast, the *Spot On Learner's book* includes a few pictures of people and many cartoons, which may be interpreted differently.

The *Spot On Learner's* book cannot stimulate learners' interest in the same way that the *New Generation* book can. The *New Generation* book offers profiles of prominent individuals who actively participated in implementing or resisting apartheid. In contrast,

the Spot On book provides small pictures of leaders and a few events. For example, Spot On shows a picture of D.F. Malan under the sub-topic “*Why did the National Party adopt the policy of Apartheid?*” The New Generation book, however, provides a profile and a picture of D.F. Malan, indicating that he was the first Prime Minister to implement the apartheid policy.

Why did the National Party adopt the policy of Apartheid?

Apartheid was adopted to ensure the survival and domination of the Afrikaner nation. This nation had experienced many challenges, including the defeat in the South African War in 1902 (studied in Grade 10). During this war, the British concentration camps had cost the lives of 27 000 Boer women and children and, as a result, the near extinction of the Afrikaner nation. This created in many a desire and determination to survive. Apartheid was the Afrikaner nationalists' way of ensuring that they, as a so-called “chosen people”, would never again be under threat.

The political threat to the Afrikaner nationalists in the 1940s was losing white supremacy and their privileged positions to a much larger African population. As a result, everything was done to disadvantage the African population and promote the interests of white South Africans. To ensure total control over a black population who outnumbered them, it was imperative that the economic wealth of South Africa remain completely in the hands of white people.



DF Malan
From Topfoto/INPRA

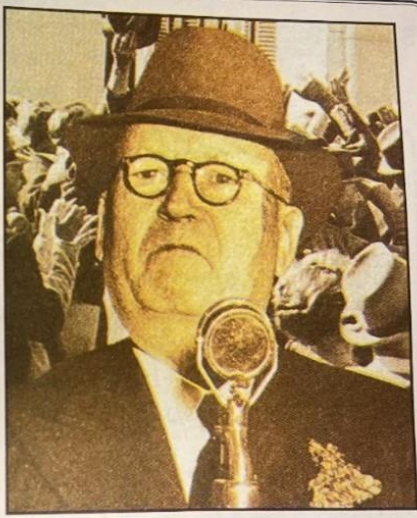
Source: *Spot On Learner's Book*, p.261

Profile of D F Malan

Born in Riebeeck- Wes. Studied at Victoria College, Stellenbosch. Was a preacher in the Dutch Reformed Church.

Was a champion of Afrikaner Nationalism and became the first Prime Minister at the age of 74 who implemented the policy of apartheid.

It has been reported that on one occasion he saw White South African children playing with Coloured South African children and felt that this was wrong. Hence the idea of apartheid was born.



Source: *New Generation Learner's Book*, p.259

4.5.3.2. Multimedia resources

According to Abdulrahman, Faruk, Oloyede, Surajudeen-Bakinde, Olawoyin, Mejabi, Imam-Fulani, Fahm, and Azeez (2020), using multimedia resources in the learning environment produces positive results for learners, as it allows them to combine words (content) and pictures (multimedia), stimulating their interest in learning. The teachers' responses from the semi-structured interviews regarding the use of multimedia resources to teach History were as follows:

Teacher 1 said that:

I try to show them a video on YouTube, some short clips relevant to apartheid. And if I find a short YouTube video relevant to the topic I'm teaching, I like to show each of them.

Teacher 4 supported the above statement because he mentioned that his learners enjoy visual learning:

They enjoy visuals and like watching videos. I downloaded them from YouTube.

The two participants have similar interests when it comes to using multimedia to assist learners in having a better understanding of the topic. Teacher 5 further said that:

I use many resources. You know, nowadays, we've got what is called YouTube. You know, some of the information, some of the topics that we teach in class, like you're talking about apartheid, you go to YouTube, and you'll find many videos on apartheid. And I use audio. There are audios that the subject advisor would send to us. I send it to the group, especially with my learners. We have a group. I send audio on WhatsApp. Then, learners listen to the audio when they are at home.

Teacher 5 indicates that he incorporates social media, such as WhatsApp, in his classroom to share important audio with the learners. From the observation of Teachers 1, 4, and 5's classroom settings, these teachers were provided with projectors and images related to History. Teacher 2 responded that, regarding resources, he used:

Tangible resources, such as historical museums, monuments, and true edited films.

