

**Teachers' pedagogical experiences in the  
context of Open Educational Practices**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the experiences of teachers who are engaged with Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in the Mauritian context. It discusses their contextual pedagogical experiences, approaches, and silences as they engage with free online OERs. To date, little has been written about how Mauritian teachers explore OERs in the context of their professional practice; and voices from the southern hemisphere, in which Mauritius is situated, have been underrepresented, for OER-related discussions are dominated by the North and West. This study addresses this gap by representing the voices and silences of teachers from Mauritius in relation to their experience with OERs.

Given that Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) synthesises technology and pedagogy as a model, I used it as a theoretical lens to critically evaluate its relevance and appropriateness given the complex context within which teachers in Mauritius work with OERs and OEPs.

I used a narrative inquiry approach to elicit teachers' stories, including the often silenced and marginalised elements therein, to gain insights into their perspectives relating to how they conceptualise teaching today, and how they perceive that this view has been influenced by their engagement with OEPs. I conducted in-depth interviews with 14 practising teachers in Mauritius. The findings revealed that teachers are mindful, but not exclusively passionate about OEPs, and that their experiences are dominated by contextual truths and sensibilities emanating from their professional practice. These are expressed through the contextual characteristics as experienced by the teachers and the three themes namely working with OERs and OEPs, working with OERs using technology, and teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs. The findings also revealed added insights through the analytical lens of commonplace as context; temporality, sociality and place.

A key finding from the study is that unless 'context' as subjectively lived and experienced by teachers is taken into consideration, TPACK as an education model will be misinterpreted by education professionals and teachers. The context in which teachers are situated, its complex and dynamic form influences the pedagogy of teachers as they work with OEPs today. The study proposes the emergence of a 'framework of pedagogy in context' that acknowledges the value of temporality, sociality and place, and situates 'context' at the centre of teachers' pedagogy in the current Mauritian educational landscape.

**Keywords:** Technology, pedagogy, narrative inquiry, commonplaces, context, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Open Educational Resources, Open Educational Practices

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## List of Acronyms

CC	Creative Commons
CCEM	Commonwealth Conference for Education Ministers
CK	Content Knowledge
CODL	Centre for Open and Distance Learning
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CPE	Certificate of Primary Education
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPP	Computer Proficiency Programme
DE	Distance Education
DETA	Distance Education for Teachers in Africa
Démarche	French word for venture
GTU	Government Teachers' Union
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
LLB	Bachelor of Law
MCA	Mauritius College of the Air
MES	Mauritius Examinations Syndicate
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MGI	Mahatma Gandhi Institute
MIE	Mauritius Institute of Education
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEHR	Ministry of Education and Human Resources
MOESR	Ministry of Education and Scientific Research
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MQA	Mauritius Qualifications Authority
MRU	Mauritius
NAEC	National Accreditation and Equivalence Council
NBP	National Broadband Policy
NCB	National Computer Board
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NYS	Nine Year schooling
OERs	Open Educational Resources

OER18	Open Education Resources 2018 Conference
OER4OS	Open Educational Resources for Open Schools
OEPs	Open Educational Practices
ODL	Open and Distance learning
OUM	Open University Mauritius
OU UK	Open University UK
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PSAC	Primary School Achievement Certificate
PVE	Prevocational Education
QAD	Quality Assurance Division
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAIDE	South African Institute for Distance Education
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TDP	Teacher's Diploma Primary
TCP	Teachers' Certificate Primary
TESSA	Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TT	Trainee Teachers
TTE	Trainee Teachers' Engagement
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge
UBS	United Bus Services
UOM	University of Mauritius
USA	United States of America
UTM	University of Technology, Mauritius
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VCILT	Virtual Centre for Innovative Learning Technologies
VUSSC	Virtual Island for Small Island State Countries
ZEP	Zone d'Education Prioritaire

## **Acknowledgments**

In the cradle of knowledge seeker lies curiosity, knowledge, intelligence, aesthetic oddness and humility. These nourish, mystify and demystify the quest and are the very object and purpose of the quest. Ultimately all giants are beginners...

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## **Author's Declaration**

*I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. This thesis has not been previously submitted to any university for a degree and does not incorporate material already submitted for a degree.*

*Signed: P. Auckloo*

*Dated: 12.08.2019*

## **1.0 Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This thesis explores the pedagogical experiences of teachers in Mauritius who are familiar with Open Educational Resources (OERs) and have used these at some point during their career as teachers. The thesis details the pedagogical experiences of teachers engaged with OERs, reflecting what these experiences reveal about teachers' approaches to teaching and learning today.

The purpose of the current chapter 1 is to offer a general overview of the focus of the study in relation to the Mauritian context and situate the context of OERs and OEPs therein. I also describe my motivations that led the current investigation and offer my formative reflections while the actual aims of the research and research questions will be detailed at the end of the chapter 2 in section 2.8.4.

OERs are defined as educational materials, made freely available, through technology, for consultation, use, or adaptation on a non-commercial basis. Downes (2011, paragraph 1) identifies them as “materials used to support education that may be freely accessed, reused, modified and shared by anyone”. These are published under a Creative Commons (CC) licence and are predominantly available from online sources.

OEPs are identified as practices which support the (re)use and production of high-quality OERs through institutional policies. They promote innovative pedagogical models and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning path (Andrade et al., 2011). Openness refers to openness of access, admission to a programme, resources and one's ability to determine one's own educational progress and course of studies. (Daniel, 2012).

In the context of this study, the concept ‘familiarity with OERs’ includes teachers having knowledge of OERs and experience of using them in educational projects, either currently or in the past. This includes the creation, appropriation and adaptation of resources to suit their teaching and learning needs.

The focus of the study was examined through two main lenses: first, the theoretical perspective of technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra and Koehlers, 2006; 2007; Koehler and Mishra, 2009) served as a theoretical lens to gain pedagogical insights into teachers' pedagogy in the context of their professional practice. Second, a methodological investigation using a narrative inquiry (Goodson, 2013; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) served to gain contextual understanding of ways in which teachers' lives and stories matter (Bruner, 1990) as they conceptualise teaching in the current Mauritian context, engaging with OERs and OEPs.

What follows is an overview of the contexts viewed from the perspectives mentioned above, which serve as grounding for this investigation.

## **1.2 My professional context and origin of the study**

In earlier projects, completed as part of my EdD, I investigated how in-service teachers engaged with OERs and sought to understand their perceptions and practices as they translated OERs into OEPs. While these projects shed light on in-service teachers' engagement with these resources and practices in real classroom situations, they did not enable a deep understanding of how teachers, who are familiar with OERs, relate to pedagogy or their professional practice in the Mauritian context. This study seeks to address this gap, focusing on learning that could be derived for the benefit of this wider community or stakeholders such as teachers and researchers involved in OERs. The question: "What is happening out there?" prompted me to frame the study in a way which allowed me to move beyond studying only the classroom practices of OERs and led me to analyse teachers' practices in relation to OERs in the broader school and social context. I also realised that my earlier studies focused primarily on what I, as a researcher, wished to know about OEPs and OERs, rather than focusing on, what teachers wanted to tell me about their practices. This thesis extends my earlier research boundaries and furthers the theoretical and methodological views to develop deeper understandings about what more can be learnt from teachers' use of OERs in the current Mauritian context.

This study is also based on my experience as a Senior Lecturer in the field of education and pedagogy at the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE). It involves my work in OER projects at a time when OERs were hardly used or discussed at MIE in 2009. The pioneering works then started in particular with the Open University, UK (OU, UK) and Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA). TESSA is a consortium tending to explore and promote

Universal Primary Education and the Education for All agenda through the provision of open and distance materials, and the improvement of access to education (Wolfenden et al., 2009; Moon et al., 2007).

As someone who is passionate about the use of OERs in Teacher Education, I have for a long time extended my interests to academic research that focuses on how teachers use, or engage with OERs and OEPs. Over the years, I became increasingly aware about the gaps and challenges in this field in particular those related to teachers' pedagogy and adoption of a theoretical lens and model. These reflections shaped my orientation as a practitioner-researcher in the field of OERs, engaging constantly with the theoretical, practical and contextual dimensions. These led me to adopt a particular approach to relevant research, debates and conferences I illustrate in chapter 2. I also acknowledge my rich understanding of the context of the Mauritian education system as a former primary and secondary school teacher. This includes my familiarity and professional interactions with government public primary and secondary personnel and schools.

### **1.3 The Mauritian Context**

The Republic of Mauritius is an independent democratic small island state, geographically located to the east of Madagascar, in the Indian Ocean. With a population of 1.3 million, the country boasts a peaceful political and social climate and 50 years of independence. The six-year primary education programme starting at the age of five, was officially proclaimed free in 1976. This was followed by free secondary education in 1977 (Rughooputh, 2003). In 1988 tertiary education was also proclaimed to be free; at that time the focus on education in agriculture was given the priority economic drive of the country. Today the priorities have changed and the economy has moved from an agriculture based economy to a multi-sector based economy. As per the Education Act of 2004, the Mauritian education system mandates a compulsory one-year pre-primary schooling and primary education for six years; followed by secondary schooling or 'college and/or vocational system' requiring compulsory schooling until the age of 16.

#### **1.3.1 Education in Mauritius today**

Since the introduction in 2015 of the new National Curriculum Framework (NCF), (MIE 2015) provisions have shifted to a nine-year basic schooling (NYS) instead of a six-year

basic primary education. The new system also makes provision for secondary academic and vocational streaming to be more inclusive.

As at 2016, there were 318 primary schools and 173 secondary schools in the country, with several institutions and universities offering courses in teacher education. The schools are run either as public institutions, private government-aided schools, or privately funded schools. Some private fee-paying schools opt to follow a British or a French education model.

The Mauritian education system has for long been critiqued as a competitive one that encourages elitism first (Morabito et al. 2017). The Ministry of Education (MOE) has attempted to terminate competition at the end of primary schooling, commonly termed as the ‘rat race’, by making equal provision for low-performing students. Popular measures included the establishment of Zone d’Education Prioritaire (ZEP) schools with the view to supporting low-performing schools at primary level. However, the traditional contrast between elite schools and ZEP schools led to the labelling of ‘ZEP Schools’ as poor performing schools. Recent measures such as the nine-year schooling project (NYS) were meant to adopt a less elitist, less discriminative and local or pro-regional approach. The measures included the adoption of a more inclusive philosophy and use of innovative pedagogies to encourage more success stories than failures. The first outcome of this initiative was indicated by the results of the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) that reached a 77.7% pass rate (<http://www.govmu.org>).

The Mauritian education system is experiencing a time of change owing to the implementation of the NCF and NYS. New curriculum textbooks and materials are being developed mainly for primary schools and lower secondary classes by the MIE, by means of a digitalised curriculum. The process involves not only teachers who are the core agents to drive the change; but also students, parents and other stakeholders and service providers who influence the education and schooling system.

### **1.3.2 Teacher education in the Mauritian context**

The MIE was set up in 1973 to provide training to in-service and pre-service primary and secondary school teachers, as well as various stakeholders in education. The MIE is responsible for the development and implementation of the National Curriculum, including the writing of materials, and development of learning assessment tools while collaborating

with all stakeholders in education. Other institutions such as Open University Mauritius (OUM), University of Mauritius (UOM), University of Technology Mauritius (UTM), as well as Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) also offer educational services in teacher education, whether in collaboration with MIE, or on their own. However, in April 2018, MIE remains the main public teacher-education service provider in the country; and has recently been proclaimed as a degree-awarding institution in recognition of its increasing contribution and importance in the educational landscape for decades, specialising in teacher education.

Apart from MIE, there are other institutions involved in teacher training. With the setting up of the Mauritius Qualification Authority (MQA) and the National Accreditation and Equivalence Council (NAEC), the focus increasingly shifted to lifelong learning and continuous development plan for teachers (MOE, 2004). This plan suggested that teachers would be the agents of change and drive the ambition to ‘transform Mauritius into a Cyber Island’ (p.13. 2004). A framework for ICT was set up and a mass training in Computer Proficiency Programme (CPP) for teachers and the general population started in 2002. In 2004 the government also expressed the need to activate e-Education and e-Training, transforming the Mauritius College of the Air into Open University Mauritius (OUM) in 2014. Today the OUM proposes courses up to doctoral level to teachers mainly through distance education channels.

However, issues related to teacher education are deeper than provision of courses or training. Rughooputh (2003) shifts the debate from an ICT-driven culture and argues that the quality of teaching and private tuition by teachers are largely to be blamed for our failures:

“Teachers need to be trained on more innovative teaching methodologies to capture the interest of the students. Teachers and the teaching profession have to be accorded the status deserved, for good teachers make for good professionals in later life (Rughooputh, 2003, p.10). The latter also indicates: “Absenteeism is becoming very acute, especially during the weeks preceding examinations. Poor teaching, teachers' absence, some unscrupulous teachers, private tuition, and fierce competition have been identified as the main causal factors...” (Rughooputh, 2003, p.15).

This indicates that the debate is not about the Cyber Island, but more about measures that have to be taken with regards to contextual issues such as absenteeism, and perceptions about poor teaching. For, if teachers are to be considered agents and allies of change by policy makers, then more research is required judging on the quality of teaching and poor

achievement (Ibid). This would help to shift the debate from blaming teachers to contextual analysis of the realities of the context (micro, meso and macro).

### **1.3.3 The requirements for teaching in Mauritius**

Currently, all teachers in Mauritius need to undergo mandatory training and certification at some point in time. These are offered mainly by the MIE throughout the year through multi-modal approaches, including distance or face to face, blended modes and workshops for pre-service and in-service teachers. The MIE trains more than 3500 of these teachers per year and is also involved with local and external universities to provide certification at Master's and Doctoral-level.

As a public service provider, the MIE is constantly under public scrutiny; and public audits for public accountability are a regular practice (TEC, 2013). It is the main organisation responsible for curriculum planning and implementation of changes in education. Teacher education is always evolving at MIE; and the programmes are regularly reviewed to ensure their appropriateness in changing times. However, there is another important feature of the Mauritian context that influences teacher training, which is 'Policy on ICT'.

### **1.3.4 Mauritian National Policy on Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and the Cyber Island**

The country is experiencing significant growth in the ICT sector which targets change in the way of life of its citizens in a number of public and private sectors. As of 2012, the ambition of the government was to see Mauritius make progress in the field of ICT, and become a leader in the region. Proposed measures included fastest Internet connectivity, including undersea cable by 2020, and broadband access to every citizen to multiply access to Internet, email and communication for personal and business use (MICT, 2012). To meet this target, the National Computer Board (NCB) was set up to advise the Mauritian Government on the formulation of national policies for the development of the IT culture in the country (ICTA, 2004, p.4). One of its roles was also to develop educational and pedagogical tools for the general public and to promote the broadband culture in the population, in collaboration with educational institutions. This clearly showed the ambition to turn the island into a high-ICT-user platform, and attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through the use of ICT as a tool (MICT, 2012).

One monitoring report showed an increase in the number of students enrolled in an ICT-dominated field at tertiary level from 3,475 in 2009/2010 to 3,694 in 2010/2011 (MICT, 2012, p.17-18). In March 2010, the report indicated that 56% of the students in primary schools had been provided with Internet compared to 20% in 2009. Today the number of households accessing Internet has significantly increased; and the promises of integration also include sectors such as healthcare, education, energy management, transport systems, emergency services, among others.

The ambition became a vision to “transform Mauritius into a people-centred, development-oriented Information Society that allows optimal opportunities for all, government, citizens and businesses alike, to participate fully in the Mauritian Broadband Ecosystem thus lowering geographic barriers and minimising socioeconomic disparities” (MICT, 2012 p. 28).

The report then recommended the establishment of standards to be adopted for locating, sharing, and licensing digital educational content; and recommended that the MOE consider legislative actions to encourage copyright holders to grant educational digital rights of use without prejudicing their other rights. The intention was to encourage collaborative creative works and consider a necessary legislative framework to allow Creative Commons Licences especially in research and education/pedagogy. In 2017, these efforts led to a ministerial speech claiming the usefulness and relevance of the OERs policy while proposing the Port Louis OER Declaration (COL 2017, E-Learning Africa conference 2017).

In education, the measures to drive the ICT policy can also be ambiguous from educational and political perspectives. Jugee and Santally (2016) indicate one such project – a tablet computer (PC) project, which was launched in 2013 resulting in tablets being freely distributed to students. However, this led to some ‘controversy for teaching staff but quite a good experience for students’ (p. 14). Teachers themselves were not very familiar with the project and they needed more guidance. Initiatives such as the distribution of 24000 tablets in 2014 to Form four students (age 15) and the Sankore ICT project are further elaborated in Chapter 2.

#### **1.4 Value of OERs from a global perspective**

There are clear statements about the value of OERs in teacher education. This implies an understanding of ‘feasibility and accessibility’ (Wiley and Gurrell, 2009; Wolfenden et al.,

2009:2010). It also poses questions related to globalisation, international and local policy. Globalisation and education are strongly interrelated with teacher education, technology, and teaching and learning imperatives (Appadurai, 1990; Hooks, 1994). International policies are adopted locally through international protocols, funding and agreements (Mazurek et al., 2000; Conole, 2010), with the intention of using ICT tools to influence education across the world. However, this international stance that seeks to influence local policies poses questions about homogenisation, heterogenisation and the use and influence of ICT in education (Stromquist and Monkman, 2000). While globalisation influences teacher education and schooling across the world, it is yet to be weighed against the local priorities and influences. Globalisation transmits the need to standardise practices and policies but is also associated with a loss of identity, especially for developing countries (Cassanova, 1996). Globalisation also exacerbates social problems in developing countries that are not able to compete and keep pace with the fast innovation entailed, for instance, by the use of ICT for instance.

The implication therefore resides in evaluating the pertinence and relevance of international policies, rather than adopting a standardised approach to the appropriation of ICT without due consideration of the context and the dynamics involved in each country. A similar challenge is comparable for OERs which as an ‘imported’ concept emanated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States of America (USA), and was transmitted to the whole world in 2002 through the adoption of a universal definition of OERs. While developed countries in the west adopt and promote the use of ICT and OERs as part of the international and global agenda, developing countries have their realities and context which need examination prior to consideration or adoption of same. Therefore, when Mauritius began to use OERs, it signalled its affinity with the global agenda; but without an adequate examination of the applicability in the local context.

Since 2002, initiatives related to OERs including digitalisation and appropriation in teacher education have multiplied. Research in this field is emerging in higher-education institutions (Lane, 2012). Maturation models of OERs, including frameworks for their use in education, are still being developed, relating also to the respective contexts. In spite of emerging models in Australia, New Zealand and European countries (Lane, 2012), there is still a dearth of frameworks in Openness and OERs and OEPs; and the field is also laden with assumptions that OERs mean online or distance learning. Mauritius has also been heavily influenced by models from other countries; and these associations include UNISA, Open and Distance

Learning programmes and SAIDE (South African Institute for Distance Education). These influences signal reception of several models of use of OERs without necessarily weighing the implications and defining a direction that is in line with any policy so far. For instance, the University of Mauritius (UOM), the University of Technology (UTM), as well as the MIE, are all now using OERs in different ways. This multiplicity and value difference prompts further investigation.

The literature in the domain of OERs is recent and there are developments being made in the field now; however, there is a gap on how practitioner led pedagogy in OERs may be analysed against a theoretical stance that is contextual (Downes, 2007; Santally, 2010). Instead, the literature was dominated by a ‘globalised’ and Eurocentric view of how OERs may be put to education stakeholders which front lined the use of technology or online learning (Conrad and Donaldson, 2004). This further widens the gap between knowledge from theory and knowledge from practice (educators’ practice) as well as contextual knowledge from the local environment in which OERs are put to use.

I argue that there is much to be learnt from the experiences of teachers in relation to OEPs in a small island state such as Mauritius in the current context or what I relate to as ‘Pedagogy in Context’.

This reflection prompted the following formative questions that helped to phrase the actual research questions detailed in section 2.8.4:

- What may be learned from practitioners’ experiences of OEPs in the current Mauritian context?
- How may an authentic framework or approach for the use of OERs be constructed?

One possible way of arriving at a contextual understanding of OERs is to consider various quarters, voices, and case studies at micro level, looking for ‘little OERs’ (Rennie and Weller, 2010). These come from smaller sites of practice, which can inform how OERs move from an online- or digital-based platform to a real one or in a practical landscape (Wolfenden et al., 2009). These, in turn, could influence policy that is contextually relevant.

## **1.5 Mauritius on the OER map**

In the Mauritian context, teacher education and training are under the mandate of the MIE (MIE, 2000) and the context is still influenced by the aftermath of a colonised system

(Appadurai, 1990). My professional experience led me to examine whether the MIE still appropriates standards and trends in educational policy according to a Western/British standard, or Eurocentric approach in education and teacher education. This presupposes the west as ‘the models’ and marginalises the South-South cooperation in education models such as Africa and Asia, including China and India which influenced the development of OERs in Mauritius.

### **1.5.1 The development of OERs in Mauritius**

According to Goorah et al. (2013), the use of OERs and Open Source Software (OSS) is recent in the Mauritian context and it is important to promote the use of OERs and educational technologies to advance the educational agendas. In Mauritius, OERs can mainly be accessed from online sources. These originate from various parts of the world; and several factors determine their use, adoption, and development. While some institutions interested in OERs insist on the creation and digitalisation of resources, others make use of already available resources for institutional use. It is also possible to access OERs online on an individual basis without institutionalising these.

There have been representations of OER-related projects in education in Mauritius either through individual projects or research initiatives. My own involvement in these initiatives included the development of an elective Module on OERs in 2010 in the Teachers’ Diploma Primary Programme (TDP) (OER Africa, 2014). The diploma programme is a compulsory programme for primary school teachers and the elective module was proposed based on my research and experience in the field. This start-up led me to develop later projects related to OERs in teacher education in the Republic of Mauritius, including Rodrigues Island, which follows the same education system as Mauritius (Auckloo et al., 2014; Auckloo P, 2017). Other initiatives related to OERs at MIE included the setting up of open licensed materials under the tablet project (MOE, 2014; <http://www.tabletpc.intnet.mu>) as a centralised initiative to enhance the use of ICT and making materials available through an OER licence. This novel project gained much attention and allowed secondary school students to benefit from a digital tablet with integrated local curriculum materials. Another related OERs and digital project is the Sankore project led by the MIE. This project targeted primary schools and was supported by a Franco-British summit in March 2008 to help Africa achieve the EFA goals through digital empowerment, and aiming at bringing qualitative changes to the classroom (Bahadur and Oogarah, 2013).

In 2014, Neil Butcher from Commonwealth of Learning (COL) sensitized a crowd of academics at MIE on OERs and their legal and copyright implications. As a member of the audience, I experienced the reactions of staff members to the novel concept. This experience confirmed the newness of the concept in the Mauritian MIE context; and the confusion academics experience when it comes to determining what is 'distance education' (DE), online, or OERs.

A recent study by Wolfenden et al. (2017) in African countries including Mauritius, and a report in 2017 (COL, 2017) confirm the absence of policy, showing that institutionalisation and appropriation of OERs is slow in educational institutions. These reiterate that appropriation of OERs is more often an isolated phenomenon in which users champion the philosophy at institutional level. In Chapter 2, I elaborate further on the issues surrounding institutionalisation.

At tertiary level, more widespread use of OERs comes from the UOM, in which OERs are formally integrated across courses at diploma, degree and master's courses (Santally 2011, Guinness 2012). Major projects related to OERs include integration of OERs from OU UK, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for learners and facilitated by the UOM (Santally, 2011; Guinness, 2012). Other projects include Microsoft Partners, Ministry of Health (Goorah et al., 2013), pro-OER initiatives presented at the OER Policy and Platform workshop in 2014, Mauritius (OER, 2014) and educational initiatives at the MIE and UOM to build a local pool for networking on users and creators of OERs in Mauritius. Recently Curtin Mauritius (formerly Charles Telfair Institute - CTI) has presented OER initiatives including research on OERs and Inclusive Education in the Mauritian context as part of its agenda to institutionalise the spread of OERs through local use of OERs (Grant et al., 2018). At Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI), this co-training, institution, an individual-led pro-OER initiative, meant to use Open Software to make the Hindi Language accessible online was also presented at the OER Policy and Platform workshop in 2014 (Ibid.). These initiatives confirm the views of Wolfenden et al. (2017) in that the pursuit of OERs in institutions is mainly voluntary and depends on champions. The latter indicated that, even at MIE, the increasing spread of OERs is a time-consuming process prior to institutionalisation and ensuring quality resources.

## 1.5.2 OER policies in Mauritius

*There is need for a suitable open licensing framework to be included within copyright law in Mauritius. From this perspective, there was unanimous agreement that the Creative Commons (CC) licensing framework would be most suitable to cover OER, given its widespread currency in education globally and its flexible framework for applying different licensing restrictions according to need. (COL, 2014, p.4).*

Despite having reached consensus at national level and despite the spread of OER projects, legislation and implementation have been slow to formalise Open Education Policy (COL, 2014). The aim of harmonising educational programmes at the level of Virtual Island for Small State Countries (VUSSC) since 2009, through a Transnational Qualifications Framework, (West and Daniel, 2009) helping regions to collaborate through endorsement of e-learning courses, has not gained popularity in all institutions. This slows down popularity of OERs and its progress meant to influence institutional and national OER policies in all small island states. An underestimated challenge is observed by West and Daniel (2009), who indicate that, even if online communication has the potential to transform education, the role of the Internet remains ‘ambiguous’. The aforementioned researchers recognised that this could also deplete traditional teaching and learning methods, especially since early applications of e-learning were deceptive.

Since the declaration of VUSSC, and the CCEM (2012), there have been responses to the call to adopt ICT and OERs as part of a COL agenda; building a national OER platform for Mauritius that would serve to “provide a common online gateway for access to openly licensed resources produced by Mauritian Tertiary education institutions” (Col 2014, p.24). This included the Mauritius OER policy and in 2014, the Platform Workshop. Proponents supported the re-purposing and reuse of materials developed via government funds by individual organisations, arguing against illegal copying of materials, thus supporting ethical practices. Some progress was observed at the recent e-Learning Conference Africa (2017) held in Mauritius, when the Minister of Education claimed the need for our context in her opening speech. COL also recognises that policy adoption is slow in many countries; and there are still doubts concerning OERs, notwithstanding the challenges which include issues such as sustainability and technology-enabled environments. Other barriers include institutional resistance due to lack of information, no perceived benefits and lack of information, as well as lack of a licensing framework.

Today, in the absence of institutionalisation of OERs and national policies and frameworks, efforts are being made by individual champions at institutional levels. However, many of these focus mainly on the showcasing of a digital process or production or conversion of resources to an online platform. The agenda of OERs is also increasingly heavily dependent on ICT and the increasing availability of MOOCs and online courses allows for a perception that ‘OER’ is an online agenda and not a practical agenda. In the Mauritian context as illustrated above, dominating concerns are on OERs and not OEPs. Arguments are about legislation, institutionalisation, and not about OER practices in context. Arguments associate the Internet with ICT tools, for these are the incontestable mediators of online OERs, however, they do not guarantee practice and effectiveness. The argument I claim, therefore, is that, despite efforts by the authorities such as Ministries and educational institutions, the perception of teachers apropos of OERs, and their experiences in engaging in OEPs, are not known.

## **1.6 Methodology as Context: Context of Teachers’ Lives**

Although OERs have been widely researched (Moon, 2010; Wiley 2018), few studies have examined the experiences of teachers’ who are engaged with OERs using narrative theory. My aim of study was to adopt a research approach that would enable me to gain deep insights into teachers’ experiences with OERs. For this reason, I chose a narrative approach so as to draw meaning from the narratives of participants. I here concur with Bruner (1990), who recommends the use of narratives to understand what is happening in education from the perspective of educators themselves, which is foregrounded in this study as it seeks to analyse the views of practitioners from a sociological perspective.

From an ontological perspective, therefore, I consider myself a ‘relativist’, valuing social reality in a context. My epistemological stance, in line with an interpretive paradigm (Crotty, 1998), allows me to focus on describing and understanding human and social reality, engaging with lived experiences (Samuel, 2009). I view ‘context’ as a foreground from a sociocultural perspective rather than as a background to the study. I do not assume that meaning is out there waiting to be uncovered. Instead, I seek the co-construction of meaning, resting on the belief that teachers’ practices and experiences are situated in a context and their practices are influenced by a number of events, thoughts, feelings, as well as by their ‘context’. A narrative inquiry supported the approach for more authentic and deeper meanings.

This study, therefore, explores the pedagogical experiences of teachers in Mauritius in the current times and uses a narrative inquiry methodology (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, Clandinin, 2007; Webster and Mertova, 2007). As Goodson (2013) argues, narrative theory allows people to produce accounts of themselves that are ‘storied’ in the form of narratives. This approach and analysis has enabled me to examine how and why teachers engage with OERs the way they do and what informs their approach by analysing their experiences or narratives within their contexts.

Analysed from a sociological perspective, the approach used by Clandinin et al. (2007) highlights the concept of ‘Commonplaces’ and suggests that narrative enquirers are concerned with ‘temporality’, ‘sociality’, and ‘place’. These allow participants to ‘relive’ and recount experiences without boundaries of time, enabling them to move through time in the light of events, thoughts, and reflections that permeate across times (see Chapter 3). As elaborated in Chapter 4, I interviewed 14 participants who are practising teachers in the Mauritian schools. Drawing from these narratives, I conducted a thematic analysis as indicated in section 4.6.1 and further analysed contextual depth in the narratives of teachers using the lens of commonplaces (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) as indicated in section 4.6.2.

In the light of the above sections, the aim of this study is to explore the pedagogical experiences of teachers in Mauritius who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context. In the next chapter 2, I propose the chapter on Literature Review and research questions guiding the study.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study builds on research conducted as part of Stage one of my EdD and explores the way teachers engage with OERs in the current Mauritian context, given that little has been explicated in this field so far. The findings from this research contribute to new academic perspectives and help to reveal how educators adopt a pedagogical stance for the adoption of OERs rather than a predominantly digitally inclined approach. It is hoped that this study will serve as a grounding and contribute to develop the researchers’ field of OERs, open access and teacher-generated knowledge. Given the slow process of policy and inadequacy of research in the field in the Mauritian context, it is hoped that this study will contribute to gaining insights to support general national policy about copyright and free educational resources. It may also encourage tertiary institutions to value large scale international OERs

projects but also value local micro and small OER projects or ‘Little OERs’ (Rennie and Weller, 2010) with rich pedagogical insights prior to its institutionalisation.

From a theoretical standpoint, it is an overt expectation that the findings shed more light on how TPACK (Mishra and Koehler, 2006) as a model may be further informed through the pedagogy of teachers in the Mauritian context prior to further appropriation. Such findings will give more insight into the contextual and theoretical dimensions informing research in TPACK and OERs through the lived experiences or stories of practising educators.

## **1.8 Overview of chapters**

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review in which I indicate the global and local perspective of the study which led me to use TPACK as a guiding framework for the study. In this chapter, I explain how ‘Context’ is a gap in the framework; and how I derive understandings from the global context and from TPACK to analyse the subject under study. I then indicate the research questions guiding the study.

Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach to the study and identifies narrative approach as a new method of inquiry in the field of OERs and OEPs. I explain the use of ‘commonplaces as context’ using temporality, sociality and place as core elements within the methodological framework (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

Chapter 4 describes the research design, methods, data collection tools and approach to analysis. It also establishes in a linear manner the link between the research questions, the methods and approach to analysis.

Chapter 5 details the findings from the analysis of 14 narratives from a thematic perspective using contextual characteristics and three main themes that respond mainly to the initial research questions. The narratives describe the experiences of participants who are familiar with OERs.

Chapter 6 complements the findings from Chapter 5, by analysing the narrative inquiry perspective through the lens of commonplaces; and by focusing more on the second research question. Six narratives offer a different way of analysing the study.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings in relation to the research questions and gives a comprehensive interpretation of the study. It discusses the main findings from chapters 5

and 6; and discusses the significance of the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context.

Chapter 8 reflects on the overall meaning of the study, illustrates the arguments related to the conceptualization of a framework of pedagogy in the context, and offers a reflective stance on the journey accomplished, including the challenges and limitations of the study. The recommendations, contributions to knowledge, and future areas of development are also indicated therein.

## **1.9 Summary**

This chapter has set the scene for the description of the journey undertaken during the past four years in Stage Two of the EdD project. It comprised the following characteristics: from a personal and professional perspective, the study built on my experience and continues the EdD journey in context. From a theoretical perspective, the study examined a contextual gap by adopting TPACK as a closer model (Chapter 2). I indicated the use of a narrative inquiry approach to examine the pedagogical experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs and/or working with OERs in the Mauritian Context. I also ended with the aim of the study and an overview of Chapters 2 to 8. The next chapter offers a literature review, examines the theoretical perspectives in the field of OERs and indicates the research questions are relevant for this study.

## **2.0 Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature in this chapter introduces the theoretical perspectives used in this research. It is a selective review that focuses on the importance of pedagogy and context in relation to OERs/OEPs in order to address the research questions. Essentially, it examines research in the field of OERs related to: Sustainable models of OERs and OEPs; teacher's pedagogy and their engagement with OERs; international influences on the use of OERs in Mauritius; and the dynamism between technology and pedagogy, through the lens of the Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) model (Mishra and Koehler, 2006; 2007).

### **2.2 From OERs to OEPs**

Previous studies in this field have focused more the online aspects of OERs and efforts have been geared towards making OERs known to the potential users in the field of education by emphasizing on licensing, freedom of access, ease of use and learning possibilities through the adoption of OERs (Butcher, 2011). These have mainly been viewed from quantitative dimensions where the reach of OERs have often been quantified both locally and internationally (CCEM, 2012). Similar tendencies were also noted at a local level (Santally 2011, Gunness 2012, Jugee and Santally, 2016) where alongside showing the reach of OERs, figures also showed reach of OERs in undergraduate courses offered at the UOM.

From an international perspective, OERs have been acclaimed as having the potential to increase educational opportunities by providing low-cost materials to a larger beneficiary group (Phelan, 2012). As a legal concept OERs are characterised by a licence upon publication of resources called Creative Commons licence (CC). From the time of the inception of CC in 2001 by Larry Lessig, to the discussion on the future of OERs at Cape Town Open Education Declaration in 2007, arguments have continued to advance the merits of OERs on the basis that it is taxpayers' and public money that fund educational resources, making them free to users. The OER movement endorsed by UNESCO and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) soon gained intensity; and its popularity touched the borders of countries all around the world including the African context (Moon et al., 2007; Moon, 2010). The above descriptions related to licencing and economic reasons are also pertinent and relevant to the Mauritian Context.

For Yuan, MacNeil and Kraan (2008), OERs are part of the trend in higher education, and dependent on free access to the Internet. This, according to Hylén (2006), should also include free access to open content, open source software, open courseware and OEPs. But, Murphy (2013) emphasizes that OEPs are not simply about the classroom practices, since they include the dynamics in practice and policy in higher education including formal and informal assessment using OERs. The current project adopts a similar stance, in that it is concerned mainly with teacher-led practices which could in turn be pertinent for and inform policy.

Although a rather recent phenomenon, there has been considerable research (Wolfenden et al., 2010, Canole, 2010) that encompasses pedagogy and technology in teacher education (Loveless, 2003; 2011; Mishra and Koehler, 2007). Even today there are amendments being made to basic terms and concepts in the OER movement. The fickleness of key definitions themselves have been recently questioned (Wiley, 2018).