Teacher 3 stipulates that using visual aids, especially films, made his learners interested in apartheid. He said that:

It is through visual aids, such as allowing them to watch educational films like Sarafina or documentaries about South African history. So, as they watched the films, I gave them guidelines that these were the things they were supposed to observe, not just for entertainment. So, they need to learn from it.

Teacher 3 argues that using these films should not be solely for entertainment but should instead allow learners to observe what the films portray about the topic. Learners who answer questions after gaining information from multimedia resources demonstrate that they value the teacher's efforts to enhance their understanding of a topic. Arriaza Westendorff, Mutch, and Mutch (2021) identify that the reciprocity of caring between the teacher and learner is the ultimate goal for positive change in the classroom.

4. 5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented, analysed, and discussed data from semi-structured interviews with five Grade 11 History teachers from the uThukela District in Estcourt and Bergville. It also examined three History textbooks used as resources for teaching and learning the subject. The following chapter summarises the study, its findings, recommendations, suggestions for future research, and reflections.

5. Chapter 5: Findings, Discussions, Conclusion and Recommendations

5. 1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the data generated through semi-structured interviews with five experienced History teachers. This chapter discusses the findings in relation to existing literature and the theoretical framework that guided this study. The discussion begins by unpacking History teachers' understanding of controversial issues, followed by the challenges they face, and the strategies employed to teach apartheid as a controversial issue. This study sought to explore how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms and aimed to answer the following sub-questions:

- How do history teachers understand the concept of controversial issues?
- What are the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in Grade 11 history classrooms?
- What strategies can be employed to enhance the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms?

5.2 Findings addressing the first objective: How do history teachers understand the concept of controversial issues?

5.2.1 Definition of the term controversial issues

Findings indicated that teachers have different ways of defining controversial issues. It was revealed that controversial issues are complex, and individuals may have varying perspectives on a phenomenon. According to Flensner (2020a), defining the term "controversial issues" is not straightforward due to the contexts in which it may be placed. The term can be defined in multiple ways, and the nature of the issues can influence the definition (Flensner, 2020b). The results showed that, given the diversity of controversial issues, there are also various ways to define the term through multiple perspectives. Consequently, this diversity may stem from individuals' disagreements, resulting in arguments or divisions within communities.

The reality is that every individual has a unique interpretation of the world, which can lead to opposing views and, subsequently, controversy. Following this assertion, literature posits that controversies arise when conflicts are rooted in social problems within societies, leading to divergent views (Larsson & Larsson, 2021). Teachers need to understand the meaning of controversial issues, as this comprehension allows them to recognise the importance of addressing controversial topics that may arise in their classrooms. Wassermann and Bentrovato (2018) found that History teachers who mentored pre-service teachers did not permit them to address controversial topics effectively because the pre-service teachers needed to grasp the term and how to approach such issues in the classroom.

5.2.2 Pedagogical understanding of controversial issues.

One of the findings from this study is that respondents regard history as a subject with many topics that highlight differences between people. These topics may include political,

social, and economic issues within the history curriculum. Teachers expressed varying views on what they understand about controversial issues when applied to the context of history. It should be noted that teachers stated that controversial issues in history are those that may lead learners to have different interpretations of what occurred. Fearnside, Davies, Kubota, Tachibana, Kato, and Davis (2022) argue that in teaching history, educators need to explore controversial issues with their learners while considering the complexities involved. This understanding aligns with the CAPS policy document, which stipulates that when teaching history, teachers should expect multiple perspectives from their learners, especially regarding topics that deal with race, gender, class, xenophobia, and genocide (DBE, 2011).

Cassar, Oosterheert, and Meijer (2023) pointed out that in history classrooms, controversial issues are always associated with the subject and may arise unexpectedly during lessons. The participants revealed that the term 'controversial issues' can be easily understood in history because of the multiple perceptions that should be used to analyse and discuss how past human actions have affected the present and influenced the future of societies. According to the caring pedagogy theory, teachers should recognise and value the perspectives that learners bring into the classroom, encouraging empathy and understanding in the learning environment (Moen et al., 2020; Tang & Walker-Gleaves, 2022).

5.2.3 Understanding apartheid as a controversial issue.

Under this theme, the study aimed to understand whether teachers viewed apartheid as a controversial issue in teaching history. The findings revealed that the teachers had differing views on apartheid. The results indicated that not all teachers considered apartheid controversial; some regarded it as controversial without contextualising it as a topic or an event. These teachers did not distinguish between apartheid as a system that affected the livelihood of the country and as a topic learned by Grade 11 History learners. A few individuals contradicted each other when they stated that apartheid is controversial in terms of being an event or a Grade 11 topic. According to Wassermann and Bentrivato (2018), learning about apartheid does indeed cause contradictions in the classroom, and

teachers should be able to address those contradictions in a way that promotes critical thinking among learners.

Apartheid, as a controversial issue, should be understood as causing people to have differing opinions. The topic of apartheid divides societies due to the tensions and emotions that arise from understanding the events associated with the implementation of the system (Pace, 2019). The South African community is characterised by significant social, ethnic, and racial differences, making it challenging to teach apartheid without provoking tension, which may lead to sensitivity and escalated emotions (Alvén, 2024). The researcher agrees with the participants that apartheid is controversial and that if a Black person narrates the story behind the system, they are more likely to focus on the struggles that Black people face. In contrast, a white person may feel the need to apologise for the wrongdoings of the apartheid regime, although some might support the system (Langa et al., 2021).

5. 3 Findings addressing the second objective: What are the challenges experienced by history teachers when teaching apartheid in grade 11 history classrooms?

5.3.1 Lack of learner engagement and understanding.

This study found a lack of learner engagement and understanding as one of the challenges that teachers face in Grade 11 History classrooms when teaching the topic of apartheid in South Africa. The respondents revealed that learners' lack of background knowledge contributed to a lack of engagement in the lessons. It was further indicated that the learners struggle to understand the content learned in history, which results in them needing the confidence to participate in lessons. The results resonate with Dong et al. (2020), who found that learners' lack of classroom engagement is influenced by their prior knowledge of the topic. They also noted that learners' prior knowledge impacts their behaviour, attention, and effort to participate in lessons (Dong et al., 2020).

The findings revealed that teachers are challenged by learners who do not understand the importance of having background information about apartheid. For instance, one teacher mentioned that the reason why learners do not bother to learn about apartheid is the generational gap. Sebbowa and Majani (2021) suggest that the older generation

should have an impact by providing learners with information to assist them during lessons. Teachers added that learners who have limited information are afraid to speak up in the classroom. It is important to note that learners' understanding of the medium of instruction contributes to their inability to comprehend the historical content. The analysis showed that learners do not engage by asking questions but become passive listeners because they lack confidence in participating and fear making mistakes while using English. Adamson (2024) affirms that low learner participation stems from a lack of understanding of the medium of instruction (English) used in schools, which makes learners fearful of making mistakes when speaking the language.

The researcher admits that when learners lack engagement, it is difficult for some teachers to implement the learner-centred teaching method recommended by the CAPS policy. The literature argues that teachers may move from traditional to learner-centred teaching; however, there may be challenges (Dada, Laseinde, & Tartibu, 2023). A learner-centred approach requires learners to participate in lessons while teachers facilitate the classroom. According to Du Plessis (2020), a learner-centred approach to teaching requires teachers to impart multiple skills to learners. The first step teachers can take is to ensure that learners not only understand the subject knowledge (content) but also organise information and develop their learning skills accurately.

The caring pedagogy argues that lack of engagement stems from disconnected or misunderstood learners in the classroom (Noddings, 2010). This theory encourages teachers to create an environment that prioritises learners' needs and interests so that they feel cared for, which might result in learners engaging in lessons to show reciprocity to teachers (Pietersen, 2024).

5.3.2 Bias

Another challenge is that bias arises in History classrooms when teachers address the topic of apartheid in South Africa, affecting both teachers and learners. The participants revealed that bias emerges in their classrooms during this topic due to the influence of ethnic groups. Consequently, they develop empathy for how their groups are portrayed in the curriculum. The data demonstrated that bias occurs within different sections of the

topic and depends on the teacher's perspective, which may result in bias towards the learners.

The results illustrated that controversial issues are complex, and teachers may become biased when presenting lessons to their learners. It is essential for teachers to be aware of their biases and to know how to address issues that lead to bias in classrooms. Mkhomi (2023) emphasises the need for history teachers to be informed about the controversial topics they teach to present unbiased lessons. The findings align with Moen et al. (2020), who state that teachers can demonstrate concern and employ relational practices that encourage development and mutual recognition.

Pietersen (2024) affirms that for learners to engage in positive and active lessons, both teachers and learners must play a vital role in demonstrating care (teachers) and feeling cared for (learners). It is important to note that biases are not encouraged by the curriculum that guides the teachers (CAPS); however, when teachers deliver content to learners, there is always a significant possibility for bias to arise, as learners tend to be passive in classrooms.