There has also been a shift from production of OERs to focus more on OEPs (Conole, 2010) with important consideration being given to how teachers use the materials, including increasing collaboration in innovative practices such as the open textbook in online environments and the real learner-centred environment. Valuing the narratives that teachers construct towards generating teacher knowledge, Fielding et al. (2005) stress the importance of investigation into transfer and practice development. They reiterate the value of understanding the ways in which teachers engage in joint practice development, coaching, experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and reflective practice to challenge isolation towards good practice.

In the light of the above, I argue that practitioners' pedagogical experiences in OEPs must be at the forefront, rather than marginalised, as we research OEPs and OERs. This leads to a critique of current models of OERs and understandings about sustainability (Downes, 2007). The relationship between OERs and pedagogy and technology (TPACK), (Mishra and Koehlers, 2006) is discussed below.

### **2.3 Sustainable Models related to the use of OERs**

*“There’s lots of free educational content out there on the Internet, but not much use is being made of it, at least by the formal education system” (Bates, 2011, p.15).*

A fundamental question relating to the OER movement is which factors support the effective and long-term use of OERs; and whether there is consensus on any one model.

There have been many models proposed to support the long-term life of OER repositories (Wiley and Gurrell, 2009; Foote, 2005). Downes (2007) describes some of these; the endowment as based on return on investment through interest (Loy, 2009), membership models that include OERs within a consortium of adherent members and the donation model in which some organisations offer to do publishing of resources. These are centred on a paradigm that encourages commercial publishing houses and higher institutions to ‘feed’ resources into publishing houses. Instead, Taylor (2007) proposes a pro-assessment and learner-centric model called a five-stage logic model, in which learners access OERs and are given support by academic volunteers. This includes an open assessment in support of learners prior to the final award.

A different approach from the above models is adopted by Wolfenden et al. (2010), and the Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium. As a consortium that emphasizes on the way teachers in African contexts use OERs, the most common approaches are identified as an ‘as-it-is’ basis or an appropriation model. Other existing models include an imperialist, or funding/sponsorship, the latter referring to a situation where resources are proposed to groups who are not involved in the making of the resources but are recipients; technical models of OERs where emphasis is laid on the technicalities and design for the making of OERs by skilled personnel or ‘the expert’ (Walker, 2005). These models can often be disregarded in favour of a process-based model that, emphasises collaborative development of open content to obtain high quality and locally applicable content. This is seen in the case of under-resourced institutions (Keats, 2003). Therefore, the quest for a sustainable model of OERs in teacher education points more towards a collaborative enterprise model that places the teachers as contributors rather than the recipients or consumers only. This collaborative enterprise model implies that the responsibility will be placed more on teachers to co-produce resources and relates to what Doherty (1998) calls ‘transformative pedagogy’. This reflection leads one to question whether there should be more production of OERs or whether more focus should be placed on investigating how OERs are used by teachers. For it is in the use of OERs that OEPs are generated in practice, determining whether teachers will look for more free online resources. This reflection about investigating the ‘use’ of, or how teachers value OERs, is a fundamental consideration that shifts the debate from the perspective of the OER creator or the online manager to the user;

the teacher who will judge and determine the ‘sustainable value’ of an online resource in a practical learning environment.

The shift in focus from funding or technical models to collaborative models thus leads towards an analysis of the role of the teacher, who as the main protagonist in the classroom has the ability to drive the OER agenda in learning environments, unlike the OER designers, who focus on production models or marketing the online content. The voice of the teacher then becomes important to understand what matters most to him/her, rather than what matters most to producers or economic partners. The situation then begs the examination of the practitioner’s pedagogy or when the users who are familiar with OERs and OEPs are involved in manipulating OERs in their pedagogy.

The argument may be further extended through the lens of Lave and Wenger (1991; 2002) and Samuel (2009), who find inherent value in representing communities of practices (CoP). CoP promotes collegiality, focuses on the learning gains that can be derived as a consequence of the bond that teachers share during pedagogical interactions and promotes the voice of teachers. In CoP, value lies in representation of narratives in authentic contexts, stressing the ‘human’ agent instead of resting on a mainly technical approach (Bell, 2002). The main thrusts of CoP involve a group of people who share a common concern and deepen their knowledge in a given area by being mutually involved in action/practice and by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). CoP as a supporting lens, thus can be used to analyse the individual and collective stories of teachers who are familiar with OERs, amidst the dominant voices, for it values collegiality and authentic representations in practical contexts. These experiences and perceptions from participants in this study who are familiar with OERs in practical contexts, are key contributors towards an understanding of a global picture that quests for knowledge on sustainability of OERs from teachers’ perspectives. As Hargreaves (2003) argues: ‘If teachers want to make progress as professionals and have an impact...they must learn to trust and value colleagues who are distant and different from them as well as those who are the same....’ (p. 28-29).

But there is a major gap: that of knowledge from the Mauritian context in which the dynamics of teachers involved with OERs may be analysed. For very little is known about sustainability of OERs and teachers’ experiences with OERs in the Mauritian context whereas the literature abound in what is happening in other parts of the world (Moon, 2010; OER18 Conference, (2018). It would be restrictive to examine only the statistics to

determine its reach, for as Perraton (2010) puts it, this would give a limited view of the reach of OERs. What would be required, therefore, is investigating ‘Little OERs’ (Rennie and Weller, 2010) or smaller sites where OERs are used, for these contextual stories could shed light on authentic understandings derived from teacher-generated knowledge and related to teachers’ experiences with OERs.

## **2.4 Institutional appropriation of OERs across contexts**

In general, teacher education institutions play a major role in advancing educational policies, in particular when it comes to appropriating new policies and sustaining them (Murphy, 2013; D’Antoni, 2008). However, policies need to be well informed in view of multiple benefits that institutions can gain in return, such as upgrading an institutional profile, academic research, improved access to educational opportunities, grants, and partnerships with other institutions (Murphy, 2013).

In a report by Open Educational Quality Initiative (OPAL), Andrade et al. (2011) examined five key barriers that individuals face generally in the context of OERs. These include absence of institutional support across contexts and countries, lack of ICT resources, lack of skills and time, relevance of OERs, and personal issues such as lack of trust. The report also suggests the need to find factors that encourage successful integration of OERs into educational institutional policies. This view is supported by Murphy (2013) in recognising that institutions are struggling with social, cultural, and economic challenges, as well as the incompatibility of philosophy of OERs and existing institutional cultures and priorities (Friesen, 2009). Another barrier to the development of OERs relates to inadequate or inappropriate institutional policy, as well as a lack of knowledge about OERs and OEPs at institutional level itself (Ehlers, 2011; Bossu et al., 2012). These act as barriers to appropriation and sustainable use of OERs. There is a need for more local knowledge to emerge from contexts to gain new insight.

Studies in Australia also confirm the slowness to adopt OERs and OEPs, attributing it to the immature policy framework at governmental and institutional level (Bossy, Brown & Bull, 2012).

In the light of the above challenges and prospects, there is a need for further analysis of the contextual and practical realities in the midst of international debates and trends in OERs, which would add to existing knowledge of experiences related to OERs. There is a need to

represent the non-dominant voice of the teacher in contributing to the global picture that would benefit teacher training institutions. Complementary to this understanding, and in particular to teachers, is the importance given to ‘pedagogy’ in the OER movement.

## **2.5 Pedagogy in OERs and OEPs**

Butcher (2011) contends that OERs have two dimensions: the pedagogical and the digital. However, pedagogy is too often absent from the discourse around OERs and OEPs. Instead models and technical design or issues of funding often take the lead; and discourses about licences and ICT-driven tools often dominate the discussion landscape. At the recent conferences on OERs such as the Creative Commons (CC) Global summit, (2018), and the OER18 Conference (OER18, 2018), these concerns were confirmed by participants; and further concerns were raised about the absence of voices and experiences from the global south, including those from teachers (Adams, 2018). This poses the question: Where is knowledge about OERs derived from?; Where is the knowledge about pedagogy on OERs and OEPs? Whose voices dominate in the international discourse on the OER movement to determine the future and reach of OER? It is clear that if the knowledge from the northern hemisphere dominates, and if the voices from the southern hemisphere are not heard, the contribution towards knowledge will be less complete. Mauritius is not dissociated from the merits of these questions.

The use of OERs is essentially based on the principle that educators should select resources from a repository or bank and engage in the organisation of their learning space (Morrow, 1994:1997). OERs are meant to improve teaching and learning, making an understanding of pedagogies implicit. However, Wolfenden et al. (2010) concurred that systematic adoption and embedding of these progressive teaching methods have been limited. Atkins et al. (2007) reiterated the pedagogical processes involved in linking OERs to teacher education which have remained evasive and restricted to design considerations for too long, rather than how these are translated into OEPs.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this complexity is accentuated by ICT integration based on the promise of positive outcomes (see Section 2.7). Kop et al. (2011) discuss the “Pedagogy of abundance” as they acknowledge that there is significant evidence that the primary interaction of participation in a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) lesson as a form of OER depends on the use, re-use, and production of OERs. The case for pedagogy in a non-MOOC environment has yet to be consolidated. In Africa, generally, teaching and learning

are still dominated by the transmission models (Pontefract and Hardiman, 2005; Akyeampong et al., 2006), and African classrooms need more knowledge coming from their own contexts. Murphy and Wolfenden (2013) evoke the concept of a ‘pedagogy of mutuality’ in a non-MOOC, African, and TESSA-related environment, to focus on increasing access and to enhance learning for pupils; while Carfagna (2018) advocates and reiterates the importance of sharing which is not automatic, but needs to be developed in an open-learning environment as core to pedagogical practice today. More research is needed, especially in the context of a small island state like Mauritius, currently at a crossroads between the possibilities of furthering the OER movement and options to select or create OER repositories.

Pedagogical learning theories deriving from Skinner, Piaget, and the later socio-constructivist perspectives (Conrad and Donaldson, 2004) have been useful in education so far; and have laid the basic foundations on which later theories and approaches such as transformative pedagogy (Mezirow, 2009) and connectivism developed. In the current context of the OER movement, given that OERs are founded on the philosophy of openness, of particular interest to me is the way in which Downes (2013) associates Open Teaching with the philosophy of ‘Connectivism’ as a theory of the current times (Siemens, 2004). It is associated with the belief that ‘Connectivism’ has the potential to connect and reach out in an interactive manner. Despite the criticisms about connectivism (Siemens, 2004; 2005) as only a revisited model of Vygotsky’s social constructivism (1978), the concept of learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that connects ‘learning’ to a local context is significant here. First, because it proposes a cyclical model of navigation to seek information and feedback the experiences to the network for newness. It relates to the way in which teachers function and use materials. Secondly, connectivism adopts an interdisciplinary approach, resting on continually discovering new information in a connected way, or through the nodes in a global network. It foregrounds the need for learning in an inter-connected way with a community of practitioners that is local, international, and diverse in a ‘node system’ which is online. In particular, this happens as ‘Connectivism’, or the act of ‘connecting’ influences on one’s own practice through cognitive activities of explorations, adaptations, even modelling, prior to authentic practice.

An examination of this theory can lead to an extension into a ‘community of users’ and Community of Practice (CoP) which influences teachers to move out of the web(online) physically and to connect back to the experiences in developing OER practices. The main

thrusts of CoP involve a group of people who share a common concern and deepen their knowledge in a given area by being mutually involved in action/practice and by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). Through the lens of Lave and Wenger, the concept of nodes may thus be extended to either online or real-time communities' interactions. Lave and Wenger's (1991) typology of the 'community of practice' (p.63) and 'legitimate peripheral participation' (ibid, p. 68) is useful here as it suggests 'authentic participation in authentic contexts, social interaction and communities ', and emphasises the human agent or the human experience (ibid, p.68). The teacher has the option to move from the periphery to the centre of the community as the 'more knowledgeable other'. This approach would give more value to contextualised local research.

As the thinking advances towards an understanding of pedagogy used in the OER movement, a social and connected approach remains a valuable concept for comprehending how teachers address their own perceptions through their translation in diverse communities, engaging with OERs. The dynamics of pedagogy in context are not so simple, especially in settings imbued with technology. This led me to examine pedagogy used in OERs using a sociocultural approach that can include communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), the lens of connectivism (Siemens, 2004), as well as the framework of TPACK in the context of OERs (Mishra and Koehler, 2006), which I express in Section 2.8.

## **2.6 Representing Voices from the South and Mauritius**

As indicated in the introduction chapter, the backdrop of globalisation and surge towards standardisation make it complex for an island state like Mauritius to be immune from external global influences, thus posing important questions of national appropriation and identity. The dominance of voices from the north and west presupposes these as 'the models' and marginalizes the South-South cooperation. There is, therefore, a lack of representation of voices from the south (Sallah 2018: Adams, 2018: Auckloo, 2018a, c), which poses questions about inclusivity in the global OER movement in a world where critical debates and decisions should not be taken in the absence of the south (Trotter, 2018). In an attempt to contribute to knowledge and inform the dominant community of researchers in the field and bridge the gap, the recent publication 'Adoption and Impact of OER in the Global South' (Hodgkinson and Arinto, 2017) describes some voices from different sub-Saharan African countries, including Mauritius, and the global south. The recent Creative Commons Summit of 2018 also showcased a number of voices from the Arab communities around the world as

they strive to access and design free resources. But clearly inclusion is still not a reality in the OER movement, it is still being dominated by voices from the north and west as examined in the OER 2018 conference (OER 2018). In the African and sub-Saharan countries, the limited representation of voices from the south indicating the dynamics, reach and potential of OERs, is attributed to causes such as limited Internet connections, slow reach of OERs to far off communities, and governmental will that limit upward mobility (development) (Thornton, 2008; Wright and Reju (2012). The restricted presence of these voices from the sub-Saharan African countries therefore does not do justice to the OER community of users, advocates, and researchers; therefore, more research is needed as argued by Merkley (2018) and Green (2018). An absence of knowledge and voices from different areas is not inclusive and makes the OER field incomplete. Prospects of greater knowledge and more voices would contribute to the international community and add insights into knowledge for everyone.

There are clear statements about the value of OERs in teacher education; as well as implications for their 'feasibility and accessibility' (Butcher, 2011; Carfagna, 2018; Wiley and Gurrell, 2009; Wolfenden et al., 2009). The framework provided by Conole (2010) illustrates the link between policy and practice through macro contextual factors such as globalisation and changing norms and values. However, the implications for Mauritius are even more complex. The Commonwealth conference for Education Ministers (CCEM, 2012) which I attended confirms that the local agenda is influenced by the need to integrate technology in education, ICT devices being donated, and policies surrounding their use being promulgated. However, dangers remain that global agendas and the scope of OERs and technology are often magnified at the expense of local realities. Moreover, dangers relate to institutional, technical, administrative, and academic resistance (Albright, 2005) as well as Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and copyright issues (Wiley and Gurrell, 2009; Bissell, 2009, CC, 2018), often measured against the prospects of commercialisation (Butcher, 2011). These do not help towards cost reduction and make economic or funded models which engage in the open learning philosophy, even more far-fetched.

A related assumption holds that practices in OERs essentially depend on the advancement in technology and are therefore costly. Little effort is then put into looking at the local and cultural demands of the classroom. I therefore reiterate that the progress in OERs and OEPs has to be progressive from a culturally relevant context that emerges from its own context. This would be a bottom-up, voluntary approach focusing on 'little OER' before the longer

and painstaking process of having them institutionalised (Rennie and Weller, 2010), especially in an African context (Duthilleul and Allen, 2005). In light of the above arguments, therefore, I offer a study that situates the pedagogical experiences of practitioners in the current Mauritian context.

At the UOM, Santally (2011) builds on the experiences of the Virtual Centre for Innovative Learning Technologies (VCILT) across Diploma, BSC, and Masters programmes to illustrate how cost of courses was reduced and attracted many educators and students onto their programmes. He also uses the experience with academics and students to propose that OER policy be institutionalised to support sustainability and support the community of practices in OERs. Santally (2011) also recognises the complexity that reigns when it comes to sustainability of OERs in the Mauritian context. While recommending the institutionalisation of OERs on a first level, he then insists that academics thereafter be led by the set of guidelines in appropriation of OERs. Although this article supports ideas towards the sustainability and community of practice related to OER, there is still an inadequacy vis-à-vis the broader Mauritian context. A contradiction is examined; initiators revised various models of appropriation of OERs in courses based on external university programmes that would be used locally without OERs per se being institutionalized locally. Furthermore, while Santally (2011) focuses on OER practices by academics and used by students, little insight is developed into the dynamics of transformation from OERs to OEPs. To understand why this happens, the implications and dynamics, more research is necessary in the Mauritian context.

Other studies conducted in the field by Gunness (2012) and Santally (Ibid.) indicate that educators increasingly follow the UOM for advanced courses, but clearly then the debate is wider than proposing OER-related courses and harnessing the benefits of increased access to higher education through the economics of cost reduction and increased access to technology. The question, therefore, leads us to schools, in which we need to know more about what is happening, or what the pedagogical practices in schools look like for teachers who are familiar with OERs. Does it matter, and, if so, why?

The examination of this crucial question is timely, there being a need to represent the voices of teachers from the south, but at the same time considering the dynamics of a small island state like Mauritius, which can easily yield to received notions about perceived benefits and knowledge of OERs from the north or west (OER 18, Bristol). These authentic voices contribute to meaning-making and knowledge and are needed so that the picture will be

perhaps more inclusive and add another piece of the puzzle if the voices of teachers from a small island state are represented.

### **2.6.1 Teacher education and OERs and OEPs in Mauritius**

In a report published by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and UNESCO (2012), a survey indicated the responses from 82 participating countries. It showed that in African participating countries 25% had specific projects with OERs through public funding, 33% had projects through private funding, while the dominance of OER activities was in tertiary education. The report indicated that countries such as South Africa have specific projects through the South African Institute for Development in Education (SAIDE) and OER Africa. While Namibia has a national OER strategy, Mauritius and Seychelles, as island states, are involved in OER movements such as the Open Educational Resources for Open Schools (OER4OS) project and the VUSSC programme which included provisions for OERs in the agricultural sector and public health service sectors. Little, if any, mention is made about teacher education providing organisation and the championing of OERs in Mauritius. This absence or silence about OERs in teacher education in Mauritius is another limitation that again undermines the progress of the OER in the global south in teacher education projects, as it occurs in the Republic of Mauritius.

The COL report also quotes the effort of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to draw up an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) plan to encourage sharing in the region, including Mauritius, which has a draft National Policy on open and distance learning and an Education Strategic Plan 2008-2020. However, it also states countries that were not aware of the research or studies on the contribution of OERs in improving education on an official level (p.17). Key recommendations include a more in-depth analysis of OER policies and practices, and measures to avoid the confusion that exists between Distance Education (DE) and ODL, proposing that OER repositories be considered. However, little emphasis is laid on the practices that are beyond the reach of ODL and e-Learning centres. This implies that we are still not considering the 'out of ODL' centre practices such as those practised by teachers in schools.

If teachers' experiences are not represented, then we perpetuate the silence; and the discourse is not complete if they continue to be at the silenced bottom end of the list of recommendations. Kneyber (2014) defends teachers against criticisms and reclaims the position of teachers; he highlights that for the last 40 years, the rise of constructivist theories

have critiqued the teacher blaming the latter in many ways. It is high time, he argues, to ‘flip the education system’ such that, instead of seeing the teachers at the far end of a pyramidal structure, we see them as the top structure particularly in the Mauritian context.

## **2.7 Context(s) of teaching versus standardisation of models of teaching**

*Context matters to learning: it is complex and local to a learner. It defines a person’s subjective and objective experience of the world in a spatially and historically contingent manner. Context is dynamic and associated with connections between people, things, locations and events in a narrative that is driven by people’s intentionality and motivations. (Luckin, 2010, p.28-29)*

The importance of context and appropriate pedagogy cannot be underestimated for enabling teachers to thrive. As indicated in a UNESCO Global Monitoring report (2014), the right context, a well-designed curriculum, and appropriate assessment strategies, are key to improving pedagogy. Richter and McPherson (2012) caution that it is not enough simply to provide OERs online; but that developers should consider the cultural and contextual differences of potential users to ensure its value.

It is clear that to date there are limited models of use of OERs, particularly those that relate to pedagogies in context. Kozma’s (2003) framework highlights a possible analysis of the dynamics of technology in practice from a micro (classroom), meso (institutional), and macro (cultural, societal, political, and economic) levels, including stakeholders operating at these levels. On the other hand, Selwyn (2011) argues that, while trying to understand how technology functions in educational contexts in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one must acknowledge important issues that are often undermined in popular discussions of education and technology.

I concur with the above and resist views about context as a background, or only in time or place or historicity. My experience and research on ways of conceptualisation of context (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) has led me to conceptualise context as vibrant and dynamic, and which contributes to understandings in education that can contextually and theoretically inform the dynamics between technology, pedagogy and teachers’ teaching and learning in situ (Rosenberg and Koehler, 2015). I further argue that the ‘contexts’ can foreground the practitioners’ knowing, world view, experiences, and truths (Samuel, 2009; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Where the narrative capital of participants (Goodson, 2013) becomes

important to understand issues so far, these are underrepresented in the Mauritian context. It becomes, therefore, important to provide a sense of agency, to understand the lived experiences of teachers (Selwyn, 2011) in their context(s), or to understand the concept stories of action in theories of context (Stenhouse, 1975). Goodson and Sikes (2001) thus, acknowledge the multiplicity of stories and theories, here extendable to multiplicities of ‘contexts’.

In a different context, a recent study on collaboration and personalisation by Turvey and Hayler (2017) describes the merits of using a narrative inquiry approach to examine the depth of student teachers’ discursive and benign spaces for reflection through blogging; and clearly illustrates that they are able to discuss their pedagogical experiences through written and oral expressions. This provokes the next question: Do teachers in Mauritius have a professional discursive space, and does it matter? In developing a model or framework of ‘pedagogy in context’ therefore how can teachers’ voices be manifested and represented through a meaningful community of practice and through pedagogical interactions involving OERs and OEPs? If these matter then, how do researchers access their notions and expressions of pedagogies in context?

### **2.7.1 Against standardisation in research in educational technologies**

Research in educational technology is often conveyed by researchers who sit in a particular research paradigm, preferring a quantitative or qualitative approach depending on their ontological and epistemological stance. While criticising the limitations of such approaches, Pachler and Turvey (2018) describe how the quest for quantitative studies is often motivated by an economic imperative to measure impact, while the number of qualitative studies fall short in research into educational technology. This poses the question of whether there is over-standardisation of research types, and over-representation of the reach of technologies whose answers to questions of impact have often remained elusive.

While suggesting that ‘context’ be included rather than oversimplified, Pachler and Turvey (2018) recommend the need to learn from the lessons of the past; and instead view ‘intervention, context and impact’ as part of the sociocultural ecology.

Understanding context therefore brings up the question of context-mindfulness or consciousness that context matters, and is an additional argument prior to appropriation of standardisation. Hargreaves (2003) laments that there is an obsession with ‘soulless

standardisation' (p.2); and in this process schools are failing in their role to prepare young people in the way that knowledge and civil society needs. Hargreaves further argues that, if we continue to put the demands of teachers and their complaints about teaching to the test, coupled with an overloaded curriculum, we will lose capable teachers. Instead 'they will become the drones and clones of policymakers' anaemic ambitions for what underfunded systems can achieve' (Ibid, p.2).

I concur with Hargreaves (2003) who calls for highly skilled teachers who are able to show creativity and ingenuity to their learners going beyond technical skills to teaching as a mission for social change and life change. In line with this philosophy, Turvey (2013) promotes teachers as active agents within what he calls a 'Narrative Ecology Framework', thus redeeming the teacher as the toolmaker at the heart of pedagogical processes. He joins Selwyn (2011), who not only resists the technology age in an adamant form but he tries to redeem the position of the teachers who, he says, must become respected intellectuals, with the mission of becoming life shapers for young people. Teaching, in this context, therefore, demands a moral commitment and not just technical skills with followers and implementation of policy.

While Selwyn's (2011) concept of technological determinism and ideas for repositioning the teacher in the hierarchical structure favours the voice of the teacher, Hargreaves (2003) claims that in today's society, which he calls the learning or the 'Knowledge society', schools need to prepare people to use creativity and ingenuity. He identifies that new skills are needed today, but at the same time highlights that there is an increasing mistrust in 'political, corporate and professional integrity' (p.1). He adds that the knowledge society has 'eroded their autonomy of judgement and conditions of work, created epidemics of standardisation and over-regulations...' (Ibid, p.10).

Selwyn also points to the lack of resources such as funding versus the obsession with standardisation, which, according to him, produces only rare success stories. He suggests that much research is conducted to perpetuate rare stories of successful innovation which distort the perception, since there are only rare and restricted stories or research on ways in which schools deal with policy (Selwyn, 2011, p.7). The need for research in this area therefore arises as a moral necessity to understand the story from a non-monopolising perspective. Hargreaves, A (2003), agrees with Hargreaves, D (1994) on the view that the practice of teaching has not been sufficiently evidenced by research, contrary to that of

doctors. The researcher also notes that researchers in education have little work that has a direct value for, or which is accessible to practitioners/teachers (p.29).

Standardisation of models of teaching with technology is therefore questioned and raises pertinent concerns about the perspectives of teachers so far underrepresented in educational research in OERs.

### **2.7.2 Perceptions influencing teaching and learning**

Research reveals that perceptions about particular phenomena can influence attitudes and therefore even determine practice and reflexivity (Malone and Gallaghere, 2010; Downie and Macnaughton, 2007). I relate the term ‘perception’ to the understanding and lens used by Downie and Macnaughton (2007):

*“...Attitudes logically depend on perceptions...they depend on beliefs, or on the way we see a situation. We have the attitudes we do because we perceive the world, including other people in a certain way” (p. 17).*

Lam and Kember (2006) reiterate the link between teachers’ views of teaching, practice and beliefs, values and attitudes about teaching and learning. The researchers argue that these are not static and changing them requires uncovering their assumptions and dispositions. While Trigwell and Prosser (2004) have developed approaches to the Teaching Inventory Tool to understand teaching approaches based on conceptions of teaching, Budge and Cowlshaw (2012) investigate how both teachers’ and students’ perception of teaching and learning are linked to the ways in which both conceive and perceive their practice. These become more significant as we address teachers’ perceptions and practice in the context of globalisation.

## **2.8 The dynamism between technology, pedagogy and OERs or TPACK**

Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra and Koehler, 2006) is a framework and an extension of Shulman’s (1986) works that describes the knowledge required for effective teaching. It claims that teachers need pedagogical content knowledge (or core teaching skills), knowledge about technology and core content knowledge. Content knowledge (CK) describes subject matter or subject specific knowledge required to teach; pedagogical knowledge (PK) describes the teaching skills, including teaching techniques and instructional approaches and methods; while technology knowledge (TK) refers to the

teachers' knowledge about technology which is both static and evolving. The interaction between the three core aspects gives rise to technological content knowledge (TCK). This relates to the dynamics between technologies and content, pedagogical content knowledge, capturing the ways in which the teacher interprets content dynamics and interaction; while technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) relates to the ways in which teaching, and learning are influenced by technology. TPACK values the dynamics between pedagogies, content and technology, as knowledge bases required to interact for effective teaching and learning.

After the inception of the model in 1986, further research led Mishra and Koehler to add 'T' as technology in the TPACK framework. The model was used for research in teacher education across research paradigms, areas and contexts involving subjects including Sciences and Mathematics, Social sciences and languages (Chang et al., 2014; Schmidt and Gurbo, 2008; Niess, 2005; Rosenberg and Koehler, 2015). In teacher education especially, TPACK was found useful in examining how technology may be integrated in teacher education and professional development of teachers (Chai, Koh & Tsai, 2013).

Although the developers of TPACK acknowledged context as important (Koehler & Mishra, 2008), there have been many criticisms about the limited importance given to context which was found to be missing in the model (Kelly, 2010; Rosenberg and Koehler, 2015). Rosenberg and Koehler (2015) state that 'context remains [an] underdeveloped and under-researched component of the framework' (p188). They refer to the model used by Porras-Hernandez and Salinas-Amescua (2013) in their attempt to represent the micro, meso, and macro levels as context and propositions for TPACK, suggesting that still there are too many variations in the meaning of context which deserves attention. Their mixed-method study of TPACK even revealed that context was present in only 36% of the 193 peer-reviewed journal articles, and that the meaning was too wide and disperse. They did not establish the dynamics of pedagogy or technology or content. Even if context has been relegated and under-researched in the TPACK model, there is still a need to examine teachers' context that could matter in their implementation of technologies or content knowledge in the area.

While proponents of TPACK adhere to the claim that, as a framework, it remains important, and even recognise it can be too theoretical, they also hope to pursue the use of TPACK as a useful lens through which teachers can learn and improve their practice, and negotiate content, pedagogy, and technology in favourably improved forms (Koehler et al., 2015). What remains unanswered, however, is how teachers relate to an objective lens that claims

to be flexible, if teachers' realities, such as context, are not overtly present in the model. There is therefore a need to advance 'realities' as experience, and explicitly explain the context in which teachers experience their professional practice. This is possible through the use of narratives as experience (see chapter 3).

The complex dynamism between pedagogy and technology is illustrated by Shulman (1986; 1987) on pedagogical content knowledge, and by Mishra and Koehler (2006) on the Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) that informs teaching and education. The TPACK framework has been particularly useful to some practitioners who stress the importance of deeper analysis in pedagogy by means of technology (Rivers, 2012). Koehlers and Mishra (2009) illustrate that technology, pedagogy, and content need to be negotiated through 'skilful manoeuvre by skilful teachers' to produce effective teaching that includes technology. However, the framework foregrounds the link between pedagogy, technology and content and again little insight is perceptible into the 'context' in which the dynamism occurs.

This is further complicated by the view of Gore (1993), who illustrates the term 'pedagogy' itself as laden with complex understandings, and the meaning as dynamic and relative as the term technology itself.

As a consequence, I argue that associating oneself with the framework, with some assumptions of transferability and appropriation in a small island state like Mauritius without the examination of the context is dangerously limiting. TPACK, therefore, does offer a partial reading which I argue, demands further analysis to understand how teachers who are familiar with OERs understand the dynamism between the important elements of the model or technology (the use of ICT in education), and pedagogy in their professional practice. Since access to OERs heavily depends on technology in education, the insights that the model could prompt become even more important. This leads us to understand the use of ICT in education in Mauritius prior to furthering the debate.

### **2.8.1 ICT in Education in Mauritius**

ICT is associated with innovation in education and takes a dominant role in the Mauritian educational agenda (MIE, 2015). It influences implementation of educational projects at primary and secondary level through the NYS project. But, in spite of national agendas to upgrade ICT facilities, the related challenges have been given less attention as too much

focus has been placed on provisions of technical tools mainly. The purpose of the National Broadband Policy 2012-2020 is to direct the country towards ‘Towards i-Mauritius’, in which the vision is to transform Mauritius into a people-centred development (MICT, 2012). The tablet PC project is considered a popular initiative for connecting schools with ICT in education through the provision of tablets. Jugee and Santally (2016) relate that the tablet PC initiative in 2013 has been quite a ‘controversy for teaching staff but quite a good experience for students’ (p.14). Tablets were distributed in 2014 to each student in Grade 9, amounting to more than 24 000 tablets.

The study reports that some measures have been conducted by the then Ministry responsible for ICT development (2012) to upgrade Internet connectivity in schools, creating digital content and encouraging adoption of electronic devices. The study undertaken by Jugee and Santally (2016) illustrates that, in a sample of 76 students, 55.26% were using the tablet for music and video player, while 48.68 % were using it for the dictionary, and 43.42% were using it as calculator. The same study states that educators’ unusual exploitation of the tablet PC ‘was dependent on the WIFI access points and also on the durability of their batteries’ (p.19).

The flaws of the approach were questioned by the researchers, given that educators concerned in the study pointed to issues such as tablet resetting, battery life, scratched screens and no Internet. They also condemned the tablet as a high distraction among students, and reproached the lack of features and no data access point to download resources. Conversely, the students who were using the tablets had limited their use to the calculator, some games and also the dictionary. I concur with Jugee and Santally (2016), who recommend that proper training must be done prior to implementation of tablet projects; and that the voices of teachers should be heard while initiating projects related to ICT.

### **2.8.2 Financial Cost of ICT and technological determinism**

Despite heavy investment in ICT, the COL reports that there is no direct correlation between “increased spending on ICT and improved performance of educational systems” (p. 31). Instead, there is a need to identify the right technology and not simply to find alternatives for replacing the traditional and face-to-face educational models (COL, 2014).

As illustrated by Gaible and Burns (2005) a lot of investment is currently being made to harness the best in ICT in a view to improve learning and teaching and support ICT as a

catalyst for learner-centred pedagogy. Kulkulsa-Hulme (2010) quotes the research by Shohel and Power illustrating how mobile tools can contribute to provide education for children as expressed in the goals of Education for all (UNESCO, 2010). But too much emphasis is laid on production of online as well as print based materials. Another drawback of a loaded ICT agenda included heavily content (subject) driven approaches to teaching which do not lead to deep learning and ‘conceptual change/student –focused approaches to teaching’ (Trigwell, 2012).

Bates (2011) further found that costs are rising because investment in technology and staff is increasing without replacing other activities, which leads to poor achievement of learning outcomes and often a failure to meet the best quality standards for online learning.

One pertinent challenge is the integration of ICT into training in order to improve teachers’ qualifications and performance (Zhang and Hung, 2007; Pouezevara and Khan, 2007; Gillies 2008). Therefore, the suggestion is to use ODL and ICT in ways in which they are integrated, assessed and focused on school based activities as well as improving teacher quality (Moon and Shelton Mayes 1995; Moon et al. 2007). Similar concerns in an African context are expressed by the Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA) initiative in that it recommends an “integrated resource and support approach” (Moon, 2010).

Acknowledging the relevance of ICT in the African context, Gaible and Burns (2005) stressed that we should not undermine its importance in achieving the aims of Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Nor should we undermine the existing challenges and the risks of the ways in which ICT could be introduced in teacher education programmes which could create disinterest and confusion.

Selwyn (2011) warns us against what he calls ‘Technological determinism’ and critiques the assumptions and promises of technology for it has not kept to its anticipated promise of altering education in many contexts. A related concern that condemns heavy investment is dependence and distraction as it easily occurs in digitally connected lives. This calls for guidance as to how well or poorly teachers adapt to the use of resources (Kulkulsa -Hulme et al., 2009).

I concur with Selwyn (2011) and Kulkulsa-Hulme et al (2009) as they add that teachers are often blamed when technology fails to be used ‘effectively’ and this blame is representative of the external urge to force an internalisation of technologies through the process of policy

and external logic (Nye, 2007). The case of Mauritius is yet to be examined as it calls for guidance as to how teachers should adapt to the use of resources (Kulkulsa -Hulme et al., 2009; Macknight, 2000; Baclean et al., 2007) through appropriation and/or translation of resources with or without technology.

### **2.8.3 A creative response**

In the light of the above, I put the following questions: If Pedagogy is inadequately explored in OERs and OEPs, if TPACK has gaps about context, if too much is being invested in ICT through marketing, if experiences of teachers in Mauritius and the global south are not adequately represented ...what next? Is it possible to draw a lens that could capture these gaps and dynamics? Is it possible to propose a less incomplete picture where inclusion forms part of the debate? I explain and propose this as a creative response below.