5.3.3 Misinformation

The study findings further stipulate that history teachers are challenged by the issue of misinformation from learners. This misinformation about apartheid often stems from the information learners receive from their parents and community members. The participants indicated that the information brought into the classroom can be misleading, as these learners do not validate the information before sharing it with their peers. Petla (2023) defines misinformation as the sharing of false information without the intention to cause harm.

Ponono (2020) argues that "misinformation speaks to longstanding social divisions, which are essentially struggles between opposing interests and outlooks" on social events that affect the country (2020: 11). The information from community members contributes to the misinformation that learners bring into the classroom, as noted in the findings that the limited knowledge learners have about apartheid is likely misled due to the differing interests of community members. Petla (2023) asserts that the use of misinformation does

not imply that an individual has bad intentions; however, the problem arises when individuals trust and share information without validating it.

5.3.4 Emotional connections

Lastly, it was revealed that learners experience emotional connections and sensitivity when they learn about apartheid. The data demonstrated that teachers face the challenge of managing learners' emotions once they show an interest in the topic. It was discovered that emotions, including anger and sympathy, arose among the learners when they discussed the treatment of Black people during the apartheid era. Nussey (2020) asserts that when teaching sensitive and controversial topics, emotions will surface during discussions as they prompt questions. The findings show that teachers do not experience emotions in the same way as learners; however, they attempt to acknowledge learners' emotions by presenting both sides of apartheid, highlighting that Black people were not the only ones facing harsh treatment, as white people opposed to apartheid also experienced difficulties (Maluleka, 2023).

The data further revealed that learners do not feel an emotional connection when the topic is first introduced due to the generational gap between them and those who experienced the events of that time (Bertram, 2020). The learners do not know how to react to the impacts of the apartheid system; however, once they have learned about and unpacked the topic, they react with anger towards those who implemented the system in South Africa. Cassar et al. (2023) argue that teachers need to consider the emotions that learners may feel and move beyond simplistic notions of good or bad feelings regarding a topic, encouraging learners to address the issues collectively as a class.

5. 4 Findings that address the third objective: What strategies can be employed to enhance the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in grade 11 history classrooms?

5.4.1 Interactive engagement as a strategy

The parents and community members play a crucial role in the learners' understanding of apartheid by providing them with information that can lay the foundations for classroom discussions. The findings revealed that encouraging learners to be active in the classroom is essential for making apartheid more approachable and addressing the emotional connections linked to the topic. Research indicates that engaging learners in the learning process is crucial for developing skills that will add value to their education and development as democratic citizens (Maluleka, 2023).

Participants revealed that learners may lack background knowledge; however, teachers create opportunities for learners to acquire knowledge from community members, aiming to encourage interaction with prior knowledge during discussions. Teachers can engage learners in activities ranging from classroom debates to group discussions and pairing them for collaborative work (Kauppi & Drerup, 2021). Another form of engagement teachers can implement involves using resources that require learners to acquire information and answer questions that challenge their historical skills and critical thinking (Flensner, 2020b). Flensner's (2020a) study indicates that teachers prefer to become norm mediators; they allow conversations to unfold in the classroom but do not accept opinions that contradict democratic values.

5.4.2 Discussion method as a strategy to teach apartheid

The semi-structured interview responses indicate that teachers use different lesson discussion strategies to accommodate their learners. The data demonstrated that teachers utilise class discussions, group discussions, pair discussions, and debates to ensure learners participate in teaching and learning. While class discussions and debates may be time-consuming, they are excellent methods for engaging learners in class and sharing ideas with their peers (Flensner, 2020b). Literature also suggests that discussions increase learners' confidence and communication when they receive constructive feedback from their teachers (Sekhar, 2024).

It is evident from the semi-structured interviews that discussions, whether in groups or pairs, allow learners to express their points of view regarding learning apartheid. The researcher agrees that discussions that accommodate learners enable them to analyse

different topics using multiple interpretations. The literature indicates that "small group discussions, classroom debates, and brainstorming present [learners] with opportunities to use historical vocabulary and concepts, attain higher levels of reasoning, and develop historical empathy" (Boadu, Donelly & Heather, 2020). Implementing discussions in classrooms based on the caring pedagogy framework allows teachers and learners to develop positive relationships and a supportive learning environment, encouraging even shy learners to engage and learn (Tang & Walker-Gleaves, 2022).