It is possible to view the complex dynamism that exists between teachers' practice, pedagogy and technology through a creative response (Bates, 2010; Loveless, 2003; 2011). Research about ICT integration in pedagogical practice has been done by Rogers (1995) and Toledo (2005) through a five-stage model approach and includes a system-wide integration to ascertain use and integration into the teacher education curriculum. Russell's model (1996) lays more emphasis on the use of innovation and the development of new skills but adds to the creative application to 'other' and new contexts. This is essential to understand how the existing resources can become renewable, sustainable and critically relevant if and when teachers are able to critically imagine and creatively apply them to their environment. In the light of the arguments advanced so far, therefore and considering the context, CoP and TPACK, further investigation is needed to understand how at the micro level the complex dynamism becomes significant to the users of OERs in their realities.

The complexity of the TPACK framework having been acknowledged, will therefore be examined against the topic under study focusing on the key characteristics of experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs. In spite of the limitations of 'context' and complexity of 'pedagogy' as well as the overt complex dynamics between the related concepts, in the TPACK model, there are strong arguments to use this framework in the study focusing on OERs. Using TPACK as a lens to examine the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs offers insight since the model lends itself to the critical examination of technology, pedagogy and content in a context of OER in a Mauritian landscape.

## **2.8.4 Aim of the study and research questions**

In the light of the above arguments, theoretical perspectives and insights gained, the aim of this study is to explore the pedagogical experiences of teachers in Mauritius who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context. The study seeks to:

1. Engage a narrative methodology to investigate the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs
2. Understand what these reveal about teaching and learning in the current context and learn from their experience
3. Develop a model/framework for ‘Pedagogy in Context’

In line with the above the research questions are:

1. What are the teachers’ experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context?
2. What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?
3. How might a model/framework of ‘Pedagogy in Context’ be developed?

## **2.9 Summary**

This chapter examined literature around the sustainability and appropriation of OERs in a global context leading to the conclusion that the gaps and voices of the south cannot be silenced or ignored. It also established the relationship between pedagogy and the OER movement by pointing at the gap or inadequacy of research on ‘Pedagogy’ in the OER movement. I have elaborated on the relationship between TPACK and the underrepresentation of ‘Context’ in education research, the relationship between the voices of the south and Mauritius as an island state against a move for standardisation as well as the link between ICT in Education and technological determinism. Finally, the chapter closes on a creative response as a means to use TPACK as an encompassing lens to examine the dynamics of the OER movement in the context of the study. This chapter has allowed a review that helped shape the research question for this study which are: What are the teachers’ experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context ?; what do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?; and finally how might a model/framework of ‘Pedagogy in Context’ be developed? In the next chapter I explain my methodological approach used to investigate the study.

## **3.0 Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology employed to answer the key research questions for this thesis. I begin by expressing my ontological and epistemological stance in describing the methodology adopted for this research which is a narrative inquiry. I then elaborate on its relevance to this study, to the research questions and to teacher education. I also describe the analytical framework that guided the design of the data collection methods and the data analysis process.

### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

I consider my ontological stance to align with that of a ‘relativist’ as for me, social reality is the sense we make out in a given context. Epistemologically, I sit within the interpretivist paradigm (Crotty, 1998) as I believe human and social reality can be described and understood through lived experiences (Samuel, 2009).

In the light of the above and in line with a qualitative approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), I believe that researchers form part of the social world they are studying and are not neutral beings. This includes taking account of what Somekh and Lewin (2005) term as one’s own interpretative processes and authorial position. Truth therefore does not exist out there without the context, the participants and the researcher. Social reality determines knowledge and examining social reality is a way of accessing knowledge. One way of looking at social reality is through a methodology that includes narrative inquiry or the stories of teachers. In the context of this study, therefore, the study of experience is the study of the phenomenon in itself. It implies seeking an understanding of the way teachers experience their lives by being engaged in the OER movement. It also means that their professional lives, when narrated, become stories from which meaning can be derived.

In an attempt to understand a social event through the eyes of the teacher, the researcher cannot be left distanced, as the latter cannot create meaning without the teacher. Thus, while the researcher has to be empathetic and sympathetic as well as generally participative, he/she also contributes to co-constructing meanings. In my role as a researcher, I adopted an inductive approach (Hayes, 2000) and let myself be led by the data generated from the field rather than have a theory, with construction of testable hypotheses. I am conscious of the importance of being “receptive to people’s own ideas and explanatory frameworks” (Hayes

2000, p.9) which is against pre-empting imposing a framework at first or against the researcher's monopoly of knowledge on the social event. I remain flexible as I value my participants, relational ethics and am open to subsequent findings by being aware of the guidance from the experience of a doing a narrative inquiry.

### **3.3 Methodological assumptions and identity as a researcher**

My own identity in this research process cannot be denied. Nor can I deny the common perception that I can be seen to be in a privileged position in this research as a researcher, a teacher trainer, and an academic. Chase (2005) and Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that narrative researchers need to state their positionality in a narrative inquiry to help them interpret the research process. Narrative researchers also break from conventional academic research by using 'I' to emphasize the role they have in shaping the research or constructing the story of the research.

My positionality is also influenced by my career tracks and stories in the field of Education for the past 18 years firstly as a former primary school teacher, as a secondary school teacher and currently now as a Senior lecturer at the MIE. I am aware that I bring to this research my own self which is not dissociated from a rich experience and insight in the field of education as a consequence of my career choices. I acknowledge these experiences, as strengths and insights which have helped me in the process of meaning-making and enabled me to build my current positionality and also to a large extent, determined the way I perform and conduct professional activities on campus.

Given my career choices and experiences, my identity and what I relate to has evolved and led me to acknowledge my own strengths and my view of the world as well as the nature of knowledge or ontology. I believe that the experiences and multiple truths around me, in turn frame and influence my current positionality where I believe that voices of teachers need to be verbally and orally attended to. These need to be written and represented for our lives are imbued with stories, multiple truths and invaluable intersubjectivity which frame who we are today and who we become. I also believe in multiple truths, and stories have always been central to my understandings and shaped my world view. I have grown to be increasingly aware of how my own life has been influenced by these as someone always told stories about things, events and society in general. The experience of hearing these stories, living in the stories as main or sub character, and gaining meaning from these stories have made me who I am today as a person, as an individual. This means that the events and experiences which

are stories have framed my identity which I cannot neglect for these are today part of me and continue to evolve in temporality.

As a relativist, I associate myself to narrative inquiry as grounded in interpretive perspective and phenomenological stance (Ellet, 2011). This implies that I have to struggle with the knowing that I bring to the field not by avoiding it, but by becoming increasingly aware of it. The relationship I share with participants then turns into a community where the narratives we share are in essence co constructed as a consequence of this interaction (Riessman and Speedy, 2007).

In this thesis, I use a narrative inquiry as I value the narratives of the participants' storied lives. I engage with the act of being an avid listener without letting my own process and reflexivity mislead the process. Ellet's (2011) calls this challenging process 'bridling' which is not dissimilar to bracketing or is the act of restraining deliberately one's own conception (conviction or views about the field) to avoid it from influencing or misleading the meaning-making process of the participants. It is the artful practise of ethical stance, respect for participants and their views, while prompting them to be themselves. It is also the practice of authorial honesty (Sikes, 2012) as well as the simultaneous practice of distance with the topic and closeness with participants that allows for the meaning-making process to emerge ethically and responsibly.

My identity, reflexivity, and position as an insider researcher (Asselin, 2003) (see also section 4.4.1) is also informed by the following views and limitations while using narrative inquiry approach. First, even if I associate myself with a narrative methodology, I am aware of the challenges and limitations of this methodology for as Smith (2000) indicates, content analysis and narrative analysis are different. The process of narrative analysis involves a sensitive and ethical approach to all participants' unique narrative while striving to co-construct meaning and represent them fairly. Riessman (1993) further point at the challenges related to validation in narratives by indicating how to approach narrative as a method and how to approach narrative analysis. The art of co-construction is sharpened with practice for the researcher but the apprehensions and challenges of navigating through the lived experiences of participants in a fair manner remains: While as a researcher I have to dig deeper and further to get at the authentic meanings, my identity as an insider researcher, practitioner and academic striving to make meaning is often the subject of preoccupation thus enriching and informing my reflexivity and positionality (section 3.3.1). I question my

identity, remain conscious of my positions in my multiple roles. I also review my stance as an insider researcher using participatory methods and involved in power relations.

While Cooke and Kothari (2001) indicate that participatory techniques constitute forms of power which can be dominating and patronizing, a different view is proposed by Gallagher (2008). The latter suggests a reconceptualization of the power relations of participatory research. He offers the view that participatory methods do not weaken but reinforce power relations for they can bind individuals together for a common concern. The participatory researcher then becomes the facilitator meant to help participants produce knowledge rather than produce knowledge on one's own. Kesby (2000) indicates this approach has the potential of offering a sense of agency for participants who enter in a reciprocal relationship and valorises 'previously neglected knowledge' (p. 423). A related view is that of Osch (1997) who indicates that narrative is collaboratively constructed and that co-authoring narratives for a lived experience impacts the understanding of experience. Gill (2001) suggests that the personal stories told are used to build larger frames of reference to assess assumptions and guide action. Its importance lies in that the recreation of experience, while these narratives still retain the personal, cultural and historical cultural connection. This implies that the researcher cannot be neutral for the latter brings into the research one's biases, insight, and knowledge.

Conducting research through a narrative methodology also implies confronting emotional and intellectual sensibilities; I take ownership of what it means to practice being a narrative inquirer; in a midst of stories, I confront belief systems, learn about them, learn the challenges related to decision making, negotiability and context sensitivity (see section 3.3.1) and still continue to search for authenticity and trustworthiness to represent the data through findings.

This process is not acontextual and an understanding of individual contexts is another vibrant challenge. For while emphasizing the importance of capturing and reporting the voices, Rhodes (1996) indicates that learning, socialisation and diversity are included as context. For me the process informs my learning and broadens my contextual insight and understanding in the field.

Finally, I concur with Snowden's (2001) view in that doing a narrative inquiry does not mean constructing stories but that it includes cultures and understandings revealed by the stories. His view on the dangers and limitations of simply constructing stories is related to Smythe and Murray (2000) who evoke ethical considerations while doing narrative inquiry. Both

authors (ibid) point at epistemological concerns of narrative ownership and multiplicity of narrative meaning. Narrative ownership is problematised given that ethical issues entails that participants are treated with respect but also participants' acceptance to give away data that will be used by the researcher. Concerns and the need for negotiation and overt awareness of one's own assumptions arise when the narrative data is not so easily separated from the researcher's fundamental values and meaningful life experiences.

### **3.3.1 My positionality and narrative inquiry**

Within the interpretive paradigm, I used a narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Clandinin, 2006; Webster and Mertova, 2007) to examine the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs and OEPs in the Mauritian context.

Narrative theory (Goodson, 2013) asserts that people produce accounts of themselves that are 'storied' in the form of narratives. Narrative inquiries also recognise the importance of multiple truths (Samuel, 2009) and are located within hermeneutic circle of interpretation and re-interpretation. This means that there is a marked difference between the text that is expressed and the meaning it can generate which can be extrapolated through various means (Bruner, 1991). I agree with the latter view and relate to what Bruner (1991) identifies as context sensitivity and negotiability. He asserts that narrative genres are culturally sensitive and supports the view of developing new ways of representations. I view this flexible approach as key to interpreting narratives since the interpretability of the narrative is relative and it is context that supports cultural negotiation or meaning-making. Further, the meaning and significance of the narrative are also informed by the method (see chapter 4). In line with the subject under study and the narrative inquiry, the method(s) then make the connections for authentic knowledge to be illuminated.

This school of thought rejects the idea of empirical validation for objectivity, consistency, stability or reliability kinds of measures that characterise quantitative studies. Instead, narrative theory is more concerned with close to life-like, and plausible narrative, verisimilitude, integrity, ethics of the researcher and reflexivity (Luttrell, 2000; Polkinghorne, 2005). Reflexivity is possible when the researcher is overt and declares biases, and makes decision to analyse, represent data during the process. I view reflexivity (Schon, 1983) as being embedded in the processes of data collection, analysis and reflections. Reflexivity is informed by the process of bracketing or bridling (Ellet, 2011). In my case,

the process was embedded in the processes of the study including the technique of ‘journal’ that I used to pen my thought processes prior to and after each narrative interview.

### **3.4 Narrative Inquiry approach**

*Bruner (1991): “...the fish will be the last to discover water” (p. 4)*

Bruner (1990) promotes the use of narrative as a powerful tool to understand education from the perspectives of educators. Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p. 2) argue that education is the construction and reconstruction of stories which are personal and social since teachers and learners live ‘storied lives’. This allows participants to make sense of the world they live in and experiment with life-as-lived (as what actually happened), life-as-experienced (the images, feelings, desires, thoughts and meaning) and life-as-told (a narrative life-as-experienced (the images, feelings, desires, thoughts and meaning) (Bruner, 1984). To make sense of the world teachers live in, this thesis uses a narrative inquiry (NI) as a methodological approach to investigate the research questions and explore the pedagogical experiences of teachers who are familiar and/or work with OERs.

Narrative inquiry is a methodological approach aiming at investigating narrative or uses narrative to present phenomena or narrative itself as, phenomena. A narrative is often the story about significant experience in an individual’s life. According to Chase (2005) a narrative may refer to any spoken or written presentation and is a particular type such as interviews or narrative data and can also take an audible, written, or even the form of a performance, painting or sculpture. A narrative often takes the common form of a story that details event and personal experience or personal reconstruction of an entire life, or can also be a life history (Samuel, 2009). Narratives are often characterised by pacing, time, rhythm, place, human agency, categories of narrators and audience, a complicated plot and action (Chatman, 1978; Polkinhorne, 1988). In such cases, the expectations are a story with actions, events, characters, settings and discourse or a complete plot that is presented in a chronological form for instance. However, this is not the sole form of representation for Toolan (1988) warns that what westerners expect stories to be in the form of a beginning, middle and end, which may be different for other cultures. He also warns that narrative conventions and audiences in everyday life are different from forms of formal research. While I concur with this view, I also believe that the representation of the interaction with the participants in the form of ‘transcribed narrative interview’ themselves offer a unique reading of the lived experiences of the participants, from which meaning can be derived and

examined for analysis. I am therefore more driven towards the representation of multiple truths, and representation of intersubjectivity through a non-story telling based approach.

*Reflections from Journal*

*I agree with Toolan (1988) who suggests that westerners have a way of telling story with a beginning – a middle and end – and Bruner (1991) who recognises that genre can be culture sensitive and expectations of the western way of narrating stories do not necessarily hold value in our context particularly when my participants are so diverse...they may have different ways of representing their stories, their lives...storying their lives in the form of a plot would be restrictive and would not do justice to the meaning they derive in the context of a narrative interview ...I will still be extracting meaning from the text even if I do not indulge in making stories out of the texts produced by the participants...*

In the next section I explain the importance of narrative inquiry for this study and elaborate on the framework I adopt.

### **3.5 The value of Narrative Inquiry to gauge teachers' experiences**

“...narrative is both the phenomenon and the method of social sciences” (Clandinin and Connelly. 2000, p. 18)

The value of narratives in educational research can never be underestimated given individuals live in stories, grow through stories, create stories and tell or retell stories differently to different audience at different points in time under different circumstances. What stays however, are the emotions, thoughts and feelings one attaches to these after the events, or circumstances have been lived or experienced. As Creswell (2008, p. 511) states “telling stories is a natural part of life, and individual all have stories about their experiences to tell others. In this way, narrative research captures an everyday, normal form of data that is familiar to individuals”.

For me therefore, the development of teachers' personal and professional identities and how they grow from these, can be narrated through stories. From these, we gauge meaning for future readers as these contribute to the bank of knowledge generated from teachers.

As Creswell (2008) asserts, narrative inquiry helps to bring a sense of community and establishes bonds between people, a connection between the teller and the listener and make

the story tellers feel important and heard. As stated by Elbaz-Luswich (2007), narrative method is sensitive to context and the enquiry engages people and shows rather than tells. In her study, Ellet (2011) claims that while attempting to understand why some teachers remain in the teaching profession, narrative inquiry has been useful to redeem those voices especially in the context of challenges that teachers face today which may make them become cynical and decide to quit teaching. What they say, what they experience and live therefore is of value to educationists to better harness the educational climate, their aspirations and their lives.

As Goodson (2003) states, while developing life and work histories of teachers the contextual and thematic data presented can help us explore what happens in the lives of teachers at work and these in turn can shape our understanding of issues such as teacher burn out.

Narratives can thus provide teacher generated knowledge where teachers themselves are concerned. These forms of knowledge are valuable in a context where the possibility exist to link our narratives to wider 'Patterns of structuration and social organization' (Goodson, 2001, p. 5). I also concur with Goodson (2003) who adds that while focusing on theories of context, we attempt to respond to the critiques and instead valorise the subjectivity of teachers which for so long, has been undermined. I also agree with Goodson and Smith (1987), (in Goodson, 2003) in redeeming the role of the teacher, who for so long has been considered mainly as a technician. Research in Teacher education therefore needs to reclaim the teacher's position by reclaiming her/his subjectivity and voice in educational research.

### **3.5.1 Narrative Inquiry and OERs in Mauritius**

In the light of the importance of narrative inquiry in educational research, I reiterate the need for research using narrative inquiry in the Mauritian context to represent the voices of teachers who are familiar with OERs.

I here concur with Bruner (1990), Samuel (2009), Goodson (2013), Clandinin and Connole (2000) who value a contextual and meaningful reading of what happens in participants' lives through narratives which can be analysed from an ideological, historical or contextual perspective. In Mauritius, this study is yet to occur, and in this first study the intention is to learn more about teachers' pedagogy in context.

Using a narrative inquiry in this field contributes to advances critical insights into the field where pedagogies are ‘lived’ and experienced. By ascertaining the experiences of those teachers who are familiar with OERs, and voicing them out, this study adds a new dimension to teacher generated knowledge. It will contribute to shed more light on how ‘Little OERs or grass root use of OERs’ (Rennie and Weller, 2010) matters in their teaching and learning stories. This will contribute to inform policy (Bissell, 2009).

### **3.5.2 A Narrative Inquiry as conceptual framework**

Using narrative inquiry implicates the understanding of a set of characteristics and consideration that allow researchers to engage in the inquiry with a view to explain why people behave the way they do. The process involves gathering data through various forms such as verbal, oral and visual. Considering the nature of this study, my understanding as a researcher led to view narratives as an approach that can enable an examination of how teachers who are familiar with OERs engage in teaching and learning. Essentially, I seek a rich and detailed understanding of how teachers conceptualise teaching in the current times in Mauritius as they engage with OERs. As a relativist, I believe in the value of teacher generated knowledge, and I also adopt an open stance in understanding and making meaning out of their lives and am open to new knowledge that is generated out of context comprising of meaningful contextual realities. I believe studying the lives of educators (events, thoughts, and actions) can offer insights into the complexity of teaching in the current context and inform our understanding within a broader social and historical context.

Narratives also offer a unique and authentic understanding of how individuals construct meaning in particular settings by stressing on the human experiences that can capture and record the complex interactions (Stephens 2009; Stephens and Traher, 2012; Goodson, 2013; Bell 2002) which is appropriate here, given the nature and intentions of this research.

The researcher’s view of the world and examination of data also determine the importance of ‘context’ in a study. While I elaborated on my view of context in chapter 1, I also relate to the multiple individual and subjective stories of experience, narratives and lives experienced from a particular angle in that broad context. One context can therefore give rise to multiple stories and each experience is as important and authentic. Goodson and Sikes (2001) relate this idea to ‘stories of action’ situated in theories of context, thus acknowledging the multiplicity of stories as well as the multiplicity of theories and here extendable to multiplicities of ‘contexts’. In this study I consider the openness of the context

as a whole, in terms of stories in actions and allow myself to analyse and interpret the meanings therein.

Although there are several ways in which a narrative inquiry (Webster and Mertova, 2007) can be conducted, of particular interest to me is the way Connelly and Clandinin (2006) conceptualise context which I use as an approach for analysis in chapter 4. Clandinin et al (2007) introduce and highlight the concept of ‘commonplaces’ which according to Clandinin (2013) are “places that need to be explored in undertaking a narrative inquiry...” (p 38). The three dimensional space termed as ‘temporality’ (temporal context), ‘sociality’ (social context) and ‘place’ (context of other people) allow narrative inquirers to navigate to and through many areas including past, present, future, social milieus and places.

For Clandinin and Connelly (2000) context is part of narrative thinking and the process of narrative inquiry is in line with what Clandinin (2013) terms as living the stories, telling the stories, retelling the stories and reliving the stories as participants express their experiences. This also means that both participants and researcher revisit the stories. For the researcher, it is termed as ‘coming alongside’ participants and implies researchers then engage with them in a more profound manner; this often brings the researcher places in the lives of the participants. An analysis of these reveals the complexity of participants’ lives as indicated in chapter 6.

### **‘Temporality as context’**

*“Life ...is filled with narrative fragments enacted in stories moments of time and space and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.17)*

‘Commonplaces’ is informed by three conceptual lenses the first one being temporality. According to Kerby (1991), engagement with temporality means attending to the experience of a participant. Time allows participants to ‘relive’ and account experiences without boundaries of time for it allows them to move in past, present and future in the light of events, thoughts and reflections that permeate across times (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). There are different possibilities to understand temporality in the context of a narrative method. Participants can go back to the past and engage with notions of time but they can also experiment with time as the physical time, time in the life of a teacher, in history, current context or educational context or climate. Essentially, temporality and memory are related

in that these illustrate how individual consciousness relates to construction of temporality. Collective memory is also essential in that it allows a certain sense of group memory or commonality. Temporality therefore allows for authentic meaning as illustrated in chapter 6.

### **‘Sociality as context’**

*Context matters to learning: it is complex and local to a learner. It defines a person’s subjective and objective experience of the world in a spatially and historically contingent manner. Context is dynamic and associated with connections between people, things, locations and events in a narrative that is driven by people’s intentionality and motivations.* (Luckin, 2010 in Loveless and Williamson, 2013, p. 110)

The social or environmental context allows personal, political, external and existential conditions, including factors and forces to contribute for experiences to happen in a particular manner (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). Personal conditions such as emotions, hopes and desires also permeate (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006), while social conditions refer essentially to the conditions in which these events or participants’ experiences unfold. These can be understood from cultural, social, institutional and linguistic views. Another dimension of sociality can also relate to the relationship between the researcher and the participant, where the researcher cannot dissociate herself or himself from the inquiry process. It also means that as participants travel to events and places in their stories, the researcher is not left unaffected, instead s/he co-learns from this experience, undergoes the process and grows as I illustrate this in my case in chapter 8.

### **‘Place as context’**

Another aspect of commonplaces or the ‘Place’ is an important consideration where the inquirer acknowledges that the physical place where events take shape and occur, impacts on the experience itself (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). They define place as the “Specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries ...where events take place” (p. 480) and there is emphasis to recognise that all events take place in a specific place.

According to Creswell (2008), narrative researchers also focus on the details of the setting or context which may include place of work or organisation as a physical place. But in the context of the study, the work place is a symbolic place where the narrative interviews occur rather than it being the place of the phenomenon or the multiple experiences that the

participants live. Although there may be some exceptions, it is to be noted that in Mauritius, most teachers in government schools are transferred as a usual exercise after several years of teaching in the same school. Place or physical context of the narrative interviews in this case is not exclusively the place where teachers have lived the experiences.

For this study, I explore 'context' as commonplaces through temporality, sociality and place because the analysis of context through these lenses allow for the participants' professional context to emerge as foreground rather than background. I, therefore, emphasize the idea of 'context' from a sociocultural perspective as foreground because this leads to authentic understandings based on the professional experiences of participants who are familiar with OERs. This approach has not been adopted in the field of OERs before and as indicated in chapters 4 and 6, commonplaces as context offer a unique view of participants' experience and this approach. Drawing from the narratives helps to gauge meaning from the experiences of teachers who engage with OEPs in a Mauritian education context.

### **3.6 Summary**

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach adopted for this thesis in line with a narrative inquiry. As indicated in chapters 1 and 3, the narratives of teachers who engage with OERs and OEPs in Mauritius in the current context have not been adequately researched and represent a novelty in this area of study related to OERs. It is expected that the drawing knowledge from narratives of teachers will contribute to a rich and authentic understanding of how teachers who engage with OEPs function.

This chapter ends with the adoption of the lens proposed by Connelly and Clandinin (2006) in using commonplaces; temporality, sociality and place as context from a theoretical lens and situates the methodological gap in this field of OERs. In the next chapter I elaborate on the links between the methodology, data collection method and the approach to analysis that I adopted for the study.

## **4.0 Chapter 4: Data collection methods and data analysis**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research design, data collection methods and the approach to analysis. The research design is in line with an interpretive approach where as a researcher, I used a narrative inquiry to understand the experience of participants through the analysis of storied events or “stories of experience” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). As indicated in chapter 3, this is in line with my interpretivist perspective, and phenomenological stance given that I believe in multiple truths, that knowledge is meaningful in a given context and that stories frame teachers’ experiences. These stories fuel their understandings of who they are today as a consequence of having experienced and lived through experiences earlier.

This narrative inquiry approach allowed teachers who participated in the study to navigate through time – past, present and future – or ‘temporality’ (Clandinin et al., 2007).

### **4.2 Research design and conduct**

Based on a narrative inquiry approach, narrative interviews were conducted to engage with the participants and answer the research questions which are

1. What are the teachers’ experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context?
2. What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?
3. How might a model/framework of ‘Pedagogy in Context’ be developed?

The interviews were intended to build an understanding of teachers’ perceptions and experiences through listening to their stories in the form of narratives and in a view to respond to the first two research questions stated above.

Research questions	Approach to enlist participants	Data collection method: Narrative interviews	Approach to analysis (2016 - 2017)
<p>1. What are the teachers' experiences of working with OERs in current Mauritian context?</p> <p>2. What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?</p> <p>3. How might a model/framework of 'Pedagogy in Context' be developed?</p>	<p>Plan A: online call for participation through email and LinkedIn and professional networks to access in service teachers who were familiar with OERs.</p> <p>Plan B: snowball approach was more useful to access in service teachers who are familiar with OERs.</p>	<p>14 narrative interviews, with in-service teachers who are familiar with OERs, were completed on a one to one basis</p>	<p>Interviews were transcribed and approval of the transcriptions sought from participants.</p> <p>A narrative analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted (see more detail of data analysis later in this chapter).</p>

**Table 1: Illustration of the broad outline of the research design**

#### **4.2.1 Data collection method: Narrative interviews**

The data collection process started in 2015. To obtain information on why and how teachers engage with OERs and what this reveals about teaching and learning in the current Mauritian context, I conducted individual in-depth interviews with 14 in-service teachers who were familiar with OERs and OEPs (see section 4.3 for details on identification of participants).

The interview questions were open ended and mainly unstructured, “dyadic” focusing more on listening to participants rather than having a set of pre-determined questions in a set order. These were also driven by one-to-one or case to case approach (Polkinghorne, 2005). The discussions were also shaped by the intention of the research questions and the questions based on the topic varied from one participant to the next determined by the latter’s responses. These helped to shape the overall data collection process. This method allowed me to capture rich data on the lived experiences of participants. Interviews took place over an average period of 45 to 90 minutes as a one-off interview per participant.

Given my belief that context and condition of the interview matter and in line with a narrative inquiry approach to relational ethics (Ellis, 2007), I paid particular attention to the interview site and to the language preferences of the participating teachers. Participants could thus select the preferred site for interview and language as indicated in the participant information sheet and consent form (See Appendix 1 and 2) to ensure maximum comfort level for the participants. I conducted detailed narrative interviews with 14 teachers over a five-month period, starting in September 2015. The narrative interviews included 13 face-to-face, and one Skype interview which were recorded with their permission and then transcribed. To maintain the trust between the researcher and the participants and to ensure that participants were comfortable with the narratives I would analyse, the transcriptions were returned to participants prior to analysis. This in line with the contract established with the participants as indicated to them in Appendix 1 and 2.

As indicated in the section on ethical considerations (section 4.5), while planning this research proposal, the Tier 1, Research Ethics Approval Protocol of the University of Brighton was scrutinised. The table below indicates the steps involved from the data collection to analysis that followed the ethical clearance process:

<p><b>Step 1:</b> Recruiting participants and reflecting on the implications and process.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Piloting and audio-recording narrative interviews with two participants.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Reflecting on the pilot phase and confirming the participation of more participants either by email or using a snowball approach.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Conducting and recording 14 one-to-one interviews over a period of five months. Adapting the interviews as necessary according to individual participant’s preferred language, time and place.</p> <p><b>Step 5:</b> Researcher verifies the process and audio recordings prior to transcription</p> <p><b>Step 6:</b> Transcribing the narrative interviews, translating them over a period of time during the process from Mauritian Creole or French to English where applicable</p> <p><b>Step 7:</b> Sending the transcripts to the participants, for participants to check; data analysis</p> <p><b>Step 8:</b> Negotiating and finalising any change to original data after participants sent their views</p> <p><b>Step 9:</b> Data analysis of the narrative interviews (I elaborate in the later section for approach to Data Analysis)</p>
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**Table 2: Steps involved in data collection**

#### **4.2.2 Piloting narrative analysis**

Prior to the main data collection, I piloted two narrative interviews. Conducting the pilot interviews served several purposes. Firstly, it helped me to develop the readiness to listen to completely unexpected issues that might emerge during the narrative interviews. I also learnt to prepare myself for some difficult, deep, emotional and personal experiences that conducting the narrative interviews could entail such as listening to traumatic stories from

participants' past. The pilot exercise allowed me to challenge my assumptions and underestimation of factors related to the process of conducting the interviews such as time of the day, duration of the interviews, travel time, place and the stress related to negotiating and handling the responses while listening to narratives of teachers. As a researcher, I was also challenged by the natural use of the mother tongue which is known as 'Kreol Morisien' or Mauritian Kreol and/or French by participants. These helped me to sharpen my readiness and become more confident to conduct later interviews.

After conducting the pilot studies, I was able to anticipate that there may possibly be emotional, passionate or silent moments and I could anticipate some of the apprehensions my participants might have. I was aware that each participant, each interview and each story would be unique and so, change would be the constant. This also meant that negotiating a one-to-one approach would not be a linear process but would depend on subjective stories and negotiation each time. The pilot studies also helped me to adopt a reflexive, non-judgmental stance as I learnt to negotiate the distance and level of formality or ease necessitated on the moment.

#### **4.2.3 Reflexivity through the data collection process**

When recording each of the interviews I ensured that I remained focused on listening to participants, so I made minimal notes during the interviews. As a researcher, it was important for me to be with the participant, ensure eye-to-eye contact, be poised and respect the emotional demands and intellectual effort the process required. I also made notes after each narrative interview, in line with the process of bracketing or what Ellet (2011) terms as 'bridling', as a necessary step to detach and distance from the emotional and intellectual demands of the process. I needed my reflexive space. It allowed me to go back to my 'self' and not be exclusively absorbed only by the content of the interviews so that I could prepare for the next one with the maximum attention. The emotional, cognitive and physical efforts were more demanding than I had initially expected; during the process of data collection, I had to stay for longer times than expected at the sites of the interviews. The note-taking and journaling allowed me to reflect on, negotiate and interpret the experience of conducting the research and the reflections thereof; I shared my participants' fields as an insider (former teacher and currently involved in education) and I could relate to the emotions they expressed, including their sadness and excitement. These experiences helped me to develop a deeper reflexive stance (Schon, 1983) and a greater awareness of the sea of stories I found

myself in and bracketing (Drake, 2010) (see section 4.4.1) allowed me to look at the data from an enriched perspective when I analysed these.

### **4.3 Selection and recruitment of research participants**

I used a list contacts for in-service primary and secondary school teachers, who were previously engaged in OERs projects at the MIE and at the UOM and emailed them to invite them to participate in the study. Some email addresses in my custody dated as far back as 2009 and I had assumed their email addresses had not changed. The participants were not discriminated in terms of age, gender, number of years of experience, region and the only condition was engagement and/or familiarity with OERs/OEPs. I also contacted some potential participants through the professional network site LinkedIn and invited them to participate after sending them a preliminary information sheet (Appendix 1) which indicated the purpose and processes involved. After a slow response following this initial call for participants, I assumed those I had attempted to contact were either not interested or had changed their contact details. Considering the time lost contacting potential participants and the slow response, I then adopted a snowball approach which led me to contact other teachers through those who knew other teachers based in primary and secondary schools who had also been involved in OER projects. Prior to the interviews, I confirmed that the new participants were either involved in OER project or were familiar with OER concepts. I then followed a similar procedure and sent those potential participants a participant information sheet and consent form. This process allowed me to complete the narratives of 14 participants.

An overview of the profile of each participant involved is included in the table below. Among the 14 teachers who participated in the study, 12 are female teachers, and two are male. Seven of the participants teach in primary schools, and seven teach in secondary schools. Pseudonyms were adopted for all teachers who participated to maintain anonymity.

<b>Names of participant (Pseudonyms)</b>	<b>School context</b>	<b>Gender (12 F, 2 M)</b>	<b>Highest Qualifications</b>	<b>Time: Years of Teaching experience</b>	<b>Site/place of interview</b>
Beatrice	State Secondary	F	PGCE	14	Home
Aartee	Public Primary	F	TDP	1	School
Sabina	Public primary	F	PGCE	9	Skype interview
Shana	Public primary	F	TDP. BSc	5	School
Natacha	Public primary	F	TDP	11	Home
Reena	Public primary	F	TDP	16	School
John	Private aided secondary school	M	BSc	9	School
Nazeem	Private aided primary school	M	TDP	19	Centre for Private tuition
June	State secondary	F	BSc	12	Home
Jasmine	Faith based public secondary	F	BA, PGCE	16	Home
Sara	Public primary	F	TDP		School
Shalinee	State secondary	F	BA	14	School
Razia	Public primary	F	TDP, Graduate course student	5	School
Babita	Public secondary – prevocational	F	BSc, TDPVE	10	Restaurant

**Table 3: Overview of participants' context of teaching**

#### **4.4 Site of interview and language**

Clandinin (2007), Clandinin and Connelly (2000) acknowledge that context plays a crucial role such that “the place and time of day and the degree of formality established...” (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, p.110) contribute to the quality and response received. In line with the approach to respecting participants and supporting them in telling their stories in the conditions that would be most comfortable for them, participants were invited to choose the language used during their interview, as well as the time and place of their interview. This led me to travel many places across the Island including their place of residence, schools and restaurants at the times agreed by the teachers. But more importantly, I often felt I had travelled to many places with the participants, as they unfolded the stories of their past, of their present and of the places they have been in their worlds. Teachers often favoured the mother tongue, the ‘Kreol Morisien’ language or French. Many used English occasionally but most teachers juggled to and fro in the language and used a medley of three languages: Kreol Morisien, French and English. In line with relational ethics (see section 4.3.1), the choices were respected and adhered to and I translated the data in English over a period of time for the purpose of communication and presentation of data during the process.

##### **4.4.1 Insider researcher and Relational Ethics**

As an interpretivist, I am aware of my ‘own’ self’ as an important variable in this démarche having my own set of rationality; I view the world the way I do and resist the view of looking for one way of doing research (Bassegy, 1995). I see myself as an insider researcher (Sadler, 1969; Asselin, 2003, Mitchell, 1977), as such, I benefit from a set of advantages which I consider to minimise biases (Rose, 1985) such as familiarity to the field. I relate to the depth and breadth of the OER field and anticipated meeting teachers with whom I might have worked or with whom I share common experiences. Another common aspect I share with the participants is the Mauritian context unlike their micro context such as schools for these are spaces to which they attribute deeper and different meaning based on their personal, practical and sociohistorical views and experience. It was therefore, important for me to negotiate the biases throughout the process by experimenting ‘sieving’, positioning and bracketing in a reflexive manner (Drake, 2010). During the process of data collection, bracketing and sieving became regular practices as I learnt how to stop, pause and avoid personal judgment about the Mauritian context or OERs related projects even if I was familiar with these. I felt that the process demanded more than insight, it demanded an added

self-awareness and reflection of the possible influences or interpretation of my own words, my movement and actions permeating through this process.

Clandinin (2007) indicates that the extent to which the research embraces narrative inquiry is indicated by four turns towards narrative: The first being a change in relationship; this refers to a situation when for instance I as a researcher negotiate my identity as I introduce myself to the participant. Being based at the MIE in the Mauritian context, could intimidate participants, as I could have been their former tutor, former lecturer or project leader or even an actual stranger which could inhibit a flow of communication and cause awkwardness. I was aware of this limitation and opted to lay more emphasis on my role as a researcher, seeking their collaboration in research (see also section 4.4.2). The second turn (Ibid) refers to a situation where during the narrative inquiry, emphasis is placed on words and the discourse I hold as a researcher as these determine the dynamics within the interaction. The third turn refers to a situation where the conversation shifts from general to specific, enabling specialisation in the topic of research. The last turn is that of an acceptance of alternative epistemologies or ways of knowing.

While laying emphasis on the four moves, Clandinin (2007) also states that in this process the move from an acceptance of the researcher-researched relationship moves to a more relational view. This relational view reconceptualises the status of the researched in the relationship. In this case the participants are not bound, “static or atemporal and decontextualised” (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 11). Clandinin adds that during this process, researchers may still view themselves as distant from the participants particularly during the process of analysis and interpretation of data. Coming from a phenomenological standpoint, I can relate that my positionality in this research and level of familiarity with the field and the system were both an asset and a challenge. This process forms part of the challenge insider researchers, face with regards to the duality of their roles and identity during the process of narrative inquiry. The challenging part was also the newness experimented throughout this process that necessitated persistence, commitment, bracketing and detachment for new insights (see also section above on Data collection and reflexivity)

#### **4.4.2 My positionality in relation to participants**

Chase (2005) suggests declaring one’s positionality is important in a narrative inquiry to allow interpretation of the research process. I quickly imagined my professional position as a Senior Lecturer and an OER project leader as a challenge, as it could be an intimidating

factor and it made me apprehensive about participants' limited participation or level of comfort. Agar and Hobbs (1982) recognise that the relationship between the teller and the listener is generally biased given that the interviewer listener is often the dominant. While undertaking the interviews, care was taken to minimise interviewer-dominance throughout the conversations, and the nature of the interaction was geared towards increasing their power, or potential, to feel sufficiently comfortable to tell their stories. It was essential to allow their narrative to emerge during the process and not be the dominant interviewer.

*Extract from journal:*

*I quickly realised my disadvantage when I came into their 'chosen sites' ... their school, their home which were often their favoured site. I felt more of a stranger, a novice... ill at ease at times, a guest...and it took me some time to negotiate with myself to ease the communication process even before the interview could begin.*

#### **4.5 Ethical considerations for the study**

Ethical considerations and a standard protection of data and respect for participants are key aspects to trustworthy research (Cohen et al., 2011). While planning this proposal, the Tier 1, Research Ethics Approval Protocol of the University of Brighton was scrutinised to ensure that measures were taken to treat the adult volunteer participants and their data fairly and respectfully. Further ethical considerations adopted, during and after the collection of data were in line with the British Education Research Association ethical recommendations (BERA, 2011). In accordance with the ethics of care (Wiles et al., 2006: 2008: Rose, 2007) care was taken to respect participants (see also section 4.3.1). For example, consent was gained from participants through a consent form (Annex 1) and a participant information sheet specifying the purpose, terms and use of data (Annex 2) was also disseminated for their voluntary participation in the study.

As a researcher, I ensured that anonymity was maintained throughout, by treating the data confidentially and securing the information in my custody for processing, transcription, and analysis and representation purposes. Sikes (2012) stresses the need to respect the participants not only through authorial honesty but also relate to representation of views of participants that respect their views as part of ethical practice. Further, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) emphasise that while narratives are developed, it becomes necessary to be careful about the words one uses and respect the discourse of participants so that they are

not ‘researched on’ but rather researched with (with the teachers). They express that the way an interviewer acts, questions and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore, the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience, the conditions under which the interview takes place also shape the interview (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 110). Mindful of the above, therefore, I emphasised on respect for participants and engaged with them in a collaborative spirit and prompted the appropriate conditions to maximise their comfort level. During interviews I acknowledged participants’ responses with comments such as ‘that is interesting...’ to demonstrate my interest and offer encouragement. I was fully aware that the interviews were focusing on their world and the meaning they chose to represent and I fully respected that as I entered their world by listening avidly and dedicatedly to the stories of their lives and their experiences.

During the interview process, it emerged that some respondents knew me as a Lecturer or OER project leader. This served as an advantage as those participants who had worked with me on earlier projects felt comfortable when talking about their experiences. However, I still needed to negotiate the boundaries of power and authority (Thapar-Bjorkert and Henry, 2004) as I interacted with the participants and delicately dissipated any anticipated worries by making all participants feel at ease. As indicated above, as an insider researcher (Mitchell, 1977), I had to practise using the skill of ‘bracketing’ (Drake, 2010) and keep my judgement and perceptions of projects they mentioned, aside. Overcoming this challenge led me to interpret the participants as equals contributing to the study.

## 4.6 Approach to Data analysis

My approach to data analysis is informed by my position as an interpretivist seeking to analyse the experiences of participants in this study. Data analysis is initiated the very moment the narrative interviews occur because then the researcher is already in the field and involved in analysis. The use of field notes and journaling to record the related thoughts and feelings, consolidated my approach to analysis and meaning-making.

Narrative analysis is the process where the researcher describes or retells the narratives collected during the narrative inquiries. The process includes narrative representation into forms of well-knit stories with character, plot, chronology and sequence; for example, where the act of story creation is considered as an act of narrative analysis (Clandinin, 2007; Riessman, 1993, 2008; Clandinin, 2000; Creswell, 2008), or an act of thematic analysis where the content of the data is analysed to arrive at themes (Ellis 2004). As a researcher, I believe in creative conversations derived from open ended, one-to-one interviews. Therefore, instead of creating and interpreting 'well-knit stories with plot', and modifying the original narrative into a new story, I chose to respect the creative forms of the conversations in their original transcriptions. I therefore draw on the 14 narratives of participants to construct a cross-analysis. The examination across the interviews thus leads to a thematic analysis and analysis through commonplaces based on the narratives in the form of interviewed transcripts (See Table 4). Thus, the transcriptions or the narrative interviews themselves formed the basis of the analysis and were analysed using techniques such as colour coding, reaching to a set of categories and negotiating initial and final set of themes (Table 4). This, for me has an authentic, analytical and examinable value especially in the light the intentions for thematic analysis across transcripts and analysis through the lens of commonplaces (Clandinin et al., 2007). I also believe that participants are my equals in the meaning-making process and I believe their narratives in the form of interviews itself hold truths and realities I cannot change or tamper with except with their permission. Therefore, I favour transcripts or the interviews modified by the participants rather than stories or plots as seeming representation of possible value laden judgment for analysis. This process also sits well with teachers who then mentally and emotionally revisit the flow of the narratives, from the time they were first interviewed, which includes the order and reflections in a sequential manner they chose, to the time they revise and confirm the version of the transcript they want me to analyse. I here concur with Polkinhorne (1988) in analysing experiences of participants with an aim to seek meaningful analysis for trustworthiness and

authenticity, and with Loveless (2012) who links ‘creative conversations, narrative and research methods’, suggesting an authentic way of representing data.

In this thesis, I analyse the narratives from two main perspectives; a thematic analysis based on the stories narrated by teachers in view of understanding their experiences as a whole; and secondly using the lens of commonplaces, I examined the data using the three elements namely temporality, sociality and place, within a context. This process necessitates what Sikes (2012) calls ‘authorial honesty’.

### **From transcribed text to analysis**

In line with the approach to analysis, I transcribed the whole audio-recorded participant interviews using pseudonyms and sent transcriptions to participants prior to the data analysis. The process which was rather complex, was not devoid of stress (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) as I was on the waiting end for the transcribed texts to be endorsed by the participants and returned to me. That was a particularly lengthy process, which at times, took more than a month for participants to revise and change what they felt needed to be amended before they finally agreed that their transcript was finally an accurate reflection of their views. This exercise led me to be more patient and is related to what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) term as a bonding that is created between the researcher and the participants in a process of narrative inquiry. As indicated in Table 4, during the preliminary steps, some participants made minor changes prior to finalising the version of transcript they wanted me to analyse.

The thematic analysis is termed as phase one of the data analysis (see section 4.6.1) where an inductive approach is used to draw the emerging themes across the narratives. Phase two comprised of the analysis of the interviews based on the lens of commonplaces (Clandinin et al (2007) and is described in section 4.6.2. The two phases served to answer the first two research questions (see table below) as indicated in chapter 6.

Approach to data analysis	Description	Remarks
<b>Preliminary steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcribing the data</li> <li>• Anonymising the data and assigning pseudonyms to participants</li> <li>• Reading and sending the transcripts back to the participants</li> <li>• Waiting for participants to return the transcripts with amendments</li> <li>• Agreeing on a moderated version for analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Three participants suggested minor alterations while one suggested removal of one section. This decision was respected and the analysis of data followed.</p>
<b>Phase 1:</b> thematic analysis of narrative interviews	<p>Detailed Data analysis begins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading the revised narrative interviews, the field notes and listening to audio files</li> <li>• Coding and colour coding for further analysis</li> <li>• Analysis leads to a set categories</li> <li>• Reaching at emergent themes</li> <li>• Negotiating the set of themes to be finalized in the light of the research questions leading to 6 main themes (see chapter 5)</li> </ul>	<p>Example of colour coding used:</p> <p><b>Red : Sociality</b>  <b>Blue : Pedagogy and methods</b>  <b>Yellow: relationships with learners</b>  <b>Green: OERs/OEPs</b>  <b>Orange: ICT</b>  <b>Purple: regulatory bodies/ministry/policy</b>  <b>Grey: poverty</b>  <b>Blue-grey: Violence/death</b></p> <p>The above themes representing initial themes were later re-examined and analysed into main themes illustrated in in the findings chapter 5:</p> <p>Part 1 : Contextual characteristics</p> <p>Part 2 2: Three themes: working with OERs and OEPs, working with OERs using technology, and teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs.</p>

<p><b>Phase 2</b> : analysis of narratives through commonplaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing all the narratives</li> <li>• Drawing from the narratives and analysing them in the light of commonplaces: temporality, sociality and place</li> <li>• Negotiating meaning from the data to represent the examination of the narratives under the lens of commonplaces</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Phase 3</b> towards discussion: Complementarity of phase 1 and phase 2 in the light of the research questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing the findings from phase 1 and phase 2 in the light of Research question number 1, 2, an 3</li> </ul>	

**Table 4: Approach to analysis**

#### **4.6.1 Phase 1: Thematic analysis**

*“There is no neutrality. There is only greater or less awareness of one’s biases” (Rose, 1985, p. 77).*

Drawing from the examination of the narrative interviews using an inductive approach, a set of themes and sub themes were analysed; these are represented in chapter 5. The analysis required a constant reading and re-familiarisation with the data, in the light of the research questions and negotiating the emergent categories into patterns and determining colour codes (Table 4). The process of decrypting, coding, associating, blending, comparing and contrasting of data was also involved prior to finalising the themes which are represented in chapter 5.

I concur with Bazeley’s view (2009) that the analysis of data is more than just analysis of themes and the approach used was iterative rather than linear. Analysing the data involved analysing the least repetitive or least evident truths as well, an examination that goes beyond description and a process that includes challenging the data, extending, supporting, selecting and linking the data to reveal its full value. When the categories for analysis emerged, there were some anticipated ‘a priori’ themes such as themes of OERs and OEPs. While examining the narratives, the meaning of pertinent, significant, often less represented truths also emerged from the data; these were then negotiated and represented in part 1 of chapter 5, and chapter 6. The dynamics involved in analysis comprised the complex process of sieving, bracketing and negotiating the dilemmas and decision making (Acker, 2000; Labaree, 2002; Chavez, 2008).

#### **4.6.2 Phase two: Analysis using the lens of commonplaces**

Findings which emerged from the thematic analysis addressed the first two research questions: What are the teachers’ experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context? And what do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current context?

The framework developed by Clandinin et al (2007) or the lens of ‘commonplaces’ was used for analysis in phase 2. In this study, the use of this framework refers to the situation where the individual transcripts are analysed in the light of ‘temporality’, ‘sociality’ and ‘place’ as context. This analysis enabled me to immerse myself into the participants’ narratives and

engage with them, their experiences and feelings prior to making decisions about representation of data.

This detailed exercise necessitated a series of minute negotiations, I as a researcher, had to grapple with. It included making numerous decisions and persisting until I found a common and coherent thread that explained particular phenomenon. Considering the scope and limitations of this study, as well as its potential, I chose to analyse only few pertinent narratives through the lens of commonplaces for some of the narratives included more elements related to either temporality, place, or sociality than others. Thus, the narratives of six participants were selected. The analysis of the narratives through the lens of commonplaces is described in chapter 6 where rich and meaningful events and experiences of the six teachers are captured in the form of extracts of stories from the narrative interviews.

These are essentially linked to the second research questions and offer a different and deep reading of the data other than the thematic analysis in phase one above. The table below illustrates how the narratives of each chosen participant comprised a dominance of core elements; Beatrice and June representing temporality; Aartee and Shalinee illustrating sociality; and Nazeem and Natacha illustrating place.

<b>Commonplaces as lens of narrative analysis</b>		
<b>Temporality</b>	Beatrice	June
<b>Sociality</b>	Aartee	Shalinee
<b>Place</b>	Nazeem	Natacha

**Table 5: Selected narratives analysed through the lens of commonplaces**

## 4.7 Phase 3: discussion of findings from phase 2 and 3

Phase 3 further analyses meaning from the data from the thematic analysis (Phase 1) and the analysis through the lens of commonplaces (Phase 2). This examination serves to generate a whole, coherent and authentic reading of the data analysed in the earlier two phases and constructs the arguments in chapter 7. Phase 3 builds on and is informed by the findings from chapter 5 (thematic analysis) and 6 (analysis through the lens of commonplaces). It is the proposition of a coherent argument in relation to the first two research questions and the study as a whole. The three phases, are seen in complementarity (figure below) and serve to build the case towards the third research question as expressed in chapter 8.



Figure 1: The complementarity of phases 1 and 2

## 4.8 Summary

This chapter is complementary to chapter 3; it has provided details of the research design, data collection methods and the approach to data analysis. Chapters 5 and 6 will present the findings which emerged from the data.

## **5.0 Chapter 5: Pedagogical experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs**

*Connelly and Clandinin (1990): “we need to listen closely to teachers and other learners and to the stories of their lives, in and out of classrooms...” (p. 12)*

### **Part 1: Characteristics of the context**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a representation of the context (Part 1: sections 5.2) and the themes (Part 2: sections 5.3-5.5) that were analysed from the 14 narrative interviews. As an interpretivist I believe that knowledge emerges from the context and that meaning-making is shaped from the stories that occur therein. These stories are intricately linked to and shaped by situations, events and circumstance as a consequence of teachers’ living and working in that context. I therefore begin this chapter by examining the key contextual characteristics that were drawn from and analysed from the participants’ interviews (sections 5.2.1.1-5.2.1.6 and 5.2.2). These indicate how these teachers’ lives are characterised by occurrences and circumstances that influence their practices both directly and indirectly. Some of these occurrences are related directly to OERs while some of them are not directly related but inform the direction that these teachers have taken and who they have become as individuals within these contexts. These sections on contextual characteristics and their influences on teachers who are familiar with OERs illustrate that for some teachers, the circumstances under which they function prompt them to look for resources in Mauritius and beyond. Further, participants who favour their use often do not use OERs due to situations in which they find themselves. Participants also enjoy their profession as educators and express the satisfaction they feel by working in a context heavily characterised by human interactions or student-teacher relationship (section 5.2.2).

#### **5.2 Contextual characteristics and their influences on teachers who are familiar with OERs**

##### **5.2.1 The influence of regulatory bodies and parents and participants’ professional practice.**

One of the characteristics of the context that all teachers work within is the presence and influence of regulatory bodies. In the context of this research the regulatory bodies refer to

groups of individuals and institutions with a supervisory role who may also be in a position to collaborate, such as the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), the Ministry of Education (MOE), school Management and committees and parents who also have an influence on schooling. The interviews revealed a strong presence and influence of the regulatory bodies in the lives of participants in the form of interaction and dynamics with the staff, school, classes, and policy which influence participants' sensibilities, beliefs and motivation to look for online resources. The next section 5.2.1.1 elaborates on these.

### **5.2.1.1 The influence of Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) on participants' adoption of OERs**

As the main teacher training institution in the country, MIE is a regulatory body that influences participants' understanding of teaching and learning in relation to OERs. Those who have completed their training from the MIE for instance, Aartee, Beatrice and Jasmine have expressed gratitude for the components for which they trained at MIE:

- Jasmine: ...having followed the PGCE also allowed me to see things differently.
- Aartee: Many educators says that MIE is a waste of time. But if they worked in the same school as me, they would have understood how much MIE courses have helped me. MIE taught me how to sing, we need to sing with pupils... It is true that each school is different, not all strategies will work everywhere.

The interactions at MIE led participants to become familiar with OERs as they were taught about OER related projects. This is clearly expressed by Natacha who, 10 years after her initial training at MIE, was invited to participate in projects related to literacy and OERs through the MIE:

- There was a time when MIE was conducting literacy projects in schools. I liked these a lot. The tasks were according to specific grades and we were given worksheets... Then in 2009 there was the TESSA programme (OER project).

Participants who are familiar with OERs are also familiar with MIE's ICT related projects and are conscious about positive cost or economic implications of resources being available free of charge. This made Beatrice critique the high cost non-OERs related projects such as an ICT project she had to do to complete while following courses at MIE. Babita also critiqued that till date MIE is still practising the submission of costly assignments for those who follow courses. This for her is against the OER philosophy:

- Babita: She cannot give a soft copy, she needs to print and give. But I think the MIE also is not changing! It's unfair... because if you are the spearhead of the country and you are not changing your ways, how do you expect the teachers ... to change their ways?

The financial constraints illustrated above are pertinent to the philosophy of OERs. OER philosophy defends economic advantage as the intention is that OERs have to be free of charge and this reduces the overall cost of educational materials and resources. This one significant factor that leads teachers favouring OERs and which motivates them to discover more about more available OERs.

### **5.2.1.2 The influence of recent projects from Ministry of Education (MOE) on participants' adoption of OERs and their practice**

Another regulatory body that is present in the lives of participants is the Ministry of Education. Participants are aware of the MOE's educational projects and yet critique the recent projects such as the NYS and the Tablet project. Their critiques reveal their preoccupation with the innovations brought in the system and their interest for improvement. For some teachers the lack of communication on MOE's projects is appalling and is viewed as alarming. It prompts them and motivates them to look for more elsewhere rather than stick to the local context only. Shalinee for instance resists the usefulness of the Tablet project and instead associates it to a political project comprising a number of technical flaws rather than a pedagogical project:

- Shalinee (critiquing weaknesses related to MOE's project during the interview): Do you have technicians behind to repair it? ...proper connection to start with? So you just give a tablet because you want to give the tablet ...I'm not against the Minister or the previous Minister, I'm not pro the other political party or this political party, for me what matters is my class... I'm working now, whatever the politicians do I remain a civil servant... so my hands are tied in one way and I have to accept what they are doing. But how do you innovate with this? ... How do you enjoy a job which could have been utterly boring otherwise?

Shalinee raises the issue of the relevance of MOE's projects that are considered to be innovative and critiques the lack of contextually relevant materials. Her discontent leads her to with a feeling of inadequacy and she is prompted to look for more elsewhere. Jasmine

confirms this weakness and lack of pedagogical rigour that leaves her with a feeling of frustration and helplessness:

- We had to train ourselves for this (Referring to NYS). I heard my colleagues complain about the lack of information...And sometimes we had faulty tablets...we did not have any support for all this. I'm very scared.... I am still lost.

Participants thus become the people to whom innovation and policy decisions are thrust upon and the lack of clarity leaves them confused. One teacher captures this as a dictatorial attitude from the personnel of the Ministry;

- Nazeem: there is a king in the education sector ... the boss... you want to move, if he says yes it's yes, if he says no....he is the one who decides... I do not know why...But I'm not afraid of him because I know what I am doing.
- Nazeem: Because the education system is absurd. I cannot waste my time. I can't waste my time fighting against the system.

Thus participants prefer to look elsewhere for professional satisfaction and for resources. Nazeem then moves on to adopt a secular system and creates his own private centre where he develops OERs. Others, like Jasmine and Shalinee, look for alternatives. These teachers remain in the school and work in a traditional way to please the authorities when inspectors come for supervision and internally work differently and creatively when there is no supervision.

### **5.2.1.3 The influence of parents on participants' adoption of OERs**

Some participants indicate that parents coming from both rural and urban areas also influence works of participants: they either show trust, collaboration or they can also show mistrust. Although the issue of parental support for their wards' success does not directly affect participants' approach to OERs, it is an important consideration that informs their position as teachers. Knowledge about OERs and what happens online is a positive factor that prompts teachers but a lack of understanding about these and about raising their kids in general indicate that some parents are unable to collaborate. This is expressed by Jasmine, Shana and Shalinee who indicate a gap in parenting techniques of some parents which is related to the way they raise their wards.

- Jasmine: What scares me is that more and more children are coming in with their problems ... And so, and we do not have the weapons to help them. I cannot replace a mom...a dad ... indirectly we are asking this because the parents resign more and more easily from their responsibilities.

Jasmine also quotes the example of one parent to condemn the way some parents living in urban areas prefer to function at the detriment of their kids:

- Jasmine (citing a parent): “You know, madam, I’m going to buy the book, but this month I got implanted gold teeth...” (Jasmine to interviewer) for this parent there, his golden teeth are much more important than his child

Shana indicates how some parents based in the coastal area where she works, can either be less collaborative, or neutral or can also occasionally come to teachers for feedback:

- Shana: They neither collaborate nor protest. They remain silent....Sometimes parents come to school, they come for the performance of their child in class. I can only comment on their results.

However too much of parental interference is also a trouble as indicated by Shalinee who reclaims the autonomy of the teacher and questions the role of teachers in general:

- Are you a teacher? In 40 minutes, as a teacher you are responsible for the child’s values and manners, for his language, for his classwork, for his way of thinking.

The above quote illustrates one teacher’s experience and beliefs about detachment and involvement of parents. Babita describes how some parents’ lack of knowledge about OERs becomes a disadvantage:

- But, if the information is free on the net... why does the parent object? ...Well, I think that many parents are still in the traditional mode of teaching: learning from books. Parental Education ...and OERs; tell the parents “This is the site which is safe for your child.”

Teachers like Nazeem and Reena believe that excessive parental interference can be a disadvantage in elite schools. After having participated in an OER project where Reena won a competition in the field of OERs, she was posted from a poor performing ZEP School to an elite school. She was quickly disillusioned as parents labelled her as a teacher who had

worked in a poor performing school and questioned her competencies. The parents tried to induce a transfer exercise and attempted to remove their children from her class instead of appreciating her added competencies as a teacher who engages with OERs in her practice:

- There were some parents who were going to the office of the Ministry... they wanted to remove the children from the other class and put them in my class and vice versa...

Reena uses one incident to explain how students from high income earning families in an elite school can behave:

- There was a boy...did not want to listen. When I scolded him, he said, "My father is a magistrate." As if to make me afraid...I was angry.

Different approaches to parenting in the both rural and urban areas are expressed by teachers who struggle to find a balance for this collaborative link. Participants thus want more informed parents rather than absent, or misinformed parents. This gap also becomes a quest for teachers and can also explain why teachers like Babita and Nazeem engage more with the use of OERs or look for options outside the existing system.

#### **5.2.1.4 The influence of school on participants' professional practice**

School as a site of work can also be a source of oppression. As a site of work, the school can also be characterised by oppression which can then act as a catalyst for teachers to look for answers about their ambitions elsewhere. Nazeem is one such teacher:

- I was transferred in a school where the teacher left the class like that...no teacher is willing to go to work there..... they sent me to a school where teachers are victimized, beaten ...where parents lead.

Nazeem considers he has been the 'black sheep' in his own school for his passion about technology including OERs led him to be an 'outcast...unfit for the traditional system'. He is convinced now that teachers who are innovative and passionate can only work if they adopt a low profile. School for him limits his potential and therefore he chooses to explore ICT and OERs in his private centre and after school hours.

Participants' views about regulatory bodies and parents who are unable to collaborate indicate the power struggles that are prevalent in the Mauritian system. The difficulties underlying the teachers' everyday lives include inadequate organizational, institutional leadership and parental interference which are disadvantageous. These, however do not hamper their quest for more knowledge or the need to look for resources from outside. In fact, participants in this study demonstrate the ability to contour the challenges and continue using ICT and OERs in their work. These challenges, in fact, build their resilience and confirm the need for more solidarity among stakeholders as indicated in the later sections.

#### **5.2.1.5 The influence of day-to-day challenges on participants' adoption of OERs**

As indicated above, the experience of participants is characterised by the presence and influence of regulatory bodies. These may not be exclusively directly related to OERs but they influence participants in their motivation and stance as OER users. Some teachers reported that while pedagogically, they favour using OERs, their pedagogical choices are influenced by negative experiences and challenges related to poverty, grief and violence in the school context. These limit and affect the frequency of use of OERs; while some participants favour their use, others do not often use OERs due to situations in which they find themselves:

Teachers who are aware that their pupils are struggling with basic needs recognise the difficulty students may have to access ICT or Internet at home. For these families this reality deepens the gap among learners at school. Thus, access to OERs is compromised because OERs are mainly accessed through ICT devices. However this reality is also a counter argument for it can also motivate learners to come to school to access these resources:

- Shana: At the same time he is motivated while he comes to school, as at home he has never seen a computer. At school, he has the opportunity to use one.... interactive white board with the interactive pen, and children love to use that....
- Jasmine: ...story is a bit complicated, but she lives in a shelter ... so she does not have access like everyone else. And I know I said that everyone has a laptop but I have watched from a distance and I think she does not have a smartphone. But we have students who help her...

Challenges related to poverty impact on participants' pedagogy and use of OERs as these inform their alertness and sensibilities. They are considered as the disturbing and negative elements that are part and parcel of the macro and micro contexts. These concerns take

precedence over the pedagogical priorities as the teachers then have to contour their methodologies to take care of the child first rather than consider OERs and ICT first. While these challenges may not relate directly to OERs and may be experienced by non-OER users they contribute towards an understanding of a broader and more comprehensive picture of the context and the experiences of participants who are familiar with OERs in the Mauritian context.

Participants describe that some students do not come to school every day because of precarious family conditions. In these situations, empathy and solidarity take precedence over pedagogical priorities and participants have to revisit the considerations they have to take into account before teaching or even before selecting resources, OERs and related strategies.

- Shana: It's a coastal region ...the challenge is to increase the standard of the school, where we use different strategies as parents have other priorities in life. Education is not a priority, earning a living is, as sometimes children come to school with no lunch, they have no bread...Many parents did not send their children to school, when I enquired... 'Well miss, I do not have bread or food'.

This leads teachers and school staff to prioritise basic needs over pedagogical considerations:

- Shana: At school, it's the Head Master who buys bread and butter. He provides pupils with bread and butter for their lunch...It is then that you understand about priorities...Some pupils do not come to school as their shoes are ruined or wet. But there are shoes available at school.
- Sabina: We learned that there are two to three students who come to school without food...sometimes they have nothing to eat for two days, her mom did not find work...we decided that every day one of us will prepare food for this child without going directly through PTA.

Challenges faced by participants also include their experience with grief and violence. The challenge prompts participants to double their efforts to manage learners from a socio emotional perspective. Babita: The mother who left the child with Dad did not know how to look after the child. One day the child came to school, he fainted and when he woke up he began to cry and he could not stop...We learned that his mother had left him...

For Aartee, another contextual incident related to parents that marked her is related to violence, grief and racism:

- ...once a mother came to hit me at school. The mother was apparently a drug addict... She was angry as I kept her child's book in the school library. I don't give my pupils their book to bring home; I keep all books in the library...She entered my classroom and vandalized it.

The above indicates the unsafe school environment and also how some parents can interfere in matters such as placing of books, forcing teachers to reconsider pedagogical decisions.

The emotional investment and experience of Aartee who works in a poverty-stricken context is different. Moral values, love and care are central to the way she interacts as an educator given the underprivileged conditions of the pupils who need to be treated delicately for improved school experiences. Many of them who come have antecedents related to thefts, violence and dangers. She goes a step further and motivates them using food which she feels is appropriate for the context.

- I bring bananas from home to school...pupils get bread from school, I tell them that if they want bananas to eat with their bread, they need to work.
- I bring them love as they lack love... it reminds them of their home...therefore they feel secure with me.

Mindful of the sensitivities, she recognizes the need to establish emotional parameters first and devotes a lot of time caring and explicating why she does things the way she does; her focus is building bridges, connecting to the emotional affect of learners, creating and maintaining a positive relationship as the basis for everything else to follow:

- When I spoil him, his friend will notice it. So, he will do the same and I'll spoil him. Therefore, he will come, everyone will come.

She aligns teaching as a social act embedded with care and love where education becomes the key to get out of poverty. Her pedagogy is heavily centred on communication and care, focusing on promoting a culture of peace, respect, love and care for each other

The macro and micro events can be cruel to teachers especially when death or suicide cases become common experiences lived by both students and by teachers. Aartee was markedly

traumatized by the death of her 9 year old student who was assassinated. She expresses how it affected her, made her feel bitter due to lack of support, before explaining how this incident influenced her pedagogical choices:

- Aartee: One student died recently...But this was a terrible one and I have kept a portfolio of what all students have written. One example is “Miss her head was apart and the animals ate it”...at her death bed there was the only one certificate I gave her ... it was the only one she ever had...Yes, I did not get any support. I can say it out loud... no one came to talk to either me or the children.... I was alone...do you know what this means? ...there were courses too and my head was bursting...After four months it all came out... I cried.

To overcome the situation, she began to look for resources and it led her to a bank of OERs where she discovered positive storytelling and drawings and these became therapeutic and rewarding:

- Tell me what you want to say about Rose. Then I wrote them, I kept going on. After the third day I asked them to draw. I took a philosophical approach, made them imagine she turned into an angel in the sky with wings. We told stories of angels, I answered their questions, I responded she had hands and wings and God was taking care of her and made her eat.
- ... Half of my class was telling tales, talking, the other half was drawing... These tales helped them understand that they were not the only ones suffering in a corner.

Jasmine and Sabina also experienced death of students but unlike Aartee they do not opt for a bank of resources then. Instead, these instances clearly take away more instruction time because then they need to show more solidarity as teachers rather than be OER-users first. This situation then suggests that all teachers who are familiar with OERs are not avid users of OERs at all times but instead they are often preoccupied by the immediacy of the situation and need to act accordingly.

- Jasmine: Because I had at least 3 students who died...One suicide and two illnesses...Every week I went to the hospital with a different group of students to see her...We bought a little teddy bear, a little card, we were so happy. And a few days later we received a phone call telling us that she died... We need to talk about this to children!

- Sabina: the child was very quiet and became silent and one afternoon we heard that he hanged himself ... fifteen years old, two or three years ago. He was in form four. There we learned that it was because of a girl... We had to talk to the class, we said that because of a girl it was not the end of the world. ... So brainstorming was needed every day to calm the students.

The findings also indicate that teachers' pedagogy and their use of OERs are also affected by violence in schools for instance. These leave participants preoccupied by the immediacy of the situation rather than focus on OERs or pedagogy. Dominant examples include bullying or harassment;

- Babita: They were in Year 1, they were 11-12 years. And they simulated... a rape. And another child... recorded it... They did not realize actually how far they were going...

Teachers in boys' college face more risks as narrated by Sabina who was hit once while she was expecting a baby:

- Sabina: fights... you do the class quietly there is a brawl that triggers, there you have to put yourself in the middle. Sometimes it's because of the girls, sometimes "Miss he swore at my mum"... Sometimes you take blows ... Yes it happened once I had a blow...I was pregnant.

Violence also takes the form of weapons too such as knives and pointed objects and even drugs:

- ... There he came to school with a penknife and then during the break ... while I was coming down the stairs to go to the staff room, he took the penknife he sent it in the face of the one who annoyed him ... There is a boy, he came to school with a leather bag filled with Marijuana....his parents are in prison

The above section (5.2.1.5) indicate the contextual characteristics such as the presence and influence of regulatory bodies, parents, issues such as poverty, grief, death and violence that either encourage teachers to use bank of resources or leave them preoccupied by the immediacy of the situation at the detriment of instructional or pedagogical commitments. These inform the sensibilities of the teachers and an understanding of the above drives us away from any ideology of teachers as exclusively OER users and proposes the image of

OERs users as teachers who make decisions first based on the contextual needs. Like others, they have to develop a sense of the context prior to working and this is their priority and this is a truth in their experience. Too often discussions about innovation and ICT undermine the importance of these truths that relate to teachers' lived experiences while they interact in communities and engage with OERs and these truths are underrepresented in discourses of ICT and OER (OER, conference 2018). Another characteristic of their experience participants within the Mauritian context is the participants' enjoyment while engaging with OERs in teaching.

#### **5.2.1.6 Participants' enjoyment while engaging with OERs in teaching**

In spite of the challenges related to contextual characteristics, the findings indicate that all participants seemed to enjoy being teachers. They regularly engage with creative and fun lessons from OERs banks and also experience happiness and satisfaction through these tasks. Shalinee, for instance, expresses the joy felt over creative works done, illustrating how these bind teacher and learners:

- Shalinee: I was crying. You know girls with their ribbons, with their flowers, decorations, their pencils with 10 different colours...I remember I made them work on cards... They made cards for Mother's Day...for me, till now when I feel nostalgic sometimes I look at my cards, it inspires me again.
- I remember... she was aloof all the time...she seemed sad. Every time, I made her join a group while doing group work. But I never thought she would notice what I was doing. At the end of her form 2, while saying goodbye to the class, she gave me a bouquet of flowers and thanked me for everything during the year, I cried.

Moments like these are valuable and prized, for they later inspire and refuel teachers to do even better and invest themselves more professionally. These moments are rarely spoken by all teachers who work with OERs but Shalinee indicates how these motivate her, bring her joy and motivates her to invest more in learners and enrich her pedagogy, forcing her to be more creative with OERs and OEPs:

- ...I want to make them write poem, do acting classes...I like to make students sing in class, write positive remarks on their friends
- They chose, there was even one of them who wanted to act like a pregnant woman... "I want to act as a pregnant lady." And he did it. And he acted very well....

As she invests in creative strategies, she also involves trainee teachers from MIE and her students for literary artistic expressions. The sentiments derived thereof energize Shalinee to invest in her pedagogy. She is more prone to openness and sharing. However, she quickly reminds herself of another reality as she recalls her lack of trust in the Ministry and its role as a regulatory (earlier section) and hostile body and again takes care to adopt a low profile:

- Shalinee: It was really fun...I told them you're not supposed to record my face and I don't want to be on Facebook. I don't want to get into trouble because you all know how the Ministry views it.