5.4.3 Teaching resources as a boost to the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue

5.4.3.1. Educational Resources

The study revealed that teachers have differing perspectives regarding the resources they recommend for teaching and learning about apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms. It is evident from the teachers' responses that learners retain information more easily when they have encountered it visually. Teachers indicated that they use the following educational resources: textbooks, study guides, articles, charts, documentaries, and museums. Chan, Oh, and Ma's (2023) study found that using educational resources helps learners gain a better understanding of the topic by providing resources that broaden their perspectives.

The findings indicate that the textbook "New Generation" is the most recommended resource by the teachers, as it aligns with the CAPS policy document. Bertram (2020) argues that the textbooks used to teach history should adhere to the CAPS curriculum, as it aims to develop learners' citizenship and skills in historical inquiry. According to the teachers, the book contains accessible information for learners, ranging from vocabulary to pictures and maps. The researcher agrees with the participants that the "New Generation" learner's textbook offers a detailed exploration of the topic, promotes multiperspectivity, assists learners in working with evidence, and effectively illustrates the cause and effect, change and continuity, and time and chronology of apartheid.

5.4.3.2. Multimedia resources

Lastly, the study revealed that adding multimedia resources to educational materials encourages learners to engage in lessons. Teachers' responses from the semi-structured

interviews indicated that using multimedia positively impacts learner engagement, as it prompts learners to ask questions, suggesting they are paying attention. According to Vagg, Balta, Bolger, and Lone (2020), learners have shown interest in using multimedia for educational purposes. Teachers noted that when teaching the topic of apartheid, introducing films, documentaries, and other visual aids was the most effective way for learners to engage critically. Literature indicates that resources such as "e-books, videos, animations, blogs, web pages, and digital games" assist classroom learners (Moro, Smith, & Stromberga, 2019:72).

The researcher noted that one participant revealed he uses WhatsApp as a platform to share information and provide additional readings and audio files to the learners; this indicates that learners are being exposed to the digital world. Patle (2023) argues that the digital world allows misinformation to spread quickly. Consequently, teachers are encouraged to inform and guide their learners to fact-check the information they receive from digital platforms. Findings revealed that participants advocated for the use of short videos and films to present visuals of the events that transpired during the apartheid era. These videos help learners gain a clearer understanding of the events, thus avoiding criticism without comprehension. Previous research shows that visuals and media are effective ways to demonstrate to learners the importance of obtaining information from diverse resources (Abdulrahman et al., 2020; Flensner, 2020a; Tallavaara & Rautiainen, 2020).

5. 5 Discussion of the findings

This study examined how experienced history teachers address the complex and sensitive topic of apartheid as a controversial issue. Apartheid introduced many complexities to the country, and teaching it to a generation that is unfamiliar with its history presents a significant challenge for educators. The study explored the strategies used by teachers to teach apartheid as a controversial issue.

5.5.1 Unique understanding of controversial issues

Teachers shared that they perceived the term "controversial issues" differently, indicating that it referred to topics that spark debates and differing perceptions due to their complexity, sensitivity, or connection to social, political, cultural, or ethical issues. To fully

address the teaching of controversial issues in history, it is essential to understand the conceptualisation of these issues and the possible challenges that may arise when teaching such topics.

5.5.2 Challenges associated with teaching controversial issues

Teachers often perceive learners as passive participants who do not engage in discussions. The study revealed that teachers face challenges such as misinformation, bias, and emotional connections when addressing the topic of apartheid. These challenges render the topic controversial, as they lead to discussions where learners may not share a common understanding. Fostering a learning environment in which learners actively partake in their education seems impossible due to the emotions they carry from the knowledge gained from their community members or parents.

5.5.3 Teaching Strategies

The study explored the teaching methods and resources used by history teachers to address the sensitivity of apartheid while conveying historical facts. Teachers indicated that an interactive approach, which encourages learners to participate in lessons through discussions (including group discussions, class debates, or pair work) and the use of various resources, helps develop learners' intellectual and emotional literacy regarding the topic.

5. 6 Possible contribution of this study

While there has been research on teaching controversial issues in history, there is limited focus on experienced teachers' perceptions of teaching apartheid as a topic in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, particularly in Grade 11. The current study offers insights into how experienced history teachers can engage learners in discussions that promote historical inquiry when learning about apartheid in South Africa.