### **5.2.2 Positive relationships with learners**

The findings also indicate another contextual characteristic of the professional experience of participants who are familiar with OERs. Participants find meaning in managing the positive relationship with learners while they improve their pedagogies. Relationship and bonding is considered essential and emotionally nourishing and empowering. This bonding also motivates teachers to invest their time and energy in teaching and learning as well as sharing- the latter being a core philosophy of OERs becomes embedded in their pedagogies.

Some participants are overt about positive ties with learners while others are more silent:

For Natacha, a primary school teacher, managing relationships and sharing play a dominant role in her pedagogy and she believes this helps her grow:

- Natacha: One learns a lot with the colleagues, the children, the parents, the office, one learns much.

She also associates her personal family trait and home environment of sharing through 'chatting and talking' as influential to her approach in school thus blending her personal background with her professional experience;

- At home we are like that... there is always someone talking.... Everyone is like that, my sister, my brother, my sister-in-law, and even the children. Maybe we grew up in an environment where we talk. But that's why I tell you that when children work, at some point they are quiet. I ask them questions to hear their voices...The students of the 2008 batch; his brother was in my class. The children knew me because their brother(s) or sister(s) were in my class.

The interpersonal skills she developed over years cement the relationship with her students and families in the vicinity and bonds the positive relationships. These emotionally nourishing memories are valuable for her and motivate her towards a proactive pedagogy causing her to challenge stereotypes easily:

- There's a teacher who told me: “You know you're dancing, but there are communities (religious) that do not like to dance”. I told her: “which community does not like to dance”. I said: "No, it's with Miss that she's going to dance..." We danced with my students, with the other students too. Music day, sports day. And we must have fun.

The bonding she develops with learners motivates and brings in the trust of parents too who then support her pedagogical initiatives.

Another teacher, June who is an avid OER user, works in a secondary school and worked in a technical field earlier, acknowledges that teaching with OERs transformed her approach from being too technical to more interactive:

- June: ... I was simply a ‘technical teacher’ ... with time ...and experience... my approach changed...My work is from 8 to 2:30 hrs and I do my maximum within that time... and I insist on respect..... Most kids then behave .... I don't bring back the upset mood to another class...I tell my students: “Do not be playful with me, I mean business”.

Although she was formerly involved in a technical field including PC and although she has an edge about the understanding on OERs, she goes back to valuing relationships. June also chooses when to be a fun person and insists on remaining a young person at heart thanks to the interaction with young people in a school context and thanks to her constant involvement with OERs and ICT devices:

- I stay young and understand them and their world, it's important, mainly with the elder girls ...open conversation, they tell you things...if you are willing to adapt...you will learn...

Another instance of sharing positive relationship while engaging with OERs and learners is illustrated by Jasmine whose mission is to use all means (including OERs) to support slow learners. She uses her own success story as the Most Outstanding Student in 1998 to motivate slow learners. After she learnt about the potential of OERs at MIE, she further innovated her

approach to teaching and learning. Sabina, another secondary school teacher goes to the extent of sharing her phone number with students and keeps track even when they begin to work.

- I have a few students who are in the police force, so when they pass by my home, they come to visit me... some who have already gone to university...” Miss help me ...I have assignment...”

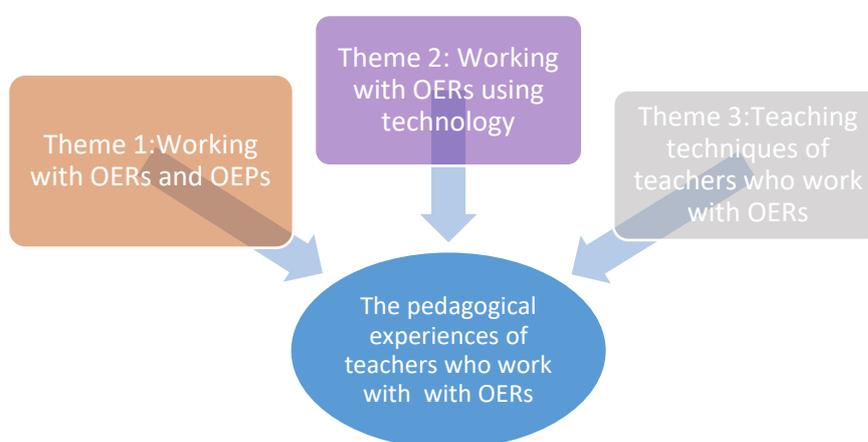
Sabina too has embedded sharing as a core philosophy in her approach to be a teacher.

This above section indicates that teachers who engage with OERs are also involved in sharing and nurturing positive relationships with those they interact. The bonding can be diverse, emotionally nourishing and act as a source of motivation and satisfaction. Some participants express these overtly while others are more silent but are guided by the belief that positive relationships and sharing as an approach matter. They then consciously manipulate their levels of emotional engagement depending on the context. The sections 5.2.1-5.2.2 established the link between the contextual characteristics and how these inform the sensibilities and allow teachers to be mindful instead of looking at teachers as only users of OERs. This is because the events are connected and prompt teachers to do things the way they do as a consequence of living the experiences in a context. Just as regulatory bodies influence teachers’ pedagogy, similarly relationships with learners also influence their pedagogy. These are truths emanating from teachers who are familiar with OERs and I therefore argue that their lives are filled with empowering elements such as relationship with learners and joys of teaching which among other variables influence their professional practice.

The next sections (5.3-5.5) now examine closer experiences related to how teachers in this study engage with OERs in a more prominent manner as a consequence of functioning in the context described above.

## Part 2: Thematic representations

This section (5.3-5.5) discusses the thematic analysis (Bazeley, 2009) of the participants' narratives relating to their use of OERs. It serves to consolidate the understandings derived from this study and essentially responds to the first research question: What are teachers' experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context? It also partially responds to the second research question: What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context? The three themes which emerged from the data and which will be discussed within this section are: Working with OERs and OEPs (section 5.3); Working with OERs using technology (section 5.4); and Teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs (section 5.5). Each of the theme discussed within this section, provides insights into teachers' perspectives of working with OERs in Mauritius.



**Figure 2: Pedagogical experiences of teachers who work with OERs in Mauritius**

## **5.3 Theme one: Working with OERs and OEPs**

### **Introduction**

This section examines how teachers who are familiar with OERs work with them and explores their OEPs. Although all the teachers interviewed were familiar with OERs, particular features and differences emanated from the importance teachers associated with the concept of OERs. Their knowledge and understanding of the term differed, as did teachers' level of interest in and engagement with OERs. Some of the participants' responses to questions about their use of OERs and their OEPs were elaborate and detailed, leading to an understanding of how OERs informed their pedagogy. Other responses were broad and less insightful, and some responses indicated that teachers did not necessarily view OERs as pertinent to their pedagogy.

#### **5.3.1 The world of Internet and online resources**

The online world or the world of Internet is the main gateway to access OERs from a bank of resources based in different parts of the world and teachers in Mauritius use these sources as their starting point to work with OERs.

Babita: "I have used the Internet as my second world. It is a virtual world... where I have understood that there are no frontiers. ...If I want to reach out to someone outside, I can do it. Then why can't my students understand and implement this in their lives? ... Why can't I use the Internet to show them how the world is and what it can achieve beyond the borders ... here they are safe in a safe environment... through the Internet, through computers, through OERs, just by using those OERs, they can at least have a sense, a feeling that the world is very vast.

The world of Internet appears to teachers as a repertoire of innumerable possibilities and a powerful tool box. These possibilities arouse the curiosity of teachers who start with an initial quest until it becomes a habit. This process has started at home for Beatrice. As a passionate teacher, Beatrice is fond of online resources and spends a lot of time surfing the Internet to find resources in preparation for lessons she is going to teach. The 'quest' is also done in concert with her colleagues who share websites and links which become an integral part of teacher preparation. This suggests that participants who use OERs develop a community of practice and relate to the online, as well as in-person, forums to share ideas about resources:

- Every teacher is always on the net: it's common and normal and teachers have shifted to Internet

Both Beatrice and Natacha make extensive use of online resources, including OERs. For Beatrice the world of Internet allows her to undertake informed searches for teaching materials and names favourite websites, free online sources as being:

- 'Alice Cycle 3, Canal blog, Google, Hatier, Conjugaison download (OER)'.

Babita terms the virtual world as the Internet world which she considers is better than possibilities in the actual world when it comes to publishing her own book:

- I'm writing. I got my editor on the Internet...I got my publisher on the Internet...the company that converts books...Microsoft Words...an Apple apparatus. So everything I did was on the Internet ...because I can control my virtual world. I control who comes into my Facebook, I control whether I want to see your stuff or not, I can control what I am doing as well. In the real world I don't have any control.

The world of Internet prompts teachers to extend their possibilities because it allows them to see more options from which they can select. It allows them to access free resources and possibilities for class lessons, making them feel satisfied and secure. Nazeem even refers to this as Aladdin's lamp:

- This is to give you an idea that open source, for us, is like an Aladdin's lamp. It gives us the opportunity to be online at nearly no cash. Else, it would have been for those who can afford.

The world of possibilities also include participants' access to simple Google searches, teachers also download apps:

- Shalinee: ... I don't know how I came to know about dictionaries... I think I went on Google some time... I was able to download then....It became really handy. So the next mobile I was buying, I was like I have to be able to use Google, I have to be able to download my dictionaries.

In the following section, findings relating to the relationship between OERs and ICT will be discussed.

### 5.3.2 Using ICT devices to access OERs

Findings suggest that participants' pedagogical practices are characterised by their use of ICT devices. Such devices include smartphones, PCs, tablets and laptops. Shalinee asserted that simple searches on her smartphone led her to discover dictionary apps. Although mobile phones are not allowed in schools and are 'prohibited in classrooms', teachers value the potential educational apps leading Shalinee, Jasmine and June to use these apps as pedagogical tools.

Shalinee uses her phone to access Internet based resources and to download notes, even if it would be considered untraditional by the head of school. Thus, participants used their personal devices and invested their own time and money to access OERs because they believed in their worth:

- Sometimes when I'm sitting in the bus, I know that I have to look for notes ...I used to get the pictures printed and things like that..., lately I fell on very short stories... saved them on my favourite link ....But very often I dictate directly from my mobile phone. Which can be pretty scandalous for some of the rectors.

Teachers who value OERs benefit from the economic advantage of accessing no cost resources and indicated that they regularly used online sites where there is no fee for a copyright licence. Shalinee accesses free resources from the web site of the British council for instance and does not have to worry about permissions and copyright issues. Participants' experiences also suggest that not only do they use their phone to support their pedagogy, but they also extended the links to their learners:

- Jasmine: I decided to use this tool they had, a Smartphone, for them (Jasmine's students) to do research.

OERs become especially helpful when there is a lack of local materials as indicated by June an ICT Teacher:

- ...there are radical changes in syllabus in O and A level and there is no textbook. The only guideline is scheme of work which teachers have to use to find resources:

...OERs ease the accessibility to free resources given the resources are online and inexpensive.

The above experiences indicate that OERs open up opportunities for teachers whose experiences abound with instances of sharing, openness, and solidarity. Working with OERs, therefore, involves using the resources for oneself and involves the use of personal tools. The web links and benefits of OERs are however also shared with learners.

Nazeem perceives OERs, the virtual world, Open source and ICT as being intricately linked and dependent on each other. He believes in the potential of OERs as the basis of an 'open worlds:

- We can see that the basis of digital world is on open source. Without open source, we can't imagine the digital world we are living. All the servers...everything we have, rely on open source.

This is also possible for him as the world of Internet and OERs are free and he favours Open Source and Creative Commons licences which he juxtaposes against costly programme he would not be able to access otherwise:

- You imagine a programme Lectorat...publisher, it is around sixty thousand...very costly, beyond our reach.
- The most important open source is Linux.
- ...there are two types of people. Some people want to make money out of their knowledge by creating software and provide licence. But there are others, who just view it as a hobby, have the passion of creating things and put it like that for others to benefit. This is the origin of online, of open sources...Linux compared to windows is much more robust.

Open Source materials are thus considered as user-friendly, powerful, offering many benefits and teachers appreciate them as assets that support the direction of their pedagogy and their own philosophy:

- Nazeem: ...we have open source program much more powerful... But I have used a Moodle, I have used so many open sources. Till now, I have not got any problem...Another example is a file transfer program. We have so many powerful FTP (file transfer protocol program)... Though it is an open source, upgrades are

available after regular periods. So I download FTP ...and then we can fully be online with open source.

The above section illustrated how participants engage with OERs in their professional practice. Participants juxtaposed OERs with ICT and related devices, and considered that this gives them flexibility as they are able to access OERs anywhere and anytime, free of charge. Access to OERs thus broadens the educational repertoires of teachers. The next section describes participants' educational practise using OERs.

### **5.3.3 Working with OEPs**

Working with OEPs is almost a practical and natural consequence resulting from teachers immersing themselves into the online world that includes OERs, accessing them and then making decisions about how and to what extent these can be embedded into their pedagogy. The data indicated that although teachers work with OERs, they are generally less familiar with the concept 'OEP', even though they are engaged in OEPs.

Beatrice and Jasmine go online to look up for free resources and have embedded this practice in their routine. Beatrice believes that OERs are not for learners but mainly for teachers who will then determine their possible adaptations and derivative uses:

- For teachers again, our engagement in OERs depends on our clientele (students). We are there to cater for their needs... I need OERs to change my way ... of teaching-learning ...like my college... there the teacher has to be more engaged, has to work harder. I have to find means and ways to make the child understand.

Participants were, therefore, motivated because they engaged with OERs in their pedagogy in ways that are meaningful for them. Some teachers sought sites that they considered would be beneficial to pupils as the sites were free of charge. This view is illustrated by Jasmine who stated:

- None of the websites I visit is chargeable... Because the child must have access... so far I have never paid to visit a site. ... But all the sites I use are open.

Shalinee illustrates how she uses free derivative apps for her practice as well as for oral examinations while responding to whether she uses OERs apps:

- For me, yes, because my job depends on them. I have to be able to download a passage, download a story. Use my verbs, check my tenses and pronunciation. I have to be able to do all that. If I need to go and open a dictionary, I check the word then go back to the explanation of phonetics, making sure I got it right.
- For Oral English sometimes there's a discussion panel, you know, in the morning before we are going for the exams, so we discuss which word is pronounced which way.... So, this was very helpful.

OEPs thus include a repertoire of possibilities, teachers can go online to look for exercises they can practice, lessons plans, and verify language related problems. Aartee's experience, however, indicates how she relentlessly searches for relevant sites and makes decisions relevant to her pedagogy based on the profile of learners in her class;

- A teacher needs to look for resources all the time. I found a website, and I have adapted the resources to my teaching...I choose, I read, I download.
- I discovered it with TESSA, it's not only in Mauritius that we can find singing literacy. But I have succeeded in singing, in plays, dramas. There are so many songs.

Aartee also indicates that her use of OERs is based on her judgements about how easy the OERs are to access, and the relevance and pertinence of these resources for the subject being taught which, in Aartee's case is music:

- It's a Rodriguan background. Rodriguans expose their child to Rodriguan music on Saturdays and Sunday afternoons, even during week days. They live with music. You need to adapt, TESSA works well with them.

Other criteria for choosing OERs include the ease of access to the simple but useful notes, as well as the relevance or transferability to the context:

- How we use the resources matters...we need to adapt to the different levels of the children. With all the resources available, there is no limitation.

This leads her to be more observant, creative and inventive to determine her instructional choices. She is aware that it is also an exercise of trial and error. She relates the story of Jean who would respond to pictures she would then use to gain his attention or the use of songs or tactile depending on the response of learners:

- I can take different turns, for example if songs do not work I shift to tactile... If it does not work, I shift.

For Shana, working with OERs is about IT, OERs, OEPs and online resources. She is aware of alternatives in the absence of a local bank of OERs:

- There is a software, Exert, you can create a screen where you can do several activities: drag and drop, fill in the blanks, matching...it is a free software. You can put it on a CD, then transfer it to the school computer to allow students to use it. PowerPoint is another resource that I use regularly with small children, we have a projector at school, and we use it.
- For other resources, we educators don't have a platform in Mauritius to be able to share our activities. For example, if I did an activity with Exert, and wanted to share it, I need to put it on a CD.

For teachers who work in a secondary school context, their pedagogy indicates the transformation of online OERs into practices. These support students' learning and engage them through software and apps:

- Jasmine: I have downloaded 3 software apps and made my students download them; translation dictionaries and verbs conjugation apps, they really help me in my teaching... These help them in preparing their lessons and so on. Not only they do these in class but do so at home too. And they try to, because when they come in class the next day, I check where they have reached. So at least they've checked 5 or 10 more words.

Although similar exercises take a lot of time, Jasmine sees the worth when learners are empowered to use websites and links:

- So, I use that a lot ...to give the students precisely a site where the explanations are clear. But it took me a long time to find this site...I guided them, I said "Go to this site, go to that one".

Some teachers, however, go a step ahead and make OEPs that can be adapted to their contexts.

Babita believes that OERs are not intended to be used in their current form with learners, rather they are designed for teachers. This leads her to adapt existing OERs for learners in the Prevocational stream:

- Babita (describing how she uses OERs by adapting them): But for them (learners\_ to use OERs by themselves, it is impossible. Because of the language problem, the resources are not adapted to their needs. Now for me to use the educational resources, that's where the teacher's experiences matter... I get a lot of help from the net.
- Babita: When we're dealing with prevocational students, we should also realize that these students are not rich. They don't have the resources to study at home or the net. Most of the time, it's at school. A few of them have Internet at home or a few of them go to the Internet café. ... And we cannot give a work, a task to a child, to a class where just a few can do it. It becomes elitist... everybody makes the lesson plan according to their students.

As an advocate of low-cost resources, Babita engages learners in the creation of new resources by using 'paint' and open software apps. She also uses the Internet extensively including audio visual tools:

- Babita (giving an example of how she downloads OERs from the net): ...I've never made a volcano and you put soda and vinegar, baking powder, there's some stuff going on there. Ok, I can get it on the net, we can show it to the students. And, I think for cooking. Again, the teacher can download a cookery lesson, for example a video on making sandwiches, and show it to the students...when we bring experience from outside...these help the teacher...for the prevocational.

Furthermore, Nazeem has created a series of open resources. His instructional approaches rely heavily on the relationship between OERs, ICT, and engaging into OEPs:

- I use the Open Source program to create the material, I use the Open Source to upload the material, I use the Open Source to host...the FTP program is Open Source, the server is run by Open Source ...everything is open source.

He is also motivated to use the Open Source program in this way as he pays only for the web address, the cost of which is minimal.

OEPs were, therefore, perceived by participants as a way of supporting pedagogical enrichment in classroom practices. OEPs were considered to enhance teachers' experiences of teaching as they provided teacher with pedagogical choices and the ability to try out ideas and activities that they considered would support their practice.

While participants were keen to highlight positive aspects of OERs, they also commented on some of the limitations of using OERs, as discussed in the following section.

### **5.3.4 Limitations of OERs**

Teachers who work with OERs also experience limitations associated with OERs and OEPs. For example, they point at limited online access, the lack of expansion of resources due to limited ICT devices, parental restrictions, and inadequate contextualised materials.

#### **Parents restrict access to online materials**

Babita criticises parents since due to limited understanding about Internet, they inhibit their children's use of Internet and online resources:

- Babita (describing how parents view the use of Internet): According to parents, they (students) do go on Facebook, they go on YouTube and all ...You give them the resources, they will spend 10-15 minutes on Facebook, it will be on, but they're still doing the work, they're downloading... nowadays I think exam papers can be download directly from Cambridge...it's not like our world, I mean we were asked to focus on one thing...but nowadays no one focuses, everybody's multi-tasking...But the children are in a different world and many parents don't understand.

This suggests an emerging trend and change in the Mauritian landscape where teachers and parents have yet to negotiate how to establish parameters for children and young people's use of Internet and ICT.

The reach of OEPs is also constrained due to infrastructural restrictions imposed, for example, the prohibition of smartphones in Mauritian schools. However, teachers use smartphone in class in a secretive way, often feeling guilty, as they use their smartphone as a tool to dictate notes. Shalinee ridicules the senior staff who would give a different interpretation if teachers are caught using smartphones as ICT resource for learning:

- But very often I dictate directly from my mobile phone, which can be pretty scandalous for some of the rectors ...and seniors ... “So, you’re dictating your notes directly from the Internet? It means you haven’t done any research and you haven’t prepared” ...I dictated from my mobile phone. It was there. But fortunately, I wasn’t caught by anyone.

Shalinee questions institutional preference of hard copies of works versus ICT enabled soft copies in a system which ironically tries to be more environment friendly:

- If I don’t need to print it, why should I print it? ...I don’t feel like printing it because when I read it on the app itself, I just have to dictate it...it’s not that you’re not doing your work or you’re not preparing. Preparing is not bringing your printed sheet here ... A lesson plan and I put in front of you!

Conversely, both Beatrice and Babita point at the limitations related to a lack of contextualised resources relevant to the Mauritian context:

- Beatrice: “there are no known sites based in Mauritius that could be useful.”
- Babita: But we need OERs from Mauritius ... Not for the star colleges because they...are already on top, they are already jumping out of the system... But below. We need Mauritian context. OERs in the Mauritian context...for the prevocational.

Shana has a similar view and emphasises the limited facilities at school when they use OERs in the Mauritian context:

- We don’t have so many facilities at school, no Internet connection or very bad connection. It’s impossible to even check your email. Even if I’m free and I wanted to do some research work, it’s impossible. It’s depressing. Even in the ICT classroom, each computer stands alone...

A further caution relating to the use of OERs is the unreliability of some sites:

- Jasmine: And I have also come across websites where people speak of a literary author but who mislead readers ... and they (students) told me "... there are even grammatical mistakes on this site!"

The limitations of OERs are thus indicated in their limited reach associated to parental restrictions, school-based restrictions or restrictions due to lack of online resources. Teachers are also concerned about the quality of OERs as illustrated by Jasmine. In spite of the limitations, however teachers continue to use OERs as indicated in the next section.

### **5.3.5 The ripple effect of OEPs**

The analysis revealed that when teachers engage with OERs and OEPs, this leads to a ripple effect whereby teachers who have positive experiences of OEPs use these again in their pedagogy. Natacha and Reena indicate how they won an international prize after using OERs. This event changed their lives and prompted further innovations. Successful use of OERs were triggers which enhanced teachers' dispositions and readiness to investigate other OERs and create new opportunities for teaching and learning using OERs. As teachers adopted this disposition, it became a routine practice for them. Reena confidently illustrates the gains she perceived after she used OERs in a ZEP school:

- I grew up a lot in my work...it's the work of TESSA. Because when I shared my work during a ZEP workshop, it was there that the inspectors began to notice me.

Natacha had a similar experience. After 10 years in teaching, she described how her participation in an international OER event, led her to develop skills of enquiry, creativity and innovation. Today, the experience of engaging with OERs in creative ways nurtures their quest for more and keeps them reinventing themselves to enhance their teaching.

- Reena: OERs...I had to look on the Internet, even going on YouTube how one says something, how one pronounces ... I continued ... I like to learn, you know, to improve.

The process of engaging with OERs in their professional practice then include adaptation, and development of OERs into OEPs through classroom implementations. Processes such as trial and error, appropriations, creation and re-creation of OERs and OEPs are involved until teachers adopt them as regular practices. This process builds teachers' confidence which allows them to invest more energy and time without expecting further reward.

### **5.3.6 Concluding theme one**

Working with OERs and OEPs was found to enrich the pedagogical experience of teachers. The process is dynamic, varied and cyclic. It illustrates the dependency on Internet as a powerful tool to access OERs. Through the theme ‘working with OERs and OEPs’, participants’ skills, dispositions and readiness to engage in OERs and OEPs in diverse ways were also observed. They are guided by learners and the professional needs that culminate into original, derivational and adaptive uses of OERs. Teachers’ experiences of adopting OEPs are also characterised by the limitations such as lack of relevant resources in the local context, concerns about quality and relevance of existing resources, the ability to download apps and the restrictions on ICT devices. The next section highlights findings relating to teachers’ perceptions of ‘Working with OERs using technology’.

## **5.4 Theme two: Working with OERs using technology**

### **Introduction**

Working with OERs involves the use of ICT. ICT plays a more prominent role in the lives of teachers who work with OEPs because it is the main vehicle that allows them to access OERs. Their pedagogical practices and experience are characterised by expert and additional ICT skills they develop as they work with electronic devices and create new teaching resources. Other than using mobile devices, the theme discussed in this section – working with OERs using technology- examines how participants perceive, invest in and integrate ICT in their pedagogy while engaging with OERs. The merits and challenges related to the use of OERs and ICT are also examined.

### **5.4.1 Participants’ engagement with Pedagogy and ICT**

Teachers are motivated to use ICT because they want to avoid their students from the scourge of marginalisation or being viewed as non-innovators in the system. They want to improve learners’ ICT skills in a fast changing world. For Shana and John, ICT skills are core for the adults of tomorrow who are in their classes today. They see ICT as a tool for the future, a means to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor:

- Shana (describing how she uses ICT): Yes, I like to include ICT resources because nowadays our environment is computerised and companies...are using computers to process all their documents ... so I want my students to be skilled from an early age so that they will be at ease with ICT...They will not feel left aside or outcast to the ICT culture because they come from an impoverished region with poor housing and poverty.
- John: I feel things are getting more complicated daily. For example, kids' behaviour have changed compared to the earlier generations ...we have to adapt...

The above quotes suggest that teachers' pedagogy cannot be separated from the prevalence of ICT which is now embedded in participants' practices. John further adds that learners today are more intelligent in ICT than those who proposed the tablet project (The Tablet Project by the Ministry is an ICT project for secondary school learners: see chapter 2):

- Youngsters know better than elders and more quickly too and are able to learn and develop things for e.g. even before the teachers could use the tablet, the students cracked it and accessed Facebook

Teachers who believe in the gains derived from ICT and OERs often invest their own money to ensure access, given the limited resources at school.

- I have bought an Internet device. Each month, I buy a Rs299 1GB package Internet data which I use exclusively at school

Nazeem, who creates OERs with highly technical skills, invested in the purchase and use of costly interactive whiteboards and audio visual materials. Using support from success stories he derived, he evidenced how the interactive whiteboard and technology were used to boost up the performance of a student:

- ...her marks were 85 to 90 and there was only the polishing work to be done and the parents wanted nothing less than the elite college... we did a teamwork... and that girl is going to the elite college.

Participants' experience with ICT and OERs can be very exciting too and prompt them to be creative, adventurous using ICT based programmes in their pedagogy:

As a teacher who works with OERs, she linked her pedagogy creatively with tools and techniques that she selects:

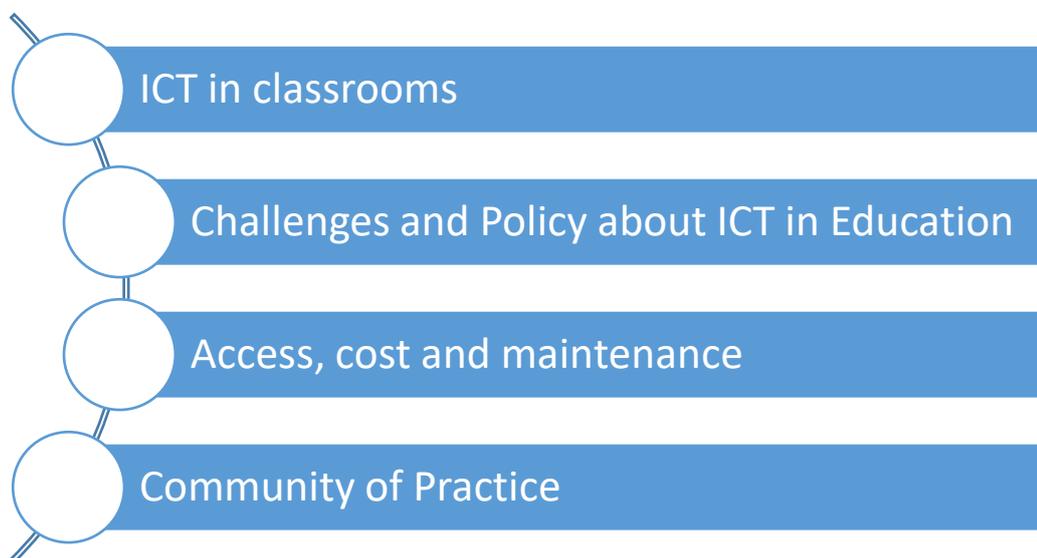
- I like to be creative. By the way, I decided to ask the children to prepare their own teaching aids... Well there were word cards which were damaged... But in the lapse of two days, I could have the days of the week well written on board paper. I use the laptop well... Projector all that... At that time, I had permission from the gentleman, he was kind enough, and he told me that the fact that his classroom is free... we could watch a movie work on the Sankoré.

This suggests that participants' experiences of working with OERs involves, but is not restricted to ICT mainly. This is because the focus is on learners first. Natacha works with OERs and dedicates considerable energy, including after school hours, to prepare learner centred activities for the next day. Participants keep searching for creative ideas to explore OERs in their practices as they indicate how much energy and time they invest in their work:

- I remember very well there was a gentleman who passed by my class, he said "five past three, you are still working".
- I will only draw the seedlings after I put things there... Flash cards. I know that the child will draw it... They are going to name the parts; there will be magma, there will be lava but I do not want them to write just magma out there, I wish to put on a door there, a small window, where the child can open with Velcro something and will know its magma and all the time there needs to be cartoons...

These quotes explain the motivation of teachers to use ICT in their pedagogy. They suggest that teachers who work with OERs value the potential of ICT in their pedagogy since they know ICT is the gateway to OERs. Motivated by the contextual needs such as inadequate materials and students' needs, teachers then invest their time and money to access Internet, OERs and related tools such as an interactive whiteboard. While some teachers use ICT selectively and decide when or how to integrate ICT in class lessons, others integrate ICT as part and parcel of their pedagogical practices. Some teachers, including Nazeem almost equate ICT in Education as pedagogy. The following section highlights teachers' perspective of the related merits and challenges of working with OERs and ICT in education.

The figure that follows needs explaining to the reader, so far, all that has been said is that the next section will highlight the merits and challenges of working with OERs and ICT in education, then Figure 3 is presented, but there is no explanation of what Figure 3 represents.



**Figure 3: Representation of technology in education**

### **5.4.2 ICT in classrooms**

Teachers can be very passionate about technology in Education. One teacher, Nazeem is so passionate and convinced about the value of OERs and pedagogy using ICT that he created a parallel system or his learning factory. This is because he sees his learning factory or the new centre as a centre for innovation. The resistance and difficulties he met at different levels did not stop him from attempting to transform education through ICT. As an outcome of his international recognition with OER project, Nazeem now independently reviews local online materials, creates his own resources using latest ICT tools in his learning factory, and shares these on online platforms freely to other teachers. He invests his time and money in the tools and devotes his time to mentor other colleagues in creating OERs and derivatives resources:

- Some educators will ask me to teach them how to use technology as such.

Another passionate teacher, Shana, asserts that teachers can adapt resources to fit their students' needs. Shana uses the ICT skills she developed from an Educational Technology course, which included access to OERs, to create resources.

She uses ICT to access worksheets for remedial activities and sounds, music, you tube videos and songs that she downloads into a folder as a personal rich bank of OERs:

- I have learnt educational technologies at the UOM...there is a subject, ICT, but there are also other subjects where pupils need to use ICT to carry out activities, example in Mathematics or English
- ...I rather use the remedial sheets for group work too because I can make more practical work. Then I can put the high achievers together with low achievers and they do peer teaching.
- For those who have Internet at home, parents try to watch film on YouTube, educational films on YouTube as they are free...download something to allow students to watch...Alphabets are on the school computer ...alphabet songs, number train, fruit train, capital letters, themes or example, Christmas, sea, the videos are very interesting.

Shana recognises the merits of blending ICT and free resources when she describes the joy and liveliness of children's experience. She finds free OER resources enabled by ICT particularly helpful for formative evaluation, editing, and language code switching;

- If I sang 'Old McDonald had a farm...' I will be singing and pupils will be only repeating. But if they listen to a professional singer with the music, they will sing better...I can pause the video and explain the sentences as they are in English...The pupils will not feel lost...It became an interactive class.

Although Babita struggled a lot to find relevant resources for the prevocational stream she teaches, while responding to how she is engaged with OERs, she considers that her students can use ICT in education as they are able to use computers confidently, go on the net and use a mobile phone:

- When I go into the computer room it's with a bunch of students. Of course they will try to change something on the screen, they will try also to find a place... I teach them how to paint...tree or plant... So in that way I make them create their own resources

ICT is thus useful in classrooms especially when teachers can access free resources or software apps to make classrooms more interactive. The use of ICT increases participants' level of confidence and influence their teaching techniques including the use of mobile devices in classrooms (below).

### **Mobile devices in classrooms**

Teachers use mobile phones as an ICT device that also gives access to OERs although there are associated risks.

In the case of June, her 'A' level students use their smartphones for WhatsApp and Skype call to revise. Although she would not use mobile phone to communicate with her learners, she allows them to use phones responsibly in her class, for example, taking pictures of notes, to save time copying these. However, she has strong views about the teachers' importance which cannot be replaced by ICT or Internet:

- Internet is not everything and the teacher is still important in today's world: for feedback, individual attention, meeting students where students are at their pace of learning.

Furthermore, Shalinee asks learners to download dictionary apps on their smartphones:

- I made them download dictionary and particularly the three apps, English dictionary English and French translation dictionary and French dictionary. Another one is the conjugation app. These four really help me in my teaching.

Shalinee admits to students that she does not know everything and needs updates too. Thus, downloading the apps and using pictures become useful:

- I need to know the translation. I'm not a walk-around dictionary. I don't know words as well; sometimes it happens that I have to check my spelling. Before, when I did not have a smartphone I used to walk around with my dictionary.
- I was more interested then in PowerPoints and pictures ... something like you put a picture of Twin Towers on the nine eleven and...They talk about terrorists, they talk about their feelings and they discuss around it.

Mobile phones are also used in the classroom by Jasmine. But given the lack of clear school policy around their use, she does so with a half-hearted, guilty feeling and feels the need to hide her use of phones in the classroom from management:

- It was I who chose that the children would use their laptop in their class. I take a risk when I do that. But I think the risk is worth taking. I sent them to the library... they were not going to do it.

June, Shalinee and Jasmine use mobile phones in classrooms and take risks given the absence of clear rules from the school management team. This weakness in the system contributes to the challenges experienced by teachers who use ICT and related devices in education. The next section further elaborates on the related challenges.

### **5.4.3 Challenges and policy about ICT in the Mauritian context**

Using ICT in Education includes opening access to OERs through ICT tools. However, there are also associated challenges. These can be related to parents, learners and also to policy. Babita illustrates the challenges related to some parents who limit the potential of learners when they restrict Internet usage.

- Because for parents, the computer, the Internet is an entertainment.... They don't realise that the child is going to get some information...They are not aware of OERs...For them, the child going on the net... and is going to waste time.