This study contributes to the field by:

Promoting active learning

The study highlights the types of resources (*manuscripts (handwritten diaries, letters and notebooks), printed text (books, newspapers and websites), video or film, photographs, drawings, paintings or cartoons, and oral sources (interviews, stories and songs)*),

recommended by the CAPS (DoBE, 2011: 9) curriculum that teachers can utilise to teach about apartheid while encouraging learners to participate more actively in the lessons. By utilising these varied materials, teachers can create more engaging and interactive lessons that encourage learners to participate actively and think critically about historical events.

Enhancing understanding of teacher perception

By paying attention to the study, experienced teachers can discover unique perspectives and strategies for teaching controversial topics in history. This information can help them equip themselves to handle these topics effectively in the classroom.

Encouraging social justice and reconciliation

This study contributes to broader efforts to foster social justice and reconciliation in postapartheid South Africa by promoting a neutral understanding of apartheid. Teachers who grasp the various perspectives on controversial issues and are well-prepared for teaching can help learners appreciate the complexities of these issues and the importance of building a more equitable and inclusive future.

Supporting historical inquiry

This study's findings emphasise the role of historical inquiry in teaching and learning controversial issues by fostering a learning environment that enables learners to ask questions, analyse sources, and engage in discussions. Encouraging historical inquiry enhances learners' ability to gain historical knowledge and promotes critical thinking and empathy when exploring controversial topics.

5.7 Methodological reflection of this study

This study interviewed five history teachers with at least five years of experience in the uThukela District. Semi-structured interviews were appropriate for this study as they allowed participants to share their experiences of teaching history in Grade 11 classrooms. Through these interviews, the study captured the teachers' multiple perspectives on the teaching and learning of apartheid. Additionally, this study analysed the CAPS document and three history textbooks (two learner's books and one teacher's

guide) to support the information gathered from the teachers and to demonstrate that they adhere to the teaching methods prescribed by the curriculum.

5. 8 Recommendations

The study found that teachers with experience still use traditional teaching methods due to the lack of engagement from the learners. It is recommended that teachers adopt a learner-centred approach to teaching about apartheid using a caring pedagogy.

Teachers can navigate the teaching of apartheid as a controversial issue by following these strategies:

Promote multiperspectivity and critical thinking: Teachers should encourage learners to critically engage with the historical content using multiple perspectives to understand the complexities of implementing the apartheid system and how it provided diverse experiences to the nation. Teachers could also find time to reflect with learners at the end of each lesson.

Strengthen empathy and compassion: Learners should be taught about empathy when addressing issues such as apartheid, as these topics evoke emotions and sensitivity towards people. Teachers should not shy away from discussing the social injustices that resulted from the era of apartheid; however, they should understand the legacy of apartheid while promoting social change through empathy and compassion.

Facilitate a safe environment for discussions: Teachers should foster a learning environment where learners feel comfortable discussing and asking questions about apartheid, guiding them to engage in respectful discussions and respect others' responses. Classroom discussions should be inclusive and enable learners to feel safe sharing their thoughts.

Teacher development: Pre-service teachers are trained to teach controversial issues in universities. The Department of Basic Education should take measures to assist experienced history teachers with training on how to address and teach controversial issues.

Resources: To accommodate learners' diverse learning styles and interests, teachers must recognise that learners are different and use resources that align with their preferences. Teachers should consider incorporating online resources and digital tools to engage learners' interests using the internet.

5. 9 Direction for future research

This study employed a qualitative research approach to investigate teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning about apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms. It opened new avenues for understanding learners' perspectives on the topic of apartheid in South Africa at this educational level. I suggest that the future trajectory of research on the teaching of controversial topics should adopt a quantitative research approach, as this will enable researchers to gather data from a larger sample of teachers and/or learners.

5. 10 Limitations of this study

It should be noted that the original plan was to conduct interviews with teachers from Ladysmith, Estcourt, and Bergville. However, the researcher was only able to connect with teachers from Bergville and Estcourt, who were enthusiastic about participating in the study. Nonetheless, the researcher successfully obtained data as planned and followed the correct procedures. Additionally, this study revealed that learners require assistance with the medium of instruction in schools, which complicates the implementation of a learner-centred teaching method by teachers. This issue was not addressed in this study, as the focus was on teachers.