She also indicates how learners, some parents and media can easily misinterpret the use of ICT in Education, especially when she had to stop the use of an educational clip because of similar threat. She thus exposes the vulnerability of teachers:

- As teachers, we don't have any power. Anything happens, the teacher is to be blamed. Management will blame the teacher, parents will blame the teacher and students will blame the teacher. The teacher is in a very precarious position, nowadays...Even if I give a link to a student, I have to be careful with what I give. When I show something to the students, I have to be very careful about what I show. I was, for my BSc course, making a small video with students. I was about to take them to Caudan, to buy vegetables at the... market... then I explained to them that I'll be taking a video. One girl then went to her mother "Miss is doing a video on

me”. And you know how bad it sounded? It sounded so bad! I started sweating...just imagine if they go to the radio... everything is nearby.

The danger of being misunderstood by parents is coupled by the dangers that learners face in a world of easy access to information:

- On you tube...You won't find videos which are hard-core. I don't even think soft-core also... Whereas the other sites are just purely for adults.... they should be taught how to navigate.

On the other hand, June and John indicate the challenges related to the distractive nature of ICT and further point at the lack of guidance from policy makers:

- June: ICT, mobile and social media are also distractions. These disrupt their concentration when they are too much on WhatsApp or Facebook which breaks revision thread.
- John: Maybe I don't know, there is a misconception of Facebook but Facebook is only meant to socialize...but they do not ask how to answer their homework. If they use it that way it would have helped them.
- John: If there was a policy at school to guide us about which system to use, we could move forward...but till now, we did not find anybody. In spite of that we take emails, we send request, but they do not reply...

While teachers express concern about distraction and interference related to some parents and media, they also critique the contradiction in policy at macro versus policy at micro level. They critique how macro level ICT is seen as an agent of change but on the other hand, school-based policy and practices are blurred and basic maintenance of computer labs and equipment are irregular:

Teachers thus feel the frustration. This is related to access, cost and maintenance as indicated in the next section.

#### **5.4.4 Access, cost and maintenance related to OERs enabling devices**

Having the resources available in a school context does not equate to an optimum use of resources for it requires upgrading and maintenance of ICT and OERs enabling devices.

Access is instrumental to the use of OERs which are predominantly online. But teachers express frustration at different levels, for example, when Internet is denied:

- Shalinee: It's the Internet, but unfortunately, we do not have Wi-Fi.
- June: ...tablet without Wi-Fi is not practical...it's like a car without 4 wheels.

As ICT teachers, John and June indicate how they have to invest their own money to access ICT tools and OERs because authorities are not upgrading and maintaining their equipment even when asked to do so. June has bought her own printer, markers and Internet package:

- I have no Internet on my laptop in spite of letters sent several times in a year... I buy Rs 299 of Dongle to ease installation of programmes for students every month.

Jasmine even prompts learners to use their mobile phones for research since school equipment are not up to date. John uses his Internet at home to download materials:

- John: If I need something, I need to download it from home. At school we do not have access to YouTube. You need to download videos and afterwards upload at school.

The access, cost and maintenance issues experienced by teachers thus contribute to a sense of mistrust and a feeling of being lost. They increasingly point at the contradictions:

- June: You tube, Facebook, twitter etc. banned in school...and yet students access them because they have smart phones and mobile data so it's an irony to ban these in schools.

June and John indicate how the project engineers could not prevent learners from cracking the tablet project:

- IT engineers do not realise that students are way more intelligent ...and can crack tablets.

John and Shalinee further add:

- John: The number of tablets was not enough... despite all the resources available for the different subjects, they did not make good use of them...they did not know how to use them.

- Shalinee: The school tablet never worked for so many reasons. The quality was not good; mine for example did not switch on. It never went beyond this point.

John further critiques the unavailability of intranet in ICT labs and lack of adequate facilities:

- I can put something on the computer so that everyone will be able to see, the intranet ...yes, there are computers that I can use, but when I have Mathematics classes, I cannot use the IT room.

Access, cost and maintenance of ICT and OERs enabled devices accentuate the debate about free access to OERs which is meant to empower teachers in their professional practice. The cases above indicate how the absence of Internet access and inappropriate materials can hamper teachers' exploitation of the resources and limit optimum use. The next sub-theme outlines findings related to teachers' experiences with regards to community of practice as experienced by participants.

### 5.4.5 Community of practice and users of OERs

Participants revealed the importance of an online and school-based support in the form of Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 2002) as they engage with OERs. Participants develop a community based on solidarity for the purpose of sharing for they use Facebook to share knowledge while at schools, the in-person interaction is valued.

Babita, Shana and Nazeem use blogs and Facebook as an online community of teachers to share and learn from others:

- Shana: Even on Facebook you can find it. The GTU page, where educators share their ideas, pedagogical problems but other problems as well, test papers where you can download and they are free.

Apart from online platforms, Shana illustrates how a group of teachers meet in person to discuss ideas which they find fulfilling:

- We discuss a chapter, how we can introduce it and work it with proposed activities. Each educator works differently, we discuss and share ideas.
- Yes, these are new methodologies that we use. The educator who gave the idea has already used the method in his class. He can thus tell us the weaknesses of the method and we can change and adapt it for our pupils.

They value the community of users because it's immediate and rich in human interactions:

- Shana: when I seek help from a friend, a colleague, they are always present to help and advise... if I want to draw the Mauritian map, I'll ask someone who knows how to draw.

Reena further relates how this community of practice helped her to participate in an international OER project with the whole school in an underprivileged area:

- In my project there were the Head Teacher of the school, the ZEP coordinator and all the teachers. I did not know how to draw, my colleague did it for me. I did not know how to do things others helped me ...Everyone must be involved.

The disappointment was also noted as she shifted to an elite school years later:

- ...While the other teachers...they had workshops how to use the Sankore programme... I said to a lady, when you do Sankore, let me know...she did not want to.

In spite of the deception in elite schools, CoP reveals that teachers who are familiar with OERs get used to share either online or face to face. Sharing as a core principle of OERs itself fuels the teachers' pedagogy and keeps them motivated for more innovation.

#### **5.4.6 Conclusion to theme two**

This theme confirms the motivation, merits and challenges related to technology as integrated in the pedagogy of teachers who work with OERs. These make their classes interactive and prompt them for more innovation and creativity. But the challenges experienced by teachers including parents' interference, policy, maintenance, cost and online access also influence teachers' thoughts, dispositions and feelings and lead to frustrations which in turn can limit the reach of OERs. In a context where OERs are predominantly online, participants showed how a community of practice whether online or school-based is helpful especially as they espouse sharing as a key principle of OERs.

### **5.5 Theme three: Teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs**

The experience of teachers who are familiar with OERs reveals rich pedagogical techniques used. This is a characteristic of participants' pedagogy and indicate they have to deal with a variety of situations that include pleasant as well as exciting and challenging situations in their context. These include managing relationships as well as risks.

#### **5.5.1 Teaching techniques**

The analysis shows that teachers who work with OERs adopt different teaching and learning techniques. This is indicated in the narrative of Aartee who is first mindful of the challenging context, uses a lot of trial and error, explores notes from varied sources, and does a lot of group work. While describing the techniques she trials, Aartee indicates:

- Aartee: I use different methods, I'm using syllabic method, which is not working, and I don't know why. I think I need to change. I'll mix syllabic method with a different one. My only aim is that the children start reading.

She shows the ability to be reflective and practices differentiation to meet the needs of learners who need special attention. She thus sieves through OERs to meet the needs of learners:

- There will be children who will be helped by their parents since pre-primary, they do not have any problems to read, write and do Mathematics. Another group will need a foundation, thus I need to separate my class... I put them in different groups. Working in groups requires a lot of preparation.
- Now I use teaching aids...we draw it together.

She also draws from existing banks of OERs and uses songs:

- It's a strategy to earn the child's trust. If you succeed, it's a win-win situation ... I make the children sing, they feel safe. Singing is not only a tool, it's allowing the child to love what he is doing.

The experiences of Jasmine reveal a drastic change from a 'spoon feeding' to more inductive approaches which is enabled through the engagement with OERs. As a French language teacher, she indicates this change after she came to know about OERs 15 years after she began teaching:

- The first years of teaching were like that. I spent my time doing research work by myself and dictating to the students ... I have been spoon feeding them.... for at least 15 years of my 16-year career, chewing all the work for students until I realised that the students now had smart phones.

The teaching techniques and strategies then incrementally shifts from paper to ICT based methods necessitating smartphones and subsequently access OERs using Internet. For this to happen, Jasmine had to change her beliefs first:

- They may not have a computer but I realised that, I'm stupid if I do not join them in what they have. They were very surprised at first ...I did what is called a change on myself. I decided to use this tool they had, a Smartphone, for them to do research.

Jasmine thus allows her learners to co-construct knowledge instead of maintaining a transmission approach to teaching. She improves her techniques using group works:

- I believe in cooperative and collaborative works because I experienced these myself...I began more group work...this does not mean that the teachers did not explain but when my friend re-explained it was better, simpler...

As a teacher, she now experiences the gains due to a changed approach:

- Because I could not have been in control of all the information...work I did, I divided... I let the class choose the group, I divided the class into two groups.

The data indicate that the pedagogical techniques adopted by teachers who work with OERs are diverse. They are essentially interactive, learner centred and include the use of ICT (see also Theme 2). The techniques are informed by contextual factors such as learners' needs, background, school, the curriculum expectations and systemic factors. The techniques are also characterised by dynamism, evolution, and are subjected to experiences, successes which will also determine repetition. There is no one universal method for even if they are working with OERs, they take individual decisions based on context and own readiness to alter strategies.

### **5.5.2 Outcomes and challenges while integrating OERs in teaching**

Using OERs and bringing innovation in the teaching techniques leads to certain outcomes which can push teachers' recognition at the international level. This, however, can also be problematic.

- Nazeem: Last year, I participated in a Microsoft (project) and I prepared a blog on eco-tourism
- ...An educator will win a prize and go to Dubai... after submission of my project, they (the school) rejected my participation...I had to work out the whole project again, ask pupils to wear civil dresses, bring them to my centre, do everything again, and I won.

Nazeem's passion for innovative approaches using OERs, made him famous locally and internationally at the cost of being antagonised by school administration for his school refused to support him. This forced him to use his own means to complete his project. According to Nazeem, the school showed a lack of support and instead favoured 'traditional followers' of traditional approaches compared to innovative users of OERs. The

consequence of being a winner even attracted more trouble as he was thereafter ‘sent to a school where a former teacher had been beaten’ as a form of punitive transfer. This suggests a lack of support from the system and indicates that few only are ready to face the changes that innovation with OERs involves.

In spite of the resistance from school hierarchy, some teachers insist on using OERs in their teaching. As a risk taker and believer in the power of OERs, Nazeem did not wait for policy to change to effect change and innovate in his classroom. Instead he, like other teachers, ventured, networked, and used alternative methods to reach his goals:

- Nazeem: I prefer blog because blog is more appealing, and it is easily updated but it is open source because most of them use world press and prefer world press.
- Shana: Even on Facebook you can find it, there is the Government Teachers’ Union (GTU) where teachers share ideas

Teachers who work with OERs, including Natacha, Reena, Shana and Nazeem are passionate about innovation, are creative and demonstrate adaptive techniques in schools. As innovators and passionate teachers, their level of engagement is thrust at a different level: they are the ones who will spend time creating additional OERs, after school hours or during holidays. They invest their money, time and seek satisfaction in what they do more than the possible rewards or recognition. International recognition builds their confidence, keeps them motivated as in the case of Nazeem, who won a prize to Dubai; Reena and Natacha won Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA/OER) competition awards.

- Reena: I began to really use the OERs and talk about TESSA, the CD...search and find ideas...TESSA helped me to grow in the sense that I needed to do something new, that others were not already doing. Thanks to TESSA, I feel I have grown in my daily work at school (as a teacher).

These experiences help participants grow and develop further confidence and skills even if they work in aggressive climates. Babita works in a prevocational context (PVE) and describes how most of her energy is spent on struggling to attend to classroom management issues and making underperforming students achieve peacefully:

- You go into the class, you say “Yes! We’re going to do this, this, this!” You’re ready with your lesson plan, you’re ready, you got everything, and you go into class, two girls are fighting. You have to stop – and don’t think that the others

will stay quiet, they'll be adding fuel to fire... Because nobody's interested in studying, so you put in so much effort and yet you go there and it's zero.

- Shalinee: But most of the time, I'm stuck with indiscipline. And this is what makes me feel frustrated...Your (teachers') hands are tied ... We sign annually memos on corporal punishment. « You're not allowed to make them kneel down, you're not allowed to make them stand on chairs, and you're not allowed to give lines.” Tell me what I'm allowed to do...I don't know.

Shalinee recalls the rural context where parents are aware of difficulties teachers have and even accept that their kids be beaten to ensure a certain discipline:

- It is different in a village. I often meet parents on the road...They tell me how their child act badly at home... And the parents always answer, “You can punish him (by the rod) as you want. You need to make him a good person”

This indicates that these teachers' experiences are also characterised by issues related to application of OERs in their teaching and learning. These are often not discussed but are significant as the experiences indicate the societal and educational pressures on teachers who then feel insecure and helpless. These overwhelming circumstances lead to a reduction in quality pedagogical interaction time, affect the morale of teachers and increase tensions in classrooms. These experiences indicate resistance from hierarchy but also indicate teachers' strength as they resist the challenges, learn and grow from these situations.

### **5.5.3 Concluding theme three**

This theme revealed the diversity of teaching techniques adopted by teachers who are engaged with OERs. This experience includes a consideration of techniques that favour inductive approaches and the use of ICT for teaching and learning. These have consequences as illustrated by the outcomes of using OERs in the Mauritian context and which can be complex for teachers.

## **5.6 Summary**

This chapter examined the main findings in relation to the two main research questions. In the first part (sections 5.2.1.1 to 5.2.2), the findings illustrated the contextual characteristics indicating that it is context that informs the experience of teachers who are familiar with and

work with OERs through the interaction and experience with regulatory bodies and contextual challenges. These characteristics contribute towards a more comprehensive understanding of the context in which teachers who work with OERs function. The contextual characteristics also inform their stance, construct an understanding of the context in which they work and serve to develop their sensibilities and dispositions which inform their decisions and actions. Teachers are thus driven by contextual considerations first. They are engaged with OERs in different ways and at different levels as illustrated in the three themes: Working with OERs and OEPs, working with OERs using technology and teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs. These reveal that teachers who work with OERs experience different realities and truths; their pedagogy is complex and evolves. It is characterised by dynamic diversity of activities, interactions, strategies, tools and techniques as well as issues and challenges that motivate them and allow them to grow.

While the thematic analysis (sections 5.3-5.5) examined mainly the initial research question and gave some insight into the second research question, still the understanding is not complete. Further analysis is examined in the next chapter through the lens of commonplaces as context. This added analysis complements the findings and allows us to learn more from the experiences of participants from a deeper analysis of narratives.

## **6.0 Chapter 6: Narrative analysis through the lens of commonplaces**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the narratives of teachers who are familiar with OERs and OEPs using the lens of commonplaces (Clandinin et al., 2007). As indicated in chapters 3 and 4, this examination, within the narrative analysis framework, complements the thematic analysis described in chapter 5. In chapter 5, the contextual characteristics and themes demonstrated that teachers who are familiar with OERs are prompted to engage with OERs the way they do while considering local influences.

This chapter 6 offers a different view from the thematic representations in chapter 5 and illustrates a deeper understanding of how selected participants experience their lives, live their stories, events and world in the current Mauritian context, examined from the lens of commonplaces.

The findings respond to the aim of the study i.e. to explore the experience of participants by engaging with a narrative inquiry approach and is also in line with the framework for analysis or the lens of commonplaces indicated in chapter 4. This chapter also redeems voices and perspectives of educators (Ellet, 2011; Bruner, 1990) in the field of OERs thus recognising the linkages between their lived stories and personal and socially connected lives (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990) (chapter 3).

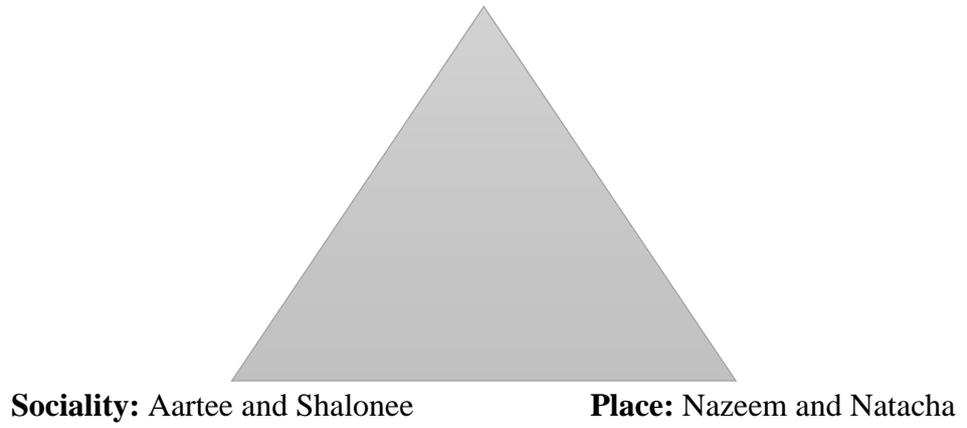
As a relativist, I believe in teacher generated knowledge and I also adopt a broad and open stance, guided by honesty and integrity in making meaning and opening up to new knowledge emanating thereof. Therefore, in seeking a rich and detailed understanding of how participants function in the current times, I offer an authentic view of human interactions and the way individuals construct meaning in the broader personal, social and historical context. The so far lesser known aspects of participants' lives are here brought to light and evidence participants' thoughts and feelings, aspirations and challenges. The way they live their lives, the way they experience and how they narrate their lived experiences are valued (Bruner, 1984). These support teacher generated knowledge from the experience of those who are familiar with OERs, which has been identified as a gap in this field (chapter 3) and add to newness in the field of OERs.

The value of this examination lies in that it reveals deeper and authentic understanding of their experiences that respects individual participants' views and opinions as analysed from specific stories. This understanding therefore complements an understanding of these teachers' experiences and responds to the second research question i.e. 'What do these experiences reveal about teaching in the current Mauritian context? This is valuable from a narrative methodological lens where commonplaces as context is examined against the prominent features of individual's stories. This approach is also justified in the light of the scope and reach of the study as indicated in the data analysis plan that seeks newness, authenticity, trustworthiness, truths and original knowledge to the field of study from a qualitative perspective.

As indicated in figure 4 below, the analysis gave rise to two participants' narratives for each concept such that a pair of participants illustrate each concept of commonplaces namely temporality, sociality and place. The experiences described through the lens of temporality, sociality and place represent an approach to understanding context. The insights gained illustrate a rich, deep and authentic reading of specific stories of teachers who are familiar and/or work with OERs in the current Mauritian context but whose experiences are not restricted to OERs and classroom pedagogies but are inclusive of OERs and their personally and socially connected lives (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990).

These serve to indicate how authentic individual truths analysed against context matter and these cannot be silenced for they are the voices of participants who are familiar with OERs. The pertinence and relevance of the individual truths in the light of the whole study are then critically interpreted and discussed in chapter 7.

**Temporality:** Beatrice and June



**Figure 4: Commonplaces as a lens of analysis of narratives**

## **6.2 What temporality tells us about participants' experience**

### **Overview**

This section examines 'time' or 'temporality' as a core component of commonplaces and as context in the narratives of two participants and serves to reveal further understandings about participants' experience. There are different possibilities for understanding temporality in the context of a narrative inquiry as it occurs as the physical time, time in the life of a teacher, time in history, in a current educational context.

In the stories of June and Beatrice, 'temporality' is critiqued as a particular 'time (s)' in their life and forms the context of their narrative. Their stories are more evocative of physical time where past, present and future cross each other. These lead to their experience as 'time in the life of a teacher' as well as time in the current educational context in Mauritius e.g. June's school days. A teacher's story thus includes many micro events and incidents which happened at a point in time in her/his life, which s/he finds meaningful. Teachers selectively recall past events as they mentally relive and recount incidences, occasionally relating how these made them who they are today. They gauge the parameters of their own experiences and their timelines (from memory, experiences lived) indicating their ability to navigate across and along timelines.

### **6.2.1 Beatrice**

Beatrice teaches French in a state secondary school and was a former primary school teacher. She has completed two professional qualifications at MIE and is based in a girls' school after having taught in a boys' college for 7 years. As a teacher who is familiar with OERs, her teaching experiences are not exclusively based on OERs. Instead, they indicate rich realities through an elaborate narrative retracing several 'moments' in her lifetime as a teacher after she left secondary college and her views on teaching and learning in the current context.

*Beatrice as a 'a teacher in our times' relates her experiences;*

#### **a. Teaching in a girls' college today**

Beatrice describes multiple moments in teaching and learning that made her grow. One of these is the marked contrasts between teaching in a boys versus a girls' college in our times. With boys, she had to work harder to get their commitment and was less satisfied

at the outcome. It was similar to a tug of war while in a girls' school it was relatively easier.

- Beatrice: ...with the girls it's different. We must take gloves and velvet gloves... I like to work with girls. You have a lot more job satisfaction in the end with the girls... With boys you fight with them, you fight for the bare minimum...you nearly have to beg boys to write. The best thing for them is to take their laptops and take the photo. But on the other hand, with the girls, one needs not tell them.

#### **b. Teaching and ICT today**

Conscious of the reach of ICT today, Beatrice appraises and makes extensive use of ICT while using OERs for teaching and learning in various ways. She relies on ICT to access free lesson plans, notes for literature and related activities.

- Yes I go on the Internet especially for literature. I saw we have lessons plans ...introduce a text etc. We are already given the lesson, the objectives, the activities we can do with the students. It is not necessarily that I will have these information exactly as they are. I will adapt them to my class and my situation ... I found images on the Internet. I searched for images of the teacher in the early 1900s.

Even if Beatrice makes extensive use of OERs through ICT, she limits the tablet as for her it is more a source of distraction and jeopardises the level of control by the teacher.

- Even if we were given a tablet at school, there is no Wi-Fi connection, and even if we had Wi-Fi connection, it would have been really complicated to monitor what the kids do with their tablets.

Conscious of the reach of mobile phone in our times, she transgresses the rules of the school and allows older girls to use it for they are considered to be more “responsible” and trustworthy. She even asks them to download specific free OERs applications such as dictionary, and looks for more complex tasks to advance learners' higher order thinking skills:

- ...I allow the elder ones because they will know how to use it discreetly while the small ones will not use it discreetly...we have different types of questions...And somewhere we teach children to think differently and I find it really interesting...

- ... So far, I had forbidden my students to use their smartphones. But I have advised some girls to download the dictionaries, English, French, translation. And, now they will make the effort to get to the word, in their phone and find the right answer. But, I cannot criticise the child. I think this is good.

**c. The ‘staff room’ stories in our times**

As an OER user, the narrative of Beatrice also indicates how involvement at micro level is characterised by events that affect the lives of learners as much as it affects educators in the staff room. These indicate how teachers’ personal lives and tragedies intertwine with the professional life. These individual stories then come together in the staff room and affect the collective memory of colleagues:

- I had a colleague whose husband fled, left after more than thirty years of marriage and took all the money from his bank account ....and the husband was a Judge...went to Canada with a younger woman. That teacher got into a depression and his pupils could not understand ... Now how to explain to students without entering into the private life of the person.

Beatrice indicates another situation where a teacher lost his job due the misuse of mobile devices:

- ... They did it. There is a person who lost his job because of ICT ... Because they are video recorded without our consent. The students provoked the teacher, he exploded and they filmed. The students did not want him to lose his job. They did not know that it was going to grow out of proportion...and the guy lost his job.

These represent incidents at a micro level and inform teacher positioning, decisions and dispositions and are sources of learning and negotiating meaning for them. The boundaries between the personal events and professional events are blurred in our times because incidents which are personal affect the collective memory and professional lives. This element of temporality which is lesser known about teachers who are familiar with OERs is important and should not be undermined as it makes them who they are.

#### **d. Current times and Policy.**

Apart from what happens at the micro level, the world of teaching and learning for Beatrice is also influenced by the events at national official level or the meso level such as national projects on ICT and tablet project. Essentially positive, she is also critical and sarcastic against the absence of Internet and absence of ICT policy in school. She expresses discontent at the gap between national policy makers' and practitioners' level. As an OER user and based on what happens at the policy level, she positions herself as the decision maker for her classroom with the ability to decide what is right and when, with the ability to exercise power. Beatrice seems thus to show an urge to state her identity as a teacher, the need to take position and TO BE a teacher in our times in her own way.

#### **6.2.2 June**

June is a secondary school teacher who worked in an IT environment prior to joining teaching as an ICT Educator and is very conversant with OERs from a legal and technical perspective. She has over 10 years of experience in teaching which has been influenced by her own 'times' as a student and 'times' laden with events in her life as a teacher and as a former student in an elite college in Mauritius. She works in a girls' state college in an urban area after having taught in a boys' school earlier. Her interview reveals a reflective stance about what it means to be a teacher in our times today. June is able to negotiate between her past and her present and foresees the rest based on the discipline and routine she has established for herself to lead a stable professional life.

*June is representative of a 'teacher in the current times and across times' as she marks her narrative by her past as a student and now as a teacher and as she revives the memories from the past.*

##### **a. A committed teacher today from yesterday**

June is conscious about the events and actions around her. She enjoys being in control of a disciplined and organised professional life. She attributes this trend as a consequence of her experience as a teacher today and past student in an elite school. She expresses a firm sense of commitment, which earns her the reputation of being a strict teacher. She accepts this reputation terming it as an asset that gets the job done with less fuss:

- I mean business.... My students know I'm strict...and they know when they deserve a harsh line...

As a teacher who is familiar with OERs, temporality is analysed first in terms of her management of physical time. June values every minute, and diligently directs her teaching and plans and decisions accordingly:

- Every time it's me who decide...do not tease me...when we have two periods its two working periods... at times I even take 2 or 3 minutes more if I'm in the middle of an explanation I will finish it, there's a line to finish, a paragraph they will stay because they benefit from it.

She clearly demarcates her professional time and her personal time. To her this is meaningful and helps her to feel the stability and allows her to do her personal best during working hours:

- I work from 8 to 2.30 and I give myself thoroughly in my work. But after 2.30hrs, I do not care about the school. What happens at school during the day I forget, what happens at school remains in school. At 2.30 I say goodbye to the girls...What happens before 2.30, I forget, tomorrow is another day. When the class is finished and I have another class after, I will not drag my bad mood into the other class. Children of the other class are innocent.

This brings her to select the distance she wants to keep with learners, limiting and establishing boundaries so as not to cross them:

- I do not ask nor entertain personal questions.
- Quality time to myself is priceless and I do not regret having joined teaching...I like the human relations.... but it's demanding....teachers need the holidays else they will go mad....they need to re-energise...

June believes that being who she is today as a consequence of her experience, is already an asset. As a teacher who is familiar with OERs, she embodies one aspect of OERs that is adaptability to situations, and she emphasises on the necessity to adapt to changing times to survive and live with the current generation:

- Teaching is a dynamic profession...people do not realise same and minimise its importance... I may teach two forms... they are different, it's dynamic... you need to adapt ... those who stick to their own world don't evolve...

#### **b. Past times to current times**

Temporality is also examined in terms of generational change and passage of time. As a student who used to bunk school, June 'knows all the nooks and corners', tricks and habits of 'bunking school', how to shy from teachers and yet score good grades. Today she uses her past experience to prevent learners from fooling her:

- Because I bunked school in my days, I know what to do now when they do it in my classes...
- ...because I was like that then, now I know'' and "my students cannot fool me".

She memorises and retells accounts of her student life, and how she easily escaped punishment, took advantage of the weaknesses in the system and triumphantly recounts how she duped teachers then. She recalls these past memories and thoughtfully rejoices and appreciates how contrary to programming, teaching keeps her young and happy:

- ...teaching is gratifying and allows me to keep up to date with youth and the current times.

But times for her were not always plain sailing as she indicates how she had to adapt to negotiate expectations when she joined teaching. While 'programming' did not require added interpersonal interactions, she realised its importance in teaching:

- Before becoming a teacher I was working in a professional world of programming. It had nothing to do with teaching. I had no contact with the customer. It was my computer and me.
- When I had just begun to teach, I treated pupils as in my professional milieu before. But slowly, my approach changed.... when I started meeting students from different ages. I now know how a child from forms 1 to 6 acts.

Teaching for her is adapting to change, bearing in mind the local conditions even if one knows a lot in domains such as ICT and OERs. June is able to shift the focus to her past times and uses that to develop adaptive techniques over time, slowly acquiring added skills

including a set of classroom management rules and code of ethics for behaviour and respect, the do's and don't's in her class.

- I demand the respect of my pupils. When I speak to them, I tell them: your caprices you do them with your friends...at home. Sometimes they try to answer you, but whenever you put them in their place, they remain quiet.
- This subject is an option [not compulsory] ... You chose this subject to succeed and not to fail. You should be conscious.

She easily reports learners to the management upon incorrect behaviour and uses both preventive and corrective approaches. While reflecting on current situation of indiscipline she condemns parents who do not collaborate and learners today:

- I think they take everything for granted. They think everything is easy. In our time it was different. When I was in college, it was different. I knew that after my HSC I had to go to university, I had no other choice. They do not know what they want. I try to talk to them about the choice of subjects. I try to advise them but there are always parents who will force their children to choose subjects that they do not like
- Students take you for granted....if you do not want to work, s/he is happy because the students get a free period, if the student does not want to work s/he fails they say...teachers do nothing....but with me it's different; you come, you work although I may joke with you....

As a teacher who is involved in innovation, these challenges do not discourage her. She believes that adaptation to the realities of our times is key. To her, teaching is dynamic, keeps one young:

- It is dynamic, those who do not teach, cannot understand. You stay young with your pupils.

Thus, June navigates across the times of her life, merging individual memories with the passage of time characterised by her school days, her previous job and the way students behave today. Temporality as context allows us to examine how these incidents made her who she is today. This context is not devoid of one's own past experiences and experimentations that allow teachers to see things or do things the way they do today as a consequence of their own storied lives. This, in turn, informs their take on technology as indicated in the next section.

### c. A time for a technology age

- June: Now, each student has a tablet, a computer, a laptop, some even have one since their early childhood. Even if they do not have one, they can manage, go to work at a cybercafé...

June represents an ICT teacher who is very familiar with OERs at a time where the agenda of innovation in Education is heavily dependent on the ability of the teacher to harness the maximum from an online and ICT rich environments. Fully conscious of this, June is flexible, adaptive and she encourages the use of phones to take notes especially given the lack of A' level materials on the market. She thus allows them to take pictures and share notes by free open apps and resources such as WhatsApp, Viber and other media.

- Because since 2011 we have been notified about a new syllabus and change in 2015...so last year in 2014 we started to apply the new syllabus with form 4 students and HSC. We have the book for form four but nothing for HSC on the market.
- But technology is great because even in my form four class and even if the bell goes at times students ... take pictures to then insert in their copybook later...they take the picture and share it with their friends on WhatsApp , or Viber ...

Teaching today in a free resourceful and ICT rich environment also means using the tools responsibly and trusting that learners can achieve by encouraging them to meet their targets. She encourages them to use cybercafés and work on projects from home.

This flexibility draws learners closer to her, for they even begin to ask her questions about technical problems with their phones:

- ...my mobile has an issue...and if I can help I guide them.

As much as June favours free resources and an ICT rich environment, she is also very aware of the challenges they represent in today's times and condemns students from well-off families as more reticent and "here they are children who already have everything but are lazy".

Even if she advocates free online and ICT resources, she still has to re-negotiate her role and the ties with a new generation as a teacher on a continuous basis which calls her to reconceptualise the role of the teacher today as indicated in the next section.

#### **d. Teacher's role today and the role of authorities and parents**

In spite of access to free online and ICT enabled resources, June refuses the idea that a teacher's role is obsolete today. She sees the teacher as someone who has to guide more and carry out more feedback and evaluation:

- All is not available on the Internet. And the most important is if you are not in class you will miss the explanation...later when your friends need a re-explanation then you realise you too understood it wrongly

June also critiques some dishonest school teachers who care more about private tuition than learners and who will work differently in schools than when they are paid privately.

On the other hand, she also sides with the voices of teachers when she feels these are not adequately heard, leaving them frustrated when their requests to the Ministry are silenced or ignored. In spite of this situation, June does not stop here and shows that the teacher's role today goes beyond being in class. Today she even buys Internet packages, software apps and downloads materials at her own cost for public schools to contour the problems:

- Every two to three months, we send a letter to the zone through the rector...about the problems of the laboratory, Internet connection. So at my cost, I installed it (the software) on all the 20 PCs....so that students can learn programming but if I depended only on the school...it's not fair towards students...and they are assessed on that component....
- It takes a lot of time to download. I use my dongle from PC to PC...but my learners cooperate and at times I guide them what to next...and when they are done...I remove it.

Examined through the lens of temporality, June has to invest her time and money in enabling access to ICT rich and open resources even if the higher authorities are careless and pay less heed to important issues. This includes overlooking subject combination choices at A' level which impacts on career choices of students at a later time in their lives:

- There is a variety of subject available this year, French, Hinduism, Computer at principal level but it is not meaningful. Their choice of subjects is strange. When I asked them, what they are going to study at university with these choices, they don't know what to answer. They only think about their entry which require two principal

subjects but they do not realise that they will not have the basic requirement to study at university level.

June is aware of the changes occurring in job market today and fears that similar oversight will only cause more harm at a later time in the lives of students. Instead learners should benefit from professional career guidance: Pupils should be exposed to the work market at form three level, they do not know which jobs are available, which studies these require. They need to have these subjects at form 5 level as not everyone will have a university degree, many will choose a manual job for example Hotel training school. They only come to school to sit for exams, to have a certificate, that's all. They do not have any support.

Temporality allows us to examine the comparison made by June when she was a student and her parents took a loan to get a computer. At that time it was more valued as a sacrifice compared to a taken for granted attitude today, both by parents and students:

- Virtually all students have laptops; even if they do not have a laptop, they have a smartphone. The parents have no control...they tell me that they revise, but I think they do not know how to do it. I explain to them but they realise much later. I still was lucky; I had no laptop or computer at home. At that time a computer cost Rs 40 000, it took a loan to buy.

Against all what is happening in a teacher's world, June generally emphasizes the need for personal (holiday) time.

#### **e. Holiday time**

According to June, holiday time rejuvenates and keeps her strong. It is also a good balance against working with large numbers of students for less salary. She values her quality time which for her is 'priceless':

- People say that teachers have a lot of holidays. But we need this leave because we do not work with files. On average I work with 120 students a day, three different classes, of different age. I do not manage files myself, every 70 mins I manage children, I have to change behaviour. It's demanding on a person. And in addition you have to manage the indiscipline of the children, if you do not have a leave you end up crazy...there is a need to switch off.

She explains that the teachers' daily job which is physically, emotionally and cognitively charged is much underestimated:

- It is demanding, it is from 8 to 14.30. I work, I prepare notes, the papers of assessments. After I have to correct them if I have time. When you have two free periods, you rest, you re-energise yourself because just after you will have other classes where you will have to talk, to irritate your throat...people do not understand, teachers work even at home.

Teaching today demands a physical, emotional and cognitive readiness which both June and Beatrice express through their stories. They negotiate their past times, current times and measure the parameters to address a series of challenges every day. Temporality through the narratives of Beatrice and June marks that today it matters to change school and teach differently, to use ICT and free open resources in ways that can also be innovative and challenging, to be influenced by the past, it matters to teach in a context laden with complexities about policy, Ministry or even staff room tragedies, it matters to decide the closeness between teacher and learners and yet believe in the future of the learner, it matters to feel that holidays can perhaps be the only re-energising factor in the current times. Teaching in our times is therefore a blend of who teachers are and who they become in a context that is multi-faceted and diverse with events, OERs and incidents which inform their experiencing teaching with OERs today. The narratives show their ability to 'juggle' with time and stories to create future stories by being mindful that OERs are part and parcel of the context but not exclusively the priority. The implication of these truths is discussed in chapter 7.

### **6.3 What sociality tells us about participants' experience**

This section describes the stories of teachers where we analyse 'sociality' as context of teachers and serve to reveal further understandings about participants' experience. As a second core component of commonplaces, sociality is best illustrated through the analysis of the stories of Aartee and Shalinee.

Several forces determine 'sociality' for teachers in our times. As much as it can be said that teachers are to live in a context that is multi-faceted and multi layered, the narratives of teachers relate much more to multi-edged profession where often the boundaries of private, social and personal, professional are blurred.

### **6.3.1 Aartee**

Aartee is a primary school teacher living and working in a sub urban area. She was based at the same school for training and teaches Mauritian Kreol after having recently completed her Teacher Diploma programme at the MIE. Passionate about OERs, teaching and people, Aartee is also involved in after school programme as a volunteer and a social worker interacting with her students' locality in an under privileged residential area. She has a background of ICT designer and is also very passionate about culture, music and sharing. What follows next is an understanding of her narrative rich with incidences, events that continue to shape her as a 'teacher' and a person. Aartee is portrayed as an extrovert Mauritian claiming loud her 'multi ethnic background'. She strongly resists racist views and defends children's rights and strives hard to make her students complete primary education. She is very protective and sensitive about the children she works with and has strong views about the weaknesses in our system, such as silences, death, pain and violence which affect the lives of people in the community she works in.

#### **Sociality - melting pot**

Examined through the lens of sociality, the community she works with represents a melting pot where worlds, realities and cultures mix up. It is also the learning environment where she experiences the deep-rooted beliefs and prejudices that govern the culture of the school and the people.

- In fact in school A there are two different cultures meeting, both wonderful, each one has its specificity and its way of life...in the school it's a bit of 'biryani', 'ti purri', and 'salted fish'...these are social strata (metaphor of local dishes) ...on one side you walk barefoot...I see children barefoot with tattered clothes playing and on the other side, those in cars.

Aartee demonstrates an overt sensitivity and mindfulness with regards to the societal bonds and community in which she teaches. She sees the school as wonderful melting pot, where worlds, beliefs and ways of lives, either resist or blend together. It is to her a place where villagers meet the town people, where cultures blend and the underprivileged meets the more fortunate. The next section highlights some harsh realities though.

### **a. The community where students' live matters**

The community where students' live matters; as a teacher who is passionate about teaching, innovation and social welfare, working as a youth volunteer in the same marginalised community where some of her students live, has enriched her perspective of the situation compared to other teachers. She sees the hidden side of their lives, where poverty and poor sanitation is rampant and less visible to others. These moved her out of her comfort zone making her more sensitive, respectful and mindful of the sociocultural context in which she works. It has allowed her to see the harsh realities and living conditions of those living in abject poverty with limited access to water, sanitation or electricity which she then juxtaposes to others:

- I am part of an NGO working at Cité A, it's called 'Ti Rayon Soleil'. As a member I teach from 16.00-17.00. As I am close to their field reality, I understand better. I see their living conditions and problems. It is not a competition with the children of Region A, the children there have much more means than the children of Cité A, because the latter often have neither water nor electricity. But they are children.

She is appalled by family conditions of some students who not only lack the basic needs but whose family conditions are insecure:

- Many children have their father in prison... their mothers ... they have different fathers.

Sociality allows us to understand that for Aartee, knowing the students based on only the profile provided by the school would have been restrictive. Instead, getting to know where and how the students live their life matters. She has now a unique reading of the situation based on their family and social profile. These in turn influences her to work with learners in specific ways which include the use of OERs (See chapter 5).

### **b. Sociality and tolerance versus racism**

Racism and lack of intercultural understanding is a societal truth she experiences. This influences the quality of life of the community members. After having expressed the characteristics of the society in which she functions, Aartee elaborates on the racism she experienced when teachers asked her about her religious background as a qualification to teach in that school;

- The first time I had a shock. I did not expect to have that kind of question in my class. I teach the Mauritian Kreol. And it is a language that is not attributed to a particular religious community...everybody is a Mauritian in my class, and I live the mixed culture...

As a passionate teacher, she refused to be intimidated and embodies on key characteristic of OER- inclusion and chooses patriotism instead of ethnic division:

- While I was doing the class, problems of religion cropped up. I tell them I do not want to hear that, you are Hindu, he is Creole. I do not want to hear about it. We are all Mauritians, if you do not understand this, you do not enter my class.

She explains her own multi- ethnic background that helps her talk to them:

- My grandmother was a Christian...my other grandfather of Tamil origin...a mixture...now I am a Telegu...and in my family you have half Hindu and half Muslim too. So my own kids will be true Mauritians...just like me... I explain this to them...

Sociality allows an understanding of the micro-society or school context in which teachers function. It is characterised by racist views, power, ethnicity and victimisation and gives an indication of the interactions all teachers, whether they are familiar with OERs or not, could face.

### **c. Fighting against a challenging context**

Fighting in appalling conditions for passionate teachers like Aartee becomes even more special when they are determined to take out their students out of the cycle of poverty:

- I do not expect my students to become doctors, lawyers. My main goal is that they get out of poverty. I want them to have an honest job. My goal is to put them in a group, to teach them how to read and write. To equip them for tomorrow.

Tooled with a set of resources and ideas, she looks at challenges as opportunities to do things differently. She regularly uses the phrase; ‘I say ...Things have to change’ and works to make it happen.

Her determination as a resourceful teacher and do things differently leads her to build constructive experiences and prepare for change. She goes beyond academic and basic socialization and sees her job as a calling. She expresses care first and builds on their self-esteem:

- They have a low esteem of themselves...most of them come from the poorest area. For me, the aim is to include life skills and to boost their self-esteem.

Sociality as context allows us to see the struggle and determination of Aartee not only as an OER user but as an individual who embodies sharing and inclusion which are also key characteristics of OERs. Aartee becomes the driving force to work towards decreased absenteeism, to create a feeling of belonging to the class first. She sees an opportunity to fight because she believes in her resourcefulness and has developed confidence with trial and error as indicated in chapter 5. Her pedagogy then takes the form of OER related interactive songs and stories as indicated in the next section.

#### **d. Sociality and the online context of Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices**

The above conditions make Aartee use online resources from TESSA (Teacher Education for Sub Saharan Africa) because she sees them as professionally enriching and particularly applicable here. Given the need of the context, she views OERs as important triggers where she discovers songs, lesson plans, and useful music components:

- Many countries have many resources, it's marvellous. Last time I listened to resources from Congo. It was on life skill and it was different. I take the resources available and try to adapt them to my students. I use the resources from TESSA and adapt them to my lesson plans. Instead of working on life skill, I adapt the resources and make them boost their self-esteem.

She uses the background of learners and justifies the usefulness of the quests. Many of them came from Rodrigues Island with a culture of playing music and songs. To increase the motivation of learners and match their experience, she downloaded music related resources from TESSA and adapted them. She also looked for literacy and life skills lessons from the same OER repository, identified songs and resources from several countries she then adapts:

- Because I work with students who came from Rodrigues...and Rodriguans grow up their kids with music on Saturday evenings, Sundays...with Sega tambour (Rodriguan Sega dance)...ravane (musical instrument)...this is how they learnt as they live the experience...It's a question of adapting...I went on TESSA.
- I download a lot of literacy lessons...also life skills because I can adapt these to my context...I will adapt it to ...Mauritian Kreol...for example on music day ...the title song "Trase pou to resi."...and "la rivièrè Tanier" but it's to boost their self-esteem mainly...make them feel that they can succeed through songs...

From the above, it can be said that the experience of Aartee is a sensitive one. The social reality of learners drives her motives and actions, making her move from empathy to actions using OERs. She negotiates and constructs her world her way, based on the events, stories and reflections emanating from the context.

### **6.3.2 Shalonee**

Shalonee is an English language teacher based in a state secondary school in the north of the island. She has joined teaching since 2001 and taught for 14 years in a number of star colleges before moving to the current rural locality. As a student, she studied in a mixed secondary college and liked science before choosing literature. Analysed from the lens of sociality, her narrative analysis reveals her leanings on humane perspectives that informs the way she works.

#### **a. Sociality and one's own working context**

Sociality implies connecting to individuals such as students and parents in the school community as part of the contextual reality and necessity. Shalonee recognizes she has to adopt a different attitude when working with boys versus girls.

- ...and the girls would cry...you have to be more polite...but with the boys I can afford to be different-a bit rude...
- I shouted at a girls...she cried a lot...It made me understand that it's a girls' world here.

The context also teaches her to judge her level of familiarity with boys with whom she thought it best to keep some distance to avoid being taken for granted. Although she

understands boys need affection too, still out of fear and ethics, she would not allow herself the same liberty with them:

- If you laugh too much with boys, they take you for granted... they begin to play truant, imagine things...you can't even smile at them even if you want to.

Over the years, she developed techniques that would bring her closer to girls, allowing more room for show of affection:

- I can be more of myself if I can laugh with them...I used to be affectionate with them...when I left the class I even cried...it was so emotional. They were really like my daughters.

This section indicates how Shalinee manages relationships in a context of single sex schools and negotiating her role with the audience then becomes critical to functioning in a school context today. Either way demands a new mind set and contextually appropriate mechanisms to construct relationships.

#### **b. Sociality is connecting to people through empathy and social events in a rural area**

Shalinee describes the importance and advantage of connecting to people especially in her current school context with poor academic achievement records and education seen as a way out of poverty.

- They come with a very bad level. For example, the intake for the form 1. They have difficulties with alphabets in English. It's not that they cannot differentiate between b and d, it's a common mistake... This is different... There are many who are not even conversant with the alphabets in English. It's scary....

She describes how the parents from the village have high esteem for teachers on whom they depend to ensure that their children do well in society. Some parents even come to complain to her hoping she would be able to put their kids on the right track:

- It's different in a village. When I meet parents on the road, sometimes I don't remember them, but they always come to me and talk about their child. They will tell me that their son is in my class and that even at home he disobeys.

- “Miss you can use the rod with him provided you make him someone respectable...” they are so upset. Parents think that their children are uncontrollable.

The parents are thus very close to her, and while they approve and encourage corporal punishment, Shalinee then expresses she can only write notes in the Journal and has limitations.

Connecting to people also means being aware and showing empathy in a context where expectations from the school and teachers are high especially from poor families. Shalinee is empathetic towards their miseries and troubled parents who would walk the extra mile for their kids. While she is appreciative of the efforts of parents who collaborate, she regrets that some even believe that just giving Internet and ICT devices to learners would guarantee learning. Troubled parents often come to her to complain:

- (Parents): we give them everything, smartphone, tablets, Internet, Wi-Fi, television, canal +. Despite everything they do not learn.
- But some parents realise. Maybe he is a vegetable seller, but he wants something else for his child. Even if he cannot control his child at home, he wants the child to be responsible in class. Many parents come to thank me for scolding their child because they themselves cannot do it.

Feelings of gratitude are thus shared, and the teacher even interacts with the parents in informal settings such as cultural events or festivals. Shalinee mentions how during festivals such as Ganesh Chaturthi, parents seize the opportunity to talk to her for up to 20 minutes asking her to keep an eye on their son, illustrating how they look up to Shalinee as the maternal or guardian figure. She reciprocates by giving special attention to learners in difficulty as she explains in one case:

- I had a student yesterday; I know he has family problems. I try as much as possible to encourage him to work. But he takes all his time, it will take more than one hour to write 150 words...He never completes his homework. I sometimes scold him, or sometimes I encourage him too it goes on like this...it is time-consuming.

Teaching in a rural context is different and there is more tendency for parents to relate to teachers when parents invite them to social gatherings. This forms part of the cultural capital teachers benefit from as they begin to form part and parcel of the community life and begin

to be more insiders rather than outsiders. It shows the esteem parents have for teachers, and their belief in the power of education.

### **c. Sociality and language**

Language binds people and cultures. Bhojpuri language used to be a common language spoken by Mauritians of Indian origin. Today it is still used by many people in rural areas mainly. English and French are then considered as foreign languages practised only at school. Shalinee who comes from a village, is familiar with the language and in her story, she indicates how Bhojpuri language is used to connect and bond with learners and the community:

- I come from a village...Some students speak Bhojpuri at home. When he is translating, he's translating from Bhojpuri to English. Each school is different. As far as possible I try to teach in English, but sometimes, students will tell me 'what are you saying? I don't understand'.
- There are particular jokes in Bhojpuri. But they are fun sometimes. As I can understand Hindi, Bhojpuri, kreol, English and French I try to use anything but to bring them to do what they should do at the end of the term, it's to succeed.

Ancestral language becomes the bonding factor that reduces the distance between teachers, students and community members.

### **d. Sociality: a driving force for youth**

Shalinee reflects about violence in the society today. Preoccupied by what kind of adults the learners would be when they leave school, she shares the responsibility of the villagers in building the career tracks of her learners with the hope to have a better youth. It becomes her mission:

- I constantly prompt my students to get educated, move out of poverty, get a job...I 'threaten' them not to be burglars or rapists or frauds about whom I'll read about in the papers someday...

Sociality is expressed beyond the limitations of what is taught at school. For Shalinee, relationships between the teacher and the students are also based on values and morals that are transmitted to them while they are in schools so that after school, learners can live

respectfully. She emphasises the importance of having true friends more than earning high scores or certificates:

- I explain to them how it is important to have friends. Just like it's important to pass in your subject, it's important to have and respect your friends

She also feels that living together is a skill that she would like to impart to her students:

- The basic things: eating together, praying together, and sharing. First of all, family, children, tolerance, all the values.

She indicates she would like to share more such stories and see more human relationships in our community and she relates how it made her feel special when someone from a different religious background showed empathy and catered for her special vegetarian meal, thus showing the interreligious bonding and diversity of the Mauritian context:

- While we were growing up, there were Hindus, Catholics, but we were together. When I went to my friend Anne's house, she checked that there were no eggs in a packet of cookies before serving me. For her birthday she had prepared a table with vegetarian food and she told me it was just for me. But it was super touching. It happened a few years ago but I think about that all the time.

Shalinee thus values these stories and incidents that have moulded her approach to being a teacher, who she is and what she tries to impart to her learners. Shalinee further demonstrates how important this is for her.

#### **e. Sociality and the sociocultural context**

In her teaching environment, Shalinee observes the content of language of the rural community in which she is currently teaching where boys use religious affiliations to call each other rather than their names:

- Here I have noticed they talk in terms of community and religious appurtenance...they use terms such as 'laskar (Muslim), malbar (Hindu), nation (catholic)'. ... We are not going to talk in these terms... Basic rule in my class. It's from then that they will be able to form friendship afterwards.

Determined to fight against this mentality and convinced that learners in our context should be taught how to live in harmony, she sees this challenge as an opportunity to teach them right through direct and indirect means and appeals to intercultural tolerance and friendship:

- Last time, someone made a comment on the way of dressing...it was a great opportunity to use this to explain about friendship and how to go out.
- I told them 'how is it possible that after 7 years in the same class, you have never eaten at your Muslim friend's place or celebrate at your Catholic friend's or attended a religious ceremony at your Hindu friend's place. Where is the sharing?

Shalinee then leaves them with a sentence that will go beyond the boundaries of classroom jokes or bullying. She educates using morals that resonate with how people divide each other, how people today conduct inter-religious marriages:

- You will always have people who will divide you. Because you're different. But you will have very few people who are coming to tell you there are many similarities in what you do.... I asked them in their families how many of them had mixed marriages? The majority agreed. So, what's the issue? We are all a mixed race.

She also associates the context in Mauritius to friendship as a common asset everybody can get at the end of schooling that would help them later:

- It's not that your religion is better, or mine is better. Because we are living in a country that we share. So, the basic rule is to develop tolerance ... What is the use of having a degree but you don't have any friend.

#### **f. The politics of the schooling system in Mauritius**

The teaching and learning world is characterised by micro politics and politics of the schooling system that affects teachers. Shalinee is pessimistic about the increasing bureaucracy and hypocrisy and points at the unhealthy school culture and rumours that victimise teachers. As a teacher she experienced a testing time of her life making her doubt whether she had to continue teaching:

- It was a very testing time of my life, I asked myself the question: Do I want to continue teaching? ... Troubles me a lot and it happened to me when I was at School A. There were so many things going on around, so many gossips ...people talking

behind your back. ...I just packed my bag one day and I went to India for six weeks. I was feeling so bad! And my mom was upset. Because she thought I would never come back...because I bought an open ticket ... I was so fed up with Mauritius because the Ministry was getting into the rumour and the administration was also not helping ...

While that was a traumatic period of her professional life, she also realises she could have had a break down had it not been for the support of few colleagues:

- I had very good colleagues, who supported me well. At that time, I found myself with crazy stories. There were letters against me, colleagues who started rumours, even the students did. When I think back about School A, I don't feel happy about it at all. If they had not been there, I would have broken down.

Years after, she grew more confident, caring less about the management and more about her students:

- I got up in the morning for my students, they made my life easier. I said to myself, "I do not care about management!"

Shalinee has given up trying to shine given the necessity to be careful and the silence and inertia of the Ministry over issues that pertain to school management especially when teachers are victimised. This affected her teaching world even if she was being very innovative and creative for, she felt disillusioned. Because of these past events she is now sceptical and even if she cannot change mind sets, she criticises from far and focuses on the essential: her class students. She also condemns the political interference in school matters and ineffective school management especially for people in position of power:

- He was unable to control a school because he did not have management skills. When you are in co-educational school, your management should be strict. You do not have to receive orders from politicians for example, not to punish your daughter when she made a mistake. There is a lot of interference.

Reflecting on teaching in mixed schools, she condemns the failure of the project due to a lack of leadership and commitment on behalf of Ministry and leaders of the reform:

- School could not deal with it. There are people who are too full of themselves because of power...are not strong enough. They cannot run a single-sex school, leave aside co-educational school. I think the department has failed. They banned co-ed schools. But despite that, they failed because they were not firm enough with their rules and regulations.

She further condemns the politics of schooling system in Mauritius when it comes to reform which she says happen in a semi-certain manner, where the right people are not at right place:

- They are not even clear in their plan how it is going to happen. They want to reinstate co-educational school but are afraid...but first I would advise them to start by putting the right people on top.

Aware of the new technological demands of the society and education system, as an OER user she regrets that ironically school partners are not on board:

- But very often I dictate directly from my mobile phone. Which can be pretty scandalous for some of the rectors...
- I don't know, at the Ministry level, you know, it's like you need to have certain things from paper. You know, when they come to visit your class, it's so much easier to have everything on paper and on board. Because if I'm using an application, I don't know what this person is expecting from me...I am afraid to score bad notes. The senior teachers are very traditional in their approach, you know, they still need the lesson plan, the weekly, the scheme and your copybooks to be signed. ...So, when they are coming, for me it's like...much easier ...to prepare a class on board. And using the book. I've never ventured out whenever I had these people from the Ministry checking my class.

Knowing how the Ministry functions and its bureaucratic approach even leads her to behave traditionally on purpose due to past stories when she felt harassed. She adopts a different professional profile when personnel from the Ministry is present and one when they are absent:

- The last time there was someone who came in the class and I was again doing the very traditional way of working to suit their purpose...because once they pinpoint you, I think you keep getting into trouble your whole life. Like a

harassment...Once I got into trouble for something that I did not even know about, they keep on coming.

This change in attitude becomes the norm to behave in the micro society or school because Shalinee does not want to be in the limelight but feels it is safer to adopt a social low profile:

- So, I don't want to do something that draws their attention. Ok, you want me to teach like this, I'm not using Kreol. I'm doing the class the way you want. But when you're going away from here, I'm using my coloured markers, I'm using my phone, I'm using my application, I'm using my drawings and, I'm dictating from a book and I'm using a guidebook for Literature.
- ...like they tell you to be innovative but when you do you have to be like, playing, playing hide and seek.

Shalinee considers the Ministry staff to be bureaucrats who are themselves uncomfortable with change and with whom teachers have to play hide and seek so as not to be overtly visible and risk being troubled. Upset with the hypocrisy of the Ministry and like many teachers (Chapter 5) she also criticises the tablet project as a useless one. These reflections, contradictions, events and stories altogether leave Shalinee as a burnt-out teacher. She regrets that today teachers are treated as opponents of the Ministry always at the receiving ends, rather than being allies for a common mission:

- For parents, the Ministry, the administration are always on our back...You know, it's like whatever happens in the school, the teacher is responsible for that. ...they are used to accusing us...but I am an ally. There is no need to antagonise me, I'm not the enemy here. I don't know when would parents start understanding that teachers are supposed to stand next to them...we (teachers) are allies...The Ministry is always complaining that teachers are not doing this or that, there are series of circular letters telling us what to do and not to do. Today they are even deciding what we should wear.

Sociality therefore allows us to see the cries of teachers who are innovative, use OERs but whose practices are also compromised by variables and circumstances they do not have control on. Shalinee also condemns the lack of dialogue between teachers and the Ministry and even some parents, feeling that the voices of teachers are silenced:

- I feel left out.... When the Ministry is deciding for instance in the NYS, all teachers should be involved in the discussion but how many are currently involved? ... There should have been more open-end discussions.
- ...Ministers don't consult you, parents don't consult you and the administration doesn't always consult you unless you're lucky to have a good administration. ...Who are the advisors to the Ministry? Have they been teachers?

She also believes the world of teaching is characterised by a certain hypocrisy she condemns:

- I feel the people who are at the top level...they are taking decisions on their own. Because, when they are at the top level, they forget that they had been teachers. The way they act when they are school inspectors – quality assurance or something...they change when they go up there.
- We have complained on so many occasions, but nothing changed. We only want a better working environment. At the level of the Ministry, they listen, make promises to us, but nothing changes.

The narrative of Shalinee indicates the world of teaching and its micro-politics that discourages her to be overtly innovative and she finds refuge in her work which she enjoys as illustrated in the next section.

#### **g. Teaching as a social mission**

The thematic analysis in chapter 5 illustrated that teachers experience joy while teaching. A deeper analysis of Shalinee's narrative adds a new element when examined through the lens of sociality as context. In spite of the troublesome micro politics of the school, she still enjoys being a teacher for different reasons because she is driven by the needs of the society around her and sees it as a mission in particular to work for underperforming kids who need to move out of poverty:

- When all my students succeeded for the National Assessment Exam of form three, I was so happy ... it's a big thing.
- I have to be constantly behind the child... It's energy-consuming. There are days when I feel drained...But I like to do it. I enjoy doing it, you know you feel satisfaction when you see the boys passing.

She is so convinced about her mission of teaching for a purpose that she overcomes challenging cases:

- I had a difficult class, they were girls, disobedient and creating a lot of trouble.
- I'm rebellious by nature. But I was able to win the affection of the most difficult girls.  
In the end it was really nice working with them.

Sociality also allows us to examine that teaching is not restricted to the classroom since she connects to students outside school and outside school hours. She befriends them on Facebook, maintains contact even years later, thus questioning the classroom as the sole site for interaction with learners:

- I found them thanks to Facebook, I found their photos, I hear from them, some pursue studies, LLB. Some even study in English. They told me that they had been inspired by my class...they're working, they have a decent job.

Sociality as context as analysed in the case of Aartee and Shalinee indicate the dynamics and interactions between individuals and institutions including the family and the school that extend beyond the classroom boundaries and are intertwined with the contextual truths. These reveal the implications of teaching in primary and secondary schools today that teachers' ability to struggle in a world where social ills and issues as well as teaching as a social mission appeal to them. Sociality is also seen as a tool to view how teachers function and why it matters to them the way it does. The implication of these understandings is further discussed in chapter 7.

#### **6.4 What place tells us about participants' experience**

This section examines 'place' as a core component of commonplaces and as context in the narratives of two participants and serve to reveal further understandings about participants' experience as they teach in the Mauritian context. The notion of place is revisited for the passionate teachers like Nazeem and Natacha.

Place can be determined as the physical place, geographical place and virtual place, as well as site. I derive the main aspects of place from the framework of Clandinin et al (2007) and locate place as the sites or places as places for work, interview and virtual places where these matter to teachers. These are illustrated through the narrative of Nazeem whose main

physical site – the learning factory as a site for teaching and learning, is the starting point leading us to discover the other places. Later I elaborate on its meaning for Natacha.

#### **6.4.1 Nazeem**

Nazeem is a primary school teacher and works in a faith-based primary school in an urban area. He has 19 years of experience and is more attached to the learning factory he created rather than the school system. There he develops digital free online and offline resources from textbooks and gives private attention to learners coming from different regions. Technology and developing resources are his passion and he devotes almost all his time developing OERs and digital resources.

##### **a. Place as site of work and redemption identity**

The experience of interviewing Nazeem reveals a deep attachment to his site of work which is his learning factory. This place emerges as a symbolic site chosen by Nazeem for it is his ‘baby project’: a building he has hired to explore ICT-based resources, including OERs and digitalising materials for learning. It is also the place where he invested his savings and spends most of his time with a group of volunteer teachers and some students whom they coach.

- I rented a house like this and I put furniture...everything and I converted the house into a digital one

Place in this situation is also representative of his power and success as a teacher who was not recognized in the school system but who has created a parallel school where no one can limit his growth. On the site of the interview Nazeem is very happy, confident to proudly show his achievements. He claims success is guaranteed with the way he uses technology to teach. Nazeem also admits having won international prizes in education but when it comes to his own place, ‘where place is the country’, he has to adopt a low profile to avoid being seen as this could lead to harassment or punitive transfer as he experienced in the past.

In his narrative, Nazeem indicates that as a student he could not fulfil his dreams of winning a scholarship and ever since has always wanted to do something ‘big’. He took it as a personal challenge to do something that would give him his right place in society. And one way of doing that was through technology where his efforts for the past 19 years lie. Today

the learning factory gives him a sense of accomplishment, pride and a new identity, something he always wanted to do:

- I said no I will not fight the system... I don't want to fight the system and I don't want to be perceived as a rebel...people will see me as a controversial figure. What I want to do, I have a vision; I setup my centre, I will do the work until the government realises something... as an educator, when I embarked on teaching new technology, I had in mind to go online.

Driven by his passion and disappointed with the current school management system which he considers to be resistant and archaic, he then created his 'school' or 'place' as a symbol of resistance and personal achievement.

### **b. Virtual space is the new place**

The physical learning factory is the physical place while the virtual space or online becomes his new place 'to be'. Both his learning factory and the online world are empowering to him and give him the online space as he wants. The virtual world is where he spends all his time and is the site for exploration where he enjoys the freedom of access to OERs:

- I would not find myself were it not for open source...because by online software, it is very costly. It is not only for corporate. But for educators, we have to rely on open sources. And open source, for us, is like Aladdin's lamp.

The freedom and flexibility these licences allow then, become a world of knowledge and a world of treasures for him:

- When we are using open source, we do not have licence; we do not have to pay for licence; it is more of the open sources, we can easily adopt them to our use.

Once online he then studies, learns and juggles with them to suit his purpose and that of the audience he expects to work with:

- Open source provides us with many such applications like, we have Moodle. I have used Moodle for a long time. It is so easy, you can just go online, you download it and then you start putting your materials on it. And you are online as an online teacher, and that also for free. And then we have... Word press, so we can say that

besides the operating system Linux, nearly all the blogs that we see are open source world press...

When the virtual space becomes the new place to be, teachers like Nazeem then begin to experiment even more.

### **c. Place as experimenting site**

Nazeem takes a further step and wants to experiment more. Online, he experiments with techniques, technology and digital resources for teaching learning. He is motivated by success stories over these 19 years and spends almost all his free time developing and using resources:

- I have worked...19 years I have seen the kids ... these were parents who were expecting star schools and also were parents for whom success was a very far-fetched deal ...
- I am using Word, there are Open Office...Microsoft Word ....and suppose I have created something from Open Office; I just have to link them. And suppose I have found some clips on YouTube, I can just link them on Moodle ...the open source is preferred on the market, on the Web.

His passion leads him to further engage in self-taught modules such as programming, IT, and advanced skills:

- I am not a developer. I have not followed any course in programming as such. So, for me, as an educator, I have to look for programs that solve all these problems. If I have to do coding, I have to do programming, and then I understand. But Moodle makes everything simple...

In his online space he describes his favourite free blogs where there is less cost:

- I prefer blog because blog is more appealing, and it is easily updated but it is open source because most of them use world press and prefer world press.

Nazeem continues to link ICT tools to low cost, free resources which he terms as 'Aladdin's Lamp'. He relates how he participated in a Microsoft project and operated a blog for the first time. To him the absence of open source would have meant a barrier between the rich and the poor.

- ...Or else, IT would have been for only those who can afford.

He thus continues to use the experimentation online site as it is free and accessible.

#### **d. Place of work : place of oppression**

Nazeem describes his formal workplace as a site of oppression for learners and passionate teachers like him. He points at the inability of the school system to adapt to innovative teaching and instead victimises passionate teachers and sends them to hostile environments:

- ..I was a fighter...struggled until the last moment ...but when they sent me to that school...where teachers are beaten ...was done to put an end to my job...end for me.

As Nazeem began to gain recognition for his work with ICT and innovative teaching, he obtained a punitive transfer and was sent to work with very challenging learners:

- When I joined school X, I used interactive whiteboard ...I was in the press...a hero again. So what they did to me was giving me a class that looked like a storeroom and work with repeaters...I was never given the opportunity to use ICT.

However, he did not stop innovating and had to participate in a project through the school. The management again refused to endorse the project. This did not discourage him. Instead he took recourse to his learning factory to rework the project, asked the students to join him there and attempted a last try and published the work with the hope of winning. After he submitted the project, he won the prize, but the school was embarrassed and left him aside, ignoring him. Nazeem felt victimised as he was looked down upon:

- When I won ...they were disappointed.... they could not face me...now I am in the school and not doing anything

Later he associates the antagonism felt against him as he is a Muslim in a faith-based organisation:

- The problems I faced there, was also because I am a Muslim in a catholic school.

Nazeem's story indicates that the place of work can be a site of professional limitation, religious oppression as well as antagonism, leaving teachers frustrated at school.

#### **6.4.2 Natacha**

Natacha is a primary school teacher who has worked in underprivileged as well as star schools. She has been teaching for more than 11 years in public primary schools and has also won International prizes with TESSA OERs project at the start of her career. She chose her home to be the site of the interview. The professional journey of Natacha brought her to work in three schools so far. The first one in an urban area, the second in a coastal rural area and the last one in a star school in a posh urban region. Through her narrative, we mainly analyse place as a melting pot of cultures, and realities enriched by the complexity of movements due to transfers of teachers.

##### **a. Places that blends geographical zones**

The school as place is representative of a melting pot of cultures and realities experienced by learners. It was a surprise when Natacha realised that among all the Mauritians in her class many did not know what a mosque was, and others had never stepped out of their village. Through her narrative the notion of geographical distance is evoked and so is the notion of gap between underprivileged coastal zones to the city centres and developed areas.

She illustrates the case of a coastal rural area and the incidence of a school outing:

- In X village there were children who did not know what a mosque was...they did not know anything about Caudan.
- For excursion I was able to take away the children out...when we went on excursion as we saw a mosque... it was only in the book and in the photos and then when it is real it is different there.

For the past years she has also learnt to adapt to different places as contexts, necessitating an understanding of their different mind sets. In all these places she learnt new things:

- 2008, it was special for me...2005 it was my first year as a teacher in a school where I had done my teaching practice before-school Z. There were tables you know there... rectangular shape but in 2008 I was told that I was going to work with standard one, I prepared all my stuff in December ... I prepared bouquets to put on

the table ... physical environment...charts ... there was a watering can there I used straws to make something.

### **b. Teacher training place**

The place for teacher training also matters to Natacha as she relates that spending only one year in a school during the teaching practice component of MIE is limited and yet useful. This for her is key to teaching confidently for it allowed her to read new things in connection with what she was learning at MIE, and live new experiences of an urban region:

- Yes, teaching practice. There too I had a good time although I was a trainee teacher. But there's only one year...plus they change teachers every year...
- I was still at the MIE. We try to implement some of what we learned at the MIE.

Natacha is more concerned about geographical distance between rural and urban areas, about the distance between cultures that leave Mauritian students unaware about what other religious practices or temples look like. For Natacha, there is more concern about how to bridge the gap between the students in the rural and the urban areas, those who do not travel places in their own country. For Natacha travelling matters and learners need to know more about other places.

Place as context matters to Natacha as much as it matters to Nazeem in Education. Place can be physical or virtual, but they still are stimulating for teachers to act in their preferred way. If for Nazeem place is virtual and physical, for Natacha place is geographical and situated in a cultural space. Even if the data from Natacha is not extensive with regards to place as compared to Nazeem, the knowledge gained from the way it is examined in her narrative is deep and significant in that it contributes to a different view of place. For both participants who are creative and passionate, online sites become synonymous to travelling places and they get their blogs, online access and travel places with free educational resources. The implication of these truths is discussed in chapter 7.

## **6.5 Summary**

This chapter complements and completes the cycle of data analysis initiated in chapter 5. The narratives of Beatrice, June, Aartee, Shalonee, Nazeem and Natacha analysed through the lens of temporality, sociality and place as context offered a different, deeper and authentic understanding of how participants experienced their lives, stories, events, world

in the current teaching and learning world in Mauritius. The experiences reveal that their actions and interactions, aspirations within a community shape their lives in context. These individual truths confirm the complexity of their teaching worlds and adds richness to an understanding of how teachers who are familiar with OERs experience teaching today. These experiences include OERs in teachers' worlds and understandings of teaching but are not restricted to OERs for at times OERs are included as either the background or the foreground as applicable per participant. These truths and knowledge coming from participants matter and indicate a strong grounding as to why context (time, sociality and place) should matter in a model of pedagogy in context. In the next chapter I discuss the implications of these findings to the overall meaning of the research and in relation to TPACK.

## **7.0 Chapter 7: Discussion**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the main findings from chapters 5 and 6 in relation to the existing literature. More precisely this chapter

- Responds to the aim of the study: to investigate the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context.
- Interprets the findings in relation to the initial research questions, 1 and 2.
- Discusses the significance of the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context in view of informing the third research question. (The latter is discussed in chapter 8).

I first offer a discussion of the initial research questions in relation to the findings from chapter 5 and in the second part I discuss the second research question more in relation to the findings from chapter 6. These are instrumental to developing a coherent view of the significance of the findings in context as a whole. It serves to inform the discussion in relation to the third research question in view of developing a framework of pedagogy in context in chapter 8.

### **7.2 Answering the research questions**

The research questions set at the beginning of the study were:

1. What are teachers' experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context?
2. What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?
3. How might a framework of 'pedagogy in context' be developed?