5. 11 Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for teaching apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 history classrooms using the theoretical framework of caring pedagogy. It also includes methodological reflections, limitations of the study, and directions for future research. The study revealed that teaching controversial issues requires teachers to demonstrate care when addressing these topics, as they may evoke strong feelings. The teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue presents unique challenges and opportunities in the educational environment.

This research highlighted the importance of using care as an approach to acknowledge the complexities and sensitivities associated with teaching and learning about apartheid. Effective delivery of the curriculum requires teachers to foster critical thinking, empathy, care, and an understanding of the historical context among learners. Engaging learners through multiple perspectives and encouraging group discussions will assist them in navigating the moral and ethical dimensions of controversial concepts. In conclusion, the findings emphasise the need for inclusive classrooms that foster a caring environment to address sensitive and controversial topics, as well as classrooms that encourage critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving skills, and communication among learners.

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5. 13 Appendixes

Appendix A- Ethical Clearance Certificate



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

26-Mar-2024

Dear Ms Londeka Mazibuko

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Exploring the Teaching and Learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11 History Classrooms

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2023/2286

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted via an Amendment on RIMS to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit a Final Report on RIMS for your study/research project to the ethics office once the project has concluded. Should you require more time than the allotted 12 months to complete this research, please apply for an extension by submitting a Continuation/Report on RIMS. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Dr Adri
du
Plessis

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Adri du Plessis
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Appendix B- Permission Letter from the KwaZulu Natal Department of Basic Education



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 392 1051

Email: buyi.ntuli@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Mrs B.T. Ntuli

Ref.:2/4/8/7627

Ms Londeka Mazibuko
Private Bag 1612
BERGVILLE
3350

Dear MS Mazibuko

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING THE TEACHING LEARNING OF APARTHEID AS A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE IN GRADE 11 HISTORY CLASSROOMS:"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from **30th November 2023 to 31st August 2026**.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Mr GN Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 30th November 2023

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix C- Letter to the Principal



To School Principal

Request for permission to conduct research

My name is Londeka Mazibuko. I am a Master's student at the Faculty of Education, University of Free State. I am currently undertaking a research project entitled *Exploring the Teaching and Learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11 History Classrooms*. I am kindly requesting permission to conduct research in your school. All information generated for this study will be treated with confidentiality. To protect the school's and the participants' identity, pseudonyms will be used. One teacher will be requested to participate in this study by being interviewed.

The study will use one data collection method, namely interviews. Information provided will be treated with confidentiality, and pseudonyms will be used. The participants can withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish, without any penalties. The study will not be conducted during working hours. Should you encounter any problems during this research project, please feel free to contact me using the following contact details: 061 948 2485 or MazibukoL@ufs.ac.za

Thank you.

Permission to contact the study

I, _____ (Principal's name), confirm that the person asking my permission to contact research in the school in which I am a principal has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits, and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to grant permission. I understand that the participation of the selected learners, teachers and members of SMT is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the *insert-specific data collection method*.

Full Name of the Principal: _____

Signature of the Principal: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D - Leaflet and Consent Form



Research study information leaflet and consent form

Date of the research project:

01 March 2024

Title of the research project

Exploring the Teaching and Learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11 History Classrooms.

Principle investigator/researcher (s) name(s) and contact number(s):

Mazibuko Londeka 2017373156 061 948 2485 / 068 140 8379

Faculty and Department:

Name of Faculty: Education

Name of Department: Social Sciences and Commerce Education

Study leader(s) name and contact number:

Dr Oyinlola Adebola (UFS staff member)

Contact number: 058 718 5344

Supervisor

Dr Boitumelo Moreeng (UFS staff member)

Contact number: 051 401 9019 Co-supervisor

What is the aim/purpose of the study?

This study aims to explore how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in grade 11 History classrooms.

Who is doing the research?

I am Londeka Mazibuko (the researcher), and working under the supervision of Dr Adebola and Dr Moreeng. I am doing this research to explore the teaching and learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade 11 History classrooms.

Has the study received ethical approval?

This study has received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UFS. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2023/2286

Why are you invited to take part in this research project?

This research project fulfils the requirements for the Master of Education degree qualification in Social Sciences Education. The participants were chosen because they are History teachers in Grade 11. The



estimated number of participants is 5. These participants must be History teachers with five years of experience teaching History in Grade 11.

What is the nature of participation in this study?

The participant's role will be to answer the questions of this study. *The study involves audio recording and semi-structured interviews.* This study is keen to know how History teachers navigate the teaching and learning of Apartheid in Grade 11 classrooms by looking at the teachers' understanding of the term "controversial issue", the challenges that the teachers face when teaching Apartheid and the strategies that they use to enhance the teaching of controversial issues.

The expected duration of participation and the time needed to complete specific research activities as semi-structured interviews are within three months. The time allocated to conduct interviews is 40 minutes per participant. The study has no risks as teachers are adults who can decide to remain or withdraw from the study.

Can the participant withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you decide to participate, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign a written consent form.

You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

Your participation will contribute to the scientific knowledge that helps teachers discuss controversial topics in a balanced and non-emotional manner in History classrooms, enabling learners to develop respect for different and conflicting opinions and appreciate divergent views from persons of different backgrounds.

Furthermore, it will help teachers and learners to develop the ability to adapt to the ever-changing global and classroom environments. Your participation in the study will be kept confidential.

What is the anticipated inconvenience of taking part in this study?

Possible or reasonably foreseeable side-effects to the potential participants are that their teaching time will be affected, and to avoid this, the researcher will conduct interviews when the teachers are not having classes. The researcher will ask the teachers to indicate when they will be accessible so they can do the interview.

Will what I say be kept confidential?

Yes, confidentiality of information will be maintained. Your name will not be recorded anywhere, and no one can connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a pseudonym, and you will be

referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Only the researcher and supervisors will access the data, and confidentiality will be maintained by signing a confidentiality agreement. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for ensuring that research is done correctly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, only people working in research can access records that identify you if you allow others to see the records. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as research reports, articles, conference presentations, etc. A study report may be submitted for publication, but the individual participants will not be identifiable in the report. However, the researcher will try to ensure that you will not be connected to the information you share in the interview. You are not obligated to participate in the study and can stop participating anytime without hassle.

How will the information be stored and ultimately destroyed?

The researcher will store hard copies of your answers for two years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at the University of the Free State. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer for future research or academic purposes. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. There are no anticipated risks associated with the study.

Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

No payment or incentives will be received in this study.

How will the participant be informed of the findings/results of the study?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please get in touch with Londeka Mazibuko at 061 948 2484 / 2017373156@ufs4life.ac.za. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please get in touch with 061 948 2485 / 2017373156@ufs4life.ac.za. Should you have concerns about how the research has been conducted, you may contact 058 718 5344/AdebolaOO@ufs.ac.za (supervisor). There are no risks associated with this research.

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

Consent to participate in this study

I, the undersigned,

(participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")
confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in relation to

_____ and which Study is being conducted by

_____ (insert the name of the researcher), (the "Researcher").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that–

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the <insert specific data collection method>.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E - Research instrument

Londeka Mazibuko

2017373156

Exploring the Teaching and Learning of Apartheid as a Controversial Issue in Grade
11 History Classrooms

Interview Questions

Main research question

How are History teachers navigating the teaching and learning of apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11 History classrooms?

Sub-questions

1. How do History teachers understand the concept of controversial issues?

- In your terms, can you please define "Apartheid as a controversial issue in History"?
- How do you introduce the topic "Apartheid" in your Grade 11 History classroom?

2. What are the challenges experienced by History teachers when teaching apartheid?

- Which challenges do you face when teaching Apartheid as a controversial issue in Grade 11?
- Which challenge do you associate with teaching controversial issues?
- Does the learner-centered approach work in the teaching of Apartheid in History classrooms?

3. What strategies can be employed to enhance teaching and learning of Apartheid as a controversial issue?

- How do you present the teaching of Apartheid as a controversial issue in the classroom that promotes learning?
- What strategies do you use to enhance the teaching and learning of CI in History?
- Are there particular strategies you use to teach Apartheid as a controversial issue in the classroom? If yes, what are they?
- Which of the strategies mentioned above work well for you when teaching CI? And why?

Appendix F- Title Registration

16 October 2023

APPLICATION FOR TITLE REGISTRATION

Applicant: Mazibuko, L

Student Number: 2017373156

Discipline: Subject Education in Social Sciences

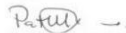
Study Code: Masters (EDCS8900)

Dear Ms Mazibuko

Your registered title is as follows: *"EXPLORING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF APARTHEID AS A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE IN GRADE 11 HISTORY CLASSROOMS"*

All of the best with your studies.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Patrick Mafora
Chair: CTR committee



Ms CS Duvenhage
Secretary: CTR committee



Appendix G: Language Editing Certificate