The need to bring up more contributing voices from the south was expressed in chapter 2. Adams (2018) and Sallah (2018) voiced out the value of inclusivity in the global OER movement by bringing in more voices from the south. By pointing at the challenges and prospects of OERs in African contexts, Wright and Reju (2015) and Thornton (2008) illustrate their beliefs that African communities can and need to contribute towards the global OER agenda even if there are delays. In the light of the above therefore, and in the

light of the first two research questions, the findings from this thesis adds new knowledge and contributes to fill part of the gap by analysing what is happening in this part of the southern hemisphere or Mauritius situated in the African context; it brings together the voices from quarters less represented; the voices of participants who are familiar with OERs in the Mauritian context as illustrated chapters in 5 and 6. In Chapter 5 the contextual characteristics were analysed and explained how participants' lives and experiences are characterised by occurrences and circumstances that influenced their practices directly and indirectly. Later, the intricacies of participants' experiences were analysed through the three themes namely working with OERs and OEPs, working with OERs using technology, and teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs. Deeper and individual insights were then gained in chapter 6, through an individualised analysis of specific narratives using the lens of commonplaces. This exercise completed the cycle of the first two research questions and revealed complementary insights into the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs.

The significance and pertinence of these are discussed in this chapter to offer a reading and critique the pedagogical approaches of teachers who work with OERs. The discussion around the third research question is an outcome of the process of engaging with the first two research questions and is addressed in chapter 8.

### **7.2.1 Teachers' experiences in the context of OEPs in relation to initial research questions**

**This section discusses teachers' experiences in the context of OEPs in relation to the initial research questions;**

- What are teachers' experiences of working with OERs in the current Mauritian context?
- What do these experiences reveal about teaching/pedagogy in the current Mauritian context?

I first examine the pertinence and relevance of the contextual characteristics and then examine the themes in relation to the initial research questions.

#### **Pertinence and relevance of contextual characteristics through the voice of teachers**

According to Richter and McPherson (2012), there is a need to go beyond online production of OERs and more emphasis should be placed on cultural and contextual differences of potential users to ensure their value. Through this study, the voices of participants situated in the southern hemisphere, more precisely in the Mauritian context, offer a rich and authentic reading of the experience of teachers who work with OERs. The examination of findings (chapter 5, Part 1) revealed the influence of contextual characteristics such as the influence of regulatory bodies, parents and stakeholders or the institutions including technical and administrative aspects. The occurrences and circumstances within their context influence participants' practices both directly and indirectly. Some of these occurrences relate directly to OERs and inform their choice of OERs, while others build their resilience, fortitude and help them become who they are as teachers who are familiar with OERs and who work in the Mauritian context. The significance of these contextual characteristics form part of their lives as teachers who work with OERs and whose narratives make a strong statement about their status as teachers who are preoccupied and concerned about the contextual needs of their learners first. This relates to Sallah's (2018) view of OERs as not an external concept but a reality that is internalised. Teachers have to 'experience' in order 'to be' and this experience is part and parcel of the context.

The findings also illustrate participants' disillusionment with and critique the role of regulatory bodies which included the MIE, MOE, parents and schools as participating stakeholders. This is an expression of their concern about the influences that impact their

teaching and learning. This view is similar to Albright (2005) and Andrade et al. (2011) considering technical and administrative and institutional resistance as dangers to the expansion of OERs. It indicates they need the attention and advice of the regulatory bodies and parents as support mechanisms rather than as regulatory or assessing mechanisms. The spirit of enquiry and adventure of teachers also led teachers to view the school as a site of oppression for they do not feel trusted to teach in an innovative manner without being questioned. Sometimes seen as a repressive institution, the school can be a site which promotes competition and reticence in elite schools where teachers share less and struggle more. Their concern about this reality is an approach which can be related to the philosophy of OERs given that the use of OERs at the basis relates to sharing and discussions which teachers here do not see happening. This is also therefore interpreted as an expression to contour the system. It leads them to find satisfaction from external sources such as a reward from external sources such as that obtained by Nazeem who has won prizes from Dubai, and Reena and Natacha who obtain recognition from the United Kingdom (UK) for their OER-related projects. They then feel valued more from external institutions rather than from within the local system.

The views expressed illustrate that in the Mauritian context, the voices and complaints of teachers require attention from stakeholders. It reveals their deception, frustration and desire for more participative professional actions rather than standardisation. They confirm that they do not appreciate their passive roles and want to be more active agents for they believe they have a lot to contribute in an ICT and OER context. This is in line with Turvey's view (2018), indicating teachers are the active toolmakers at the heart of pedagogical processes and therefore their voices matter. Otherwise, the risk, as indicated by Hargreaves (2003) is that if the demands of teachers are undermined, capable teachers will be lost and they will become the 'drones and clones of policymakers' (p.2). Teachers' urge to be more active and desire to learn and share more can also be related to Sallah's view (2018) and phrase 'I am OER' as he captures that individuals themselves are a great resource (Sallah, 2018). These are meant to be shared in a community of practitioners as like-minded individuals for the common benefit in a community.

Further, the OPAL report (Andrade et al, 2011) suggested the importance of finding factors that encourage successful integration of OERs. Through the lived experience of teachers who are familiar and through the declaration of the contextual characteristics, the first part of Chapter 5 relates to Murphy's (2013) view in recognising the struggles of institutions

with social, cultural, and economic challenges, as well as the incompatibility of philosophy of OERs and existing institutional cultures and priorities (Friesnen, 2009). It also concurs with Wolfenden et al.'s (2017) view that in some African contexts, including Mauritius, appropriation of OERs is largely an individual endeavour due to slowness in institutional/policy appropriation.

### **Pertinence and relevance of three themes as a response to the initial research questions**

As indicated in Chapter 2, Atkins et al. (2007) reiterate the value of pedagogical processes involved in OERs which have remained elusive. The study of OERs as a concept embedding both the digital and pedagogical dimensions (Butcher, 2011), also necessitated more knowledge to shed light on the negotiations between OERs and OEPs. In this study therefore, and as a response to the initial research questions, the three themes namely, working with OERs and OEPs, working with OERs using technology and teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs indicate the depth and meaning of the varied experiences of participants who work with OERs and OEPs in a teaching and learning environment. (Chapter 5, part 2). The examination of the themes illustrates the investigation of what Rennie and Weller (2010) term as 'Little OERs' or smaller (classroom) sites where OERs are used (Chapter 2). The experiences emanating from teachers' engagement with OERs indicate authentic understandings derived from teachers' practices. These support the argument that knowledge coming from the field or a bottom up approach as opposed to a top-down approach is meaningful. This knowledge generated from teachers' practice is therefore in favour of a collaborative approach to sustainable development in the field of OERs; teachers become collaborators and not recipients, they develop meaning and contribute to generate new knowledge about the dynamics of OERs.

#### **The first theme: Working with OERs and OEPs**

The first theme: working with OERs and OEPs, indicates teachers negotiate and develop meaning while working with OERs and students in their own context by being mindful of the sensibilities. Internet forms part of the process and gives teachers the ease of navigation thus adding to their repertoire of educational resources, they can then draw from. While the reasons for accessing online and OERs range from self-use to looking for research notes and apps for learners, teachers seem to value their freedom to decide what is important and when. This characteristic in itself is a core value and attribute of OERs. Engaging with OERs and OEPs also mean using them for self-learning such as writing an Open source book or

accessing innumerable possibilities such as Nazeem's metaphor of Aladdin's lamp. The lack of knowledge about copyright issues does not hamper their ability to access resources anywhere and anytime. This is in line with Conole (2010) who argues that research in this field needs to scrutinize the shift from OERs to OEPs. These then educate us about the way teachers are engaged in practice and in transfer of this knowledge (Fielding et al., 2005).

Working with OEPs also includes considerations such as relevance, teachers' ability to download apps, to make derivative use of OERs and translate or engage these into locally relevant materials. For Nazeem, OEPs are mediated by interactive whiteboards which blend OERs, OEPs and Information and Communications Technologies in Education (ICT) while for Babita, practices involving adaptation is as important as designing relevant materials. For John and June, ICT and OERs cannot be separated from their practice and they view the teacher's ability to do programming or juggle with Open source software as a real asset. For teachers in general, the means for accessing resources thus range from tablet pc, pc, and laptop or even phone, anywhere and anytime.

While working with OERs, participants feel resources should be adapted given the lack of necessary resources in the Mauritian context which therefore demands attention. Further teachers also critique the lack of Internet access and the prohibition of mobile phones in school as an educational device for education. They critique the system and use their own devices in hiding for fear of repression and discrimination while being simultaneously concerned about the distractive nature of Internet. This leads us to interpret that teachers who work with OERs, do not shy away. Instead, they contour the system and make their own decisions.

This theme also illustrates participants' work with OERs by showing the integration of practice and pedagogy and ICT in OERs (Butcher, 2011) and OEPs. This responds to the gap of limited knowledge that we have about how pedagogy, in practice, is in relation to OERs. It sheds light on what Wolfenden et al (2010) alerted as the lack of systematic adoption and lack of embedding teaching methods and partially relate to the quests of OERs advocators at the OER18 Conference (OER 2018). It also supports Atkins et al., (2007) who critique the absence of pedagogical processes in linking OERs to teacher education against a dominant design consideration. It supports the view that systematic adoption is relative and not conclusive, that embedding teaching methods or pedagogical processes in OERs and OEPs is subjective depending on teachers' needs, purpose and context.

The experiences of those who work with OERs and OEPs are enjoyable and lead to replication of OEPs in their professional practice as indicated in the case of Nazeem. This means that once teachers experience success with OERs, either through competition or trial and error, they continue to use it confidently for the pedagogical value it allows. They even invest their own money and additional time without expecting rewards or financial gains.

### **The second theme: Working with OERs using technology**

As a response to the initial research questions, Chapter 5 redeems the voices of teachers in expressing the rare stories of teachers who work with OERs using technology while teaching and learning in the Mauritian context. This view runs parallel to Selwyn (2011) who while discussing the concept of ‘technological determinism’, also criticized how few rare voices about technology works are magnified and distort perception to give a swollen image of the pertinence and use of technology in education. He suggested more voices from different teachers instead and this current theme gives a balanced view of the use of technology and how participants themselves decide when, what, how and to what extent they should include technology in education; Passionate about ICT, since a lot of his time and resources is invested in its development, Nazeem equates technology to pedagogy as the dominant methodology, others use the ICT technologies as tools to access more learning materials and devise learning activities for students based on contextual needs using educational apps, PowerPoints, WhatsApp and Viber. Many still use them for remediation while others struggle to use mobile devices in hiding for fear of being victimised or misinterpreted.

The pertinence of this theme also lies in raising awareness about the important issues that are often undermined in popular discussions of education and technology and examine the case of participants who engage with OERs using technology in a Mauritian context. Its importance also lies in refuting the often called ‘blame culture’ on teachers who are often pointed at when technology fails to be used effectively as a consequence of external policy related pressure (Kulkulsa-Hulme et al (2009); Nye, 2007). In a context where OERs are predominantly online, this theme illustrated a much in demand response to the question: what is happening and how do things happen when teachers use OERs.

The theme indicated the motivation, merits and challenges related to technology as integrated in the pedagogy of teachers who work with OERs. OERs with technology make their classes more interactive, innovative and creative. But the challenges experienced by teachers including interaction with some parents, policy, maintenance, cost and online access

are reiterated concurring with Albright's (2005) and Wolfenden et al.'s (2017) views of the contextual challenges that hamper the development of OERs.

Teachers generally believe in and practice sharing in an online community of practice (CoP) using Facebook, GTU and related blogs to keep connected and discuss. The latter view reiterates the perspective of Lave and Wenger (1991; 2002) in supporting a Community of Practice. It suggests the necessity for teachers to belong to and share practices, views and opinions about their experiences which include OER related experiences. This can happen in our times as we see teachers developing and sharing using online virtual platforms to build the community of sharers in a semi-formal or even non formal manner and emphasising what Bell (2002) terms as the 'human' agent instead of resting on a mainly technical approach. The CoP is afforded in terms of in person, school based, online/virtual connection and sharing and confirm participants espouse 'sharing' as a key principle of OERs embedded in their practice. For this to happen, teachers even invest their own money and skills and creatively engage with technology as they judge the merits and reach of OERs in their practice. These truths thus contribute towards an understanding of a global picture that quests for knowledge on sustainability of OERs from teachers' perspectives.

The narratives can also be analysed against the view of Bates (2011) who alerts against investment in technology without improving quality standards and meeting educational outcomes. The findings raise fundamental questions as teachers point at the absence of policy about ICT in schools, the lack of access to Internet and poor maintenance of ICT resources in Mauritian schools or even the unreliability or mismanagement of national project called 'Tablet project' (Jugee and Santally, 2016). These concerns question the value of ICT agenda and investment in Mauritius and is a further critique against the system given that participants are also using their own means and investing their own means to facilitate access to Internet and intranet in computer labs in public schools. They also point at issues such as a lack of parental guidance, and distraction which contributes towards a climate characterised by mistrust in school environment. Schools, it appears are disadvantaged because of inadequate or unclear policies and continue to be underfunded or under equipped.

### **The third theme: Teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs**

While appreciating how the narratives of teachers generate new knowledge, Fielding et al. (2005) stressed the importance of investigation into transfer and practice development and the need to understand how teachers engage in joint practice development, coaching,

experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and reflective practice (chapter 2). This theme generates new knowledge by delving into the teaching techniques of teachers who work with OERs as a response to the initial research questions.

Further, as a theory of the current times 'Connectivism' (Siemens, 2004, Downes, 2013) is characterised by the interactions enabled by one's own practice through activities that includes explorations, adaptations, modelling, prior to authentic practice. The experience of participants is characterised by similar explorations leading to authentic practice illustrating a diversity of teaching techniques adopted. These include trial and error, inductive and fun approaches and the use of ICT, TESSA and other sources of OERs for teaching and learning (Aartee for example). Participants are mindful of the particularities and demands of their contexts and the subsequent implications for teaching and learning and related interactions prior to relative authentic practice. Jasmine thus distances from spoon feeding to more inductive approaches using smartphones and group work in her pedagogy much later in her career. It is clear from these, that there is no one formula for pedagogy; this confirms the complexity of the term 'pedagogy' (Gore, 1993) and instead reiterate connectivism as a core act that binds the interactions.

These experiences in Mauritius therefore, do not offer a completely generalisable picture of pedagogy in context. Instead it reveals a particular Mauritian version of a picture depicted from our actual educational landscape which is diverse. These also represent the voices of teachers who work with OERs in a Mauritian context and contribute to an understanding of the silences, which so far were underrepresented (Chapter 2). These experiences and truths need to surface for they affect teaching and learning every day and inform an understanding of teaching and learning today. The picture about their experiences would be less complete if similar truths are not represented. These findings when complemented call for integration into a deeper understanding of the landscape and later in the drafting of strategic plans in education which I develop in chapter 8.

Finally, this study also revealed that participants are able to develop their own working mechanisms and subjective pedagogical approaches by contouring the challenges in a flawed system. International prizes that participants win in OER related projects encourage them and it confirms a bottom up approach to adoption of OERs rather than a top down approach (Nazeem, Natacha, and Reena). The three themes along with the contextual characteristics thus join to convey the significant pedagogical experiences of teachers who work with OERs and OEPs in the Mauritian context. The narratives illustrated stories of teachers' professional

lives which included OERs; those who work with OERs showed that they do not work with OERs exclusively but use them alongside their pedagogy by being mindful of immediacy of the needs, preoccupied by the challenges and demands of their own contexts.

Teachers show they have a choice and working with OERs also means deciding to include them in possible solution options. This is the case of Aartee and the case of Shana who are working in a marginalised area and engage with OERs using songs to motivate learners. Therefore, working with OERs, does not imply engaging with exclusive OER lessons or activity, it is instead the consequence of reflection in a context. In general, they form part of the teacher's cloud of ideas or repertoire of possibilities that they will then look up to, depending on what they feel is appropriate.

### **7.3 What these experiences reveal about teaching and learning or pedagogy in the current context**

What do these experiences reveal? - From the lens of commonplaces (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000)

Narratives focus on meanings that people ascribe to their experiences, provide an 'insight that befits the complexity of human lives' (Josselson, 2006, p, 4) and contribute significantly in understanding human experience in social, historical and cultural settings. From an empirical point of view, more stories and truths were needed to develop insight into the experiences of teachers who work with OERs (chapter 2 and 3). Selwyn (2011) suggested rare stories need to be told for new knowledge to emerge whilst in OERs, we need more truths and real situations from the experiences of the south (OER Conference, 2018; Adams, 2018; Auckloo, 2018a, c; Sallah, 2018). Therefore, as a response mainly to the second research question and to complement the findings, I here discuss the revelations based on experiences of participants in Mauritius which have been analysed through the lens of commonplaces or temporality, sociality and place as context in chapter 6. The sections below thus offer a discursive tone about what teaching and learning means and reveal about teachers who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context. These stories contribute towards a rich, authentic and significant picture of OERs in current Mauritian context.

### 7.3.1 Temporality

The findings in chapter 6, reveal that there are different ways in which teachers who work with OERs conceptualise their notion of time or temporality. Teaching in the current times is characterised by stories and events about teaching in our current context. These emphasise the story of people who produce accounts of themselves that are ‘storied’ in the form of stories/narratives (Goodson, 2013). The narratives of Beatrice and June (6.2) analysed through the lens of temporality indicate that their world of teaching and learning is characterised by several events and considerations happening at a point in time. Their world is also influenced by their past experiences which in turn influence their current approaches to teaching and learning and also influence their relationships with students (6.2.1, 6.2.2).

The narratives of Beatrice and June reveal that time is multi-temporal, situated and interpreted within a context. Time can be physical/temporal for June when she indicates she means business from 8 to 2 30 hrs (6.2.2) but it can also be viewed as differently from a more general perspective or the past as times in her life when she acknowledges she sees things the way she does today as a consequence of the past job or school times. Time is also situated and contextual as indicated by Beatrice (6.2.1) when she elucidates that teachers in the current times are at risk and that teachers in the past enjoyed a much better image.

The analysis of narratives confirms the view of Connelly and Clandinin (2006) in that ‘temporality’ allows teachers to relive experiences as they (as in the case of Beatrice and June) navigate through events, time and they also reflect on their experience that occur across times. Temporality leads us to discuss in our current times, ICT tools take a prominent role in pedagogy. It appears as a characteristic of teaching today where use of personal digital tools including apps, blogs, and social media become regular features in education. Teachers’ concerns about the future of students also lead them to determine the distance between what is private and professional. So teachers like June mean business and do not entertain personal questions (6.2.2). It is in a way her personal style to ensure classroom management techniques with a focus on outcomes.

Temporality also indicates the incoherence in our times: June questions the educational expectations and competence of stakeholders from the Ministry when she sees no coherence when students are allowed to choose any incoherent subject at A’ Level thus indicating the contradiction between espoused expectations in education and what it is in practice. In our times, they want their voices to be heard, for their voices matter especially as they experience

how the incoherence in the system affects pedagogy and the classroom climate. It matches Kneyber's (2014) idea of flipping the education promoting caution that needs to be addressed when associating ICT in education (Bates, 2011; Selwyn, 2011; Hargreaves, 2003; Gaible and Burns, 2005) (chapter 2).

In the current times, therefore, the position of teachers can be difficult especially when expectations from the teachers are not clearly defined. This can leave them feel frustrated. Matters complicate when regulatory bodies are not coherent or supportive of passionate teachers who are ready to go out of their way to innovate (chapter 5, Part 1). These illustrate how participants contour the system to negotiate their revised notions of what it means to work in a teaching and learning environment today. They then become the designers of their own pedagogy and construct their own realities and stories. These stories in which they live today indicate the multiple meanings that can be derived from teachers who work with OERs today.

### 7.3.2 Sociality

Teachers' experiences viewed from the lens of sociality (Connelly and Clandinin 2006) reveal a rich insight into the context that influences teaching and learning today. Sociality is tantamount to context and this sociality is influenced by social structures, society, media, politics, families, school based and personal events, interactions between people working in these locations among others. The narratives reveal that sociality as context is laden with significantly rich experiences for teachers like Aartee and Shalinee living in a multicultural society (6.3.1, 6.3.2).

The concept of 'Boundaries' emerge from the analysis of narratives of Aartee and Shalinee who gave no predetermined strict personal or professional boundaries as teachers. What is social can also be personal and can also be professional. As shown in section 6.3, teachers take time out of their personal and social lives to think about issues pertinent to their professional lives especially as they talk about lessons and look for resources for example. These issues are often characterised by the sociality of learners such as their profile or locality in which they work. In the case of Aartee, this badly affected her as she learnt to struggle with the issues related to the death of a student (6.3.1). On the other side, the professional world of teachers blends with the societal world as in the case of Shalinee who attends community, cultural and religious events (6.3.2). For Aartee, boundaries are further transgressed as her curiosity and willingness to serve takes her to be a volunteer in the marginalised locality where students live and she gets to meet the parents too. Spaces and boundaries become blurred and at the same time buttress her role as a particular teacher who knows more about her audience after having met them in a different context. Her teaching is enriched as she attunes herself to their realities and looks for solutions to continue teaching. Sociality, from this perspective, then becomes a driving force and incentive that informs the way she does things. Participants' lives in Mauritius is not de-contextualised. Instead, context as sociality determines the decisions they make in teaching and learning including the decision to access and work based on the influence of OERs.

'Power' is another concept that shows the fragility of the teacher in a world where parents, and authority have more say, where it is easy to put pressure on teachers (section 6.3.2). When a parent becomes physically violent, attempts at intimidating a teacher (section 5.2.1.5; the case of Aartee) and accuses the latter of racism, it affects the teacher and adds to latter's load. On the other hand, teachers can subvert the pressure and in turn can teach students how to fight racism and violence in a world where stories from the media are loaded

with terrifying news. Teachers like Aartee and Shalinee are today more preoccupied in dealing with adolescents to ensure they become responsible citizens by avoiding violence and try their best to allow them to develop a culture of peace. It can be interpreted that they represent the unsung heroes whose stories or experiences of similar nature are not told, because the research agendas do not often seek to investigate the silences and prioritise their focus.

Sociality is also about understanding poverty-packed situations in sociocultural contexts and these mean the priorities shift to basic needs such as food and safety through motivational techniques rather than by working on education and syllabus agendas as a priority (6.3). Sociality is also enhanced when the local language is used by Shalinee as a socialising device and a privilege few would attempt.

An understanding derived from sociality reveals that sociality is about flexibility and understanding the contexts, respecting them and learning to work by negotiating related meanings on a day to day basis. These in turn influence teachers' ability to make choices about going online to look for resources or solutions (as in the case of Aartee).

### **7.3.3 Place**

Place as a lens (Clandinin and Connelly, 2007) is instrumental in enabling and/or disabling classroom pedagogies that incorporates teachers' choices about OERs. Section 6.4 lends itself to the discussion that context is a powerful determinant and catalyst to what will happen in the pedagogy of the classroom. It can be a catalyst or demotivating factor. I argue that Place as context can be physical, online and virtual and can be viewed differently by teachers who associate particular thoughts and feelings to it.

In section 6.4.2, the story of Natacha illustrates place as empowering and blends the home culture with the school culture. She also sees the school place as a melting pot and a preoccupation too for she tries to bring people together in one place – the school which then becomes the symbolical, physical representation of a place that unites cultures and ideas. She looks forward to coming to school every day for it brings her joy and a lot of positive experiences she shares in a very affectionate manner.

But sections 6.4 also illustrates how place can be dissuading and liberating and confirms teachers' need to connect (Siemens, 2004; 2005). This view is also linked to Lave and Wenger (1991; 2002) who believe in the idea of connecting, the need to share and discuss

in a community of practice for enrichment of teachers and for them to express their voices. This study offers the story of teachers, as they share experiences related to their informal and own ways of sharing their practices. These occur in a given place: place as context.

Physical places are often synonymous to the school environment (6.4.1, 2) but it can also be a physical place situated outside the school environment as in the case of Nazeem who has a learning factory and works with other teachers in a community of practitioners of OERs using ICT. Place of work can be enabling and a source of motivation leading Natacha to live her passion, dedicate more time, affection and walk the extra mile for the students. The exercise is perceived to be emotionally rewarding. The opposite is also true; for Nazeem sees the school as a hostile place having been a victim of oppression, discrimination, racism and punitive transfer. For him, it is a site where the teacher can be antagonised easily, where power and hierarchy suppress the powerless and struggling teacher.

The site of the community of practice is then shifted for Nazeem, who adopts his learning factory as site of power and he reverses the role of the powerful as the manager. He along with his colleagues devise and decide the pedagogies to be used. The new site of practice or the new context as place, is then the anti-school and is liberating. He thrives and even empowers other in the use of ICT and OERs. There, he invests his savings, time and commitment. His passions grow and he repeats the discoveries and exploration because he gets a sense of personal satisfaction upon new learning, new solutions and successful results.

This also leads to the idealisation of the virtual space which becomes the new site for the community of practice to thrive without being concerned about formal hierarchy. This new world can keep him busy all the time as he is always online and the world of Internet then becomes the new place to be and is tantamount to choice, freedom and the liberty to adapt, take, borrow and share. This leads me to concur also with Turvey (2013) in redeeming the teacher as the toolmaker but in a context (Pachler and Turvey, 2018) where they have power or where the 'human' agent thrives (Lave and Wenger, 2002).

### 7.3.4 Significance of commonplaces

In the above section, context as analysed through the lens of commonplaces is vibrant, dynamic and contributes to understandings in education in Mauritius today. It comprises the following characteristics:

- Context is dynamic and an appropriate ‘place/space’ to examine how the global (macro and meso structures) blends with the local (silent voices). The story of Aartee (6.3.1) blends the micro, the meso and the macro structures where the classroom issues are also societal and of national concern.
- Context is complex and multi-layered especially as depicted in temporality, sociality and place and through the realities experienced by Nazeem in Chapter 5 and in his narrative in chapter 6.
- Context as a complex grouping of ideas, thoughts, beliefs, aspirations and events, practices, language situations blended with sociocultural and socio-political climate(s). Section 6.4.1 indicates the difficulties encountered and the emotional labour a teacher can experience while section 6.3.2 indicates how blending with the culture and language of the people is meaningful to her in a given context.
- Context is also a system that blends the personal, professional and social spheres in the lives of participants (6.3).
- Context is non static for it resonates with the lives of participants who are themselves evolving, experimenting and experiencing with their ‘selves’ in particular ‘non-static’ and evolving systems – participants are narrating in context at a point in time and their narratives are current and authentic.
- Context can thus be interpreted as multi-axial, colourful and eventful; It can be read through multiple perspectives such as a core component in the lives of participants as well as a lens for analysis (e.g. commonplaces as context). These are indicated section one in chapter 5 and chapter 6 respectively. This study offers the view that contexts comprise of narratives which have multiple layers and are functional.

The vibrant and dynamic nature of context is also in line with the views expressed in chapter 2, where the case included making representations of voices from the south, in order to understand the realities of teachers from the south. In line with the methodological lens adopted in chapter 3, the intention was to make this representation through an analysis of narratives of teachers; this included a description of their thoughts, feelings and actions as

we learnt more about what their routine looks like (Auckloo, 2018a). It also supported the concerns of researchers such as Wolfenden et al. (2017) and Sallah (2018) looking for human agents in the midst of living with the OER movement rather than resting on the technical approach of OERs as questioned by Bell (2002). These confirm that context foregrounds the practitioners' knowing, their world view and experiences (Samuel 2009; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000); where narrative capital of participants (Goodson, 2013) in the Mauritian context contribute to the picture of what can be learnt from the experience of teachers who work with OERs in the Mauritian context.

#### **7.4 Summary and forward thinking**

The aim of the study was to investigate the experiences of teachers who are familiar with OERs in the current Mauritian context. In this chapter I have interpreted and discussed the significance of the two main research questions based on the findings in chapters 5 and 6 of this study indicating the influences of OERs in participants' lives. These points as indicated in the first part of this chapter illustrate the complexity of the experiences which leads to an understanding that pedagogy and context are both complex and dynamic. The understanding from these is significant to further the discussion and in informing the framework for pedagogy in context. This is elaborated on further in chapter 8.

## **8.0 Chapter 8: Conclusion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This thesis examined the pedagogical experiences of teachers who are familiar with and who are working with OERs in the Mauritian context. In chapter 7, the discussion in relation to the first two research questions and the literature review was examined. In this chapter I extend the discussion using the theoretical lens of technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra and Koehler, 2006) in the light of the third research question namely, ‘How a model of pedagogy in context could be developed’.

This chapter builds on the discussion of the findings in chapter 7 and

- Considers the contribution in relation to the gaps identified i.e. TPACK and voices from the south in the field of OERs
- Discusses the novelty in relation to the methodology
- Discusses the development of a framework of pedagogy in context, in line with the third research question
- Highlights the implications of this research for teachers using OERs
- Situates the generalisability and limitations of the study
- Offers a reflection on the relevance and recommendations of the study as a whole

The first section in this chapter indicates how the conclusions from chapter 7 lead to the proposition of the contributions and insights that can be derived for a model of pedagogy in context. The challenges and limitations of the study as well as key recommendations are also discussed. Finally I end the chapter with an examination of my own reflexive stance as a consequence of my engagement with the study. I describe the contributions and insight for my own professional development.

### **8.2 Contribution to knowledge: from existing knowledge and gaps to possibilities for new knowledge**

#### **Towards a model of pedagogy in context**

Research question 3: How could a model of pedagogy in context be developed?

The key contribution of this thesis is the recognition that unless context as subjectively lived and experienced by teachers into consideration, TPACK as an education model will be

misinterpreted by professionals in education. The thesis proposes the emergence of a framework of pedagogy in context that acknowledges the value of context at the centre of teachers' pedagogy.

The review of the literature in chapter 2 has established that there are limitations in the way OERs and OEPs are conceptualised; in the way context is considered as a background or as linear rather than as active agency, and in the way that pedagogy is simplified in OERs. An analysis of the TPACK model in Chapter 2, also indicated that 'context' has so far been underrepresented in the model and more research was needed in this area (Kelly, 2010; Rosenberg and Koehler, 2015) even if (TPACK) is commonly considered as a framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century teaching and learning. The chapter also critiqued the underrepresentation of the voices from the global south.

Through the discussions that follow, this thesis contributes to knowledge in the following ways; from a theoretical stand point, it proposes the reinforcement of context in the use of OERs and in conceptualising TPACK as a model which integrates pedagogy and ICT.

The study uses a methodological approach of drawing from the narratives of participants and examining their experiences using the lens of commonplaces. Used as a vehicle to reach at the findings, the narrative inquiry approach has enabled an authentic understanding derived from the lives of participants in Mauritius whose professional lives are rich with contextual elements that so far were less represented (chapter 5, 6).

Therefore, this study adds to knowledge by developing insights for a model of pedagogy in context based on the understandings derived from afore said analysis. I elaborate on these in the subsequent sections where I examine contributions towards the importance of context as complex, limitations of TPACK, complexity of teachers' lives and pedagogical approaches as voices from Mauritius or as part of the global south.

### **8.2.1 Importance of context and what this research indicates**

The underrepresentation of voices from the global south in the field of OERs was highlighted in chapter 2 (section 2.6) and this study instead proposed a different and new view by describing the experiences of teachers situated in Mauritius as part of the Global south. Mauritius as context offered a unique and dynamic educational landscape as an Island state in the Indian Ocean, related to African, Indian Diaspora and international community. The findings from chapters 5 and 6 and related discussions in chapter 7, add novel insight into

the ways in which participants of an island state like Mauritius, conceptualise and value OERs in the field of teacher education rather than simply borrowing from existing external models. It is timely, especially in the light of the national public recognition, to establish a national policy on OERs as indicated at the e-Learning Conference (2017). This would also support regulatory bodies to establish the future, locally and internationally in the OER movement and teacher education.

As I discuss in the next section, this thesis argues that context is not only background or only time or place or historicity, but it is vibrant, dynamic and contributes to understandings in education. The three themes in chapter 5 (part 2 2) are occurrences and truths that respond to the initial research questions within the context in the Mauritian context (Part 1) and these truths illustrated how teachers who work with OERs as a community of practice (online and in person) experience pedagogy today (Lave and Wenger, 1991; 2002) and what happens in their teaching and learning world. Chapter 6 further analysed context through a different lens, enabling us to read through the realities from the perspectives of teachers today. This research thus values the sense of agency through the ‘Lived experiences of teachers’ (Selwyn, 2011) as narrative capital of participants in chapter 6 through the narratives of 6 teachers.

In moving towards a model of pedagogy in context, (Research question 3) therefore, the above understanding is key, for it establishes that, since, the experience of teachers with OEPs reveal deep understandings about pedagogy in context, context ought to play a more prominent role for a better understanding of OERs/OEPs and prior to even proposing a model of pedagogy in context (Chapter 5).

In the light of the pertinence of the findings from chapters 5 and 6, described in chapter 7, while analysing the TPACK model (see next section also) , what is proposed therefore, is to see context from the following perspectives: sociocultural, socioeconomic, socio-political and ‘personal social’. I here critique the idea of simplifying context since the occurrences in relation to OERs/OEPs (three themes: chapter 5) occur as a result of working with OERs. This happens in a context which offers opportunities for practice that involves OERs as well as challenges which can inhibit its growth. Building on this perspective, this study thus offers a sociocultural lens that is essentially diverse, dynamic and evolving, multi layered and inherently cultural. This is evidenced by the ways in which context is described in chapter 6 and discussed in chapter 7 (section 7.3.4); temporality, sociality and place offer separately unique but complementary approach to the diverse ways in which their

experiences and context can be viewed. Place, for instance is varied, complex and so is context; the related experiences which occur therein cannot be dissociated from place and the environment. Similarly, sociality influences practice with OERs for teachers interact in the way they do because they experience living in a particular social context in the way they do; temporality adds meaning and can either prompt or discourage practice with OERs at a given point in time. These three components therefore capture the essence of what teachers do (practice with OERs in context); why they do it the way they do (because they are influenced by the contextual needs and demands) and what can be learnt from what they do with OERs (rich authentic understandings/insights).

These lead us to understand that each individual's interpretation of context is unique, subjective and evolving, prospective or retrospective or multi-perspective. One's sociocultural context (6.2, 6.3) and view of a situation and position in teaching and learning can be at a time informed from a political and socioeconomic or sociocultural perspective.

### **What this research offers**

In the field of OERs and OEPs, therefore, this study suggests that practices with OERs are not de-contextualised and resists simplification of context for it limits our understandings and underpinnings of a phenomenon which in this case is 'experience'. This research valorises local knowledge in the field of OERs and OEPs in an international context and offers the view that OEPs include users' negotiations with pedagogical issues, regulatory bodies as well as macro implications such as societal, cultural, political and economic issues.

### **8.2.2 Prospects for contribution of 'context' to TPACK in context**

In section 2.8, TPACK (Shulman, 1986;1987; Mishra and Koehlers, 2006) recognises 'context' as concept within the model for learning and teaching using technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but the elaboration is limited as it prioritises the dynamics between Pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and technological knowledge. But if TPACK as a model of learning that has been widely researched and acknowledged, simplifies 'CONTEXT', then we are underestimating that the value of all that is meaningful to individual practitioners for whom context matters, where the latter informs the reasons and ways they do things the way they do. Although TPACK is meant to produce effective teaching through the use of technology, which depends on 'skilful manoeuvre by skilful teachers (Koehlers and Mishra, 2009), still very little is said about which conditions contribute to make teachers skilful

within a context. There is even little understanding as to whether these conditions matter and if they could possibly influence the implementation of the proposed model. In the light of the arguments in this study (chapter 7 and section above) we conclude that teachers' engagement with OERs and OEPs (inclusive of technology in Education) are not de-contextualised and that practice with OERs and OEPs is relative, subjective and complex. To clarify the assumptions of context in TPACK it is proposed that context be reconsidered alongside with TPACK as follows:

**Context - Time and TPACK** – As indicated in section 7.2, teachers' context is not static over time and includes past, present and future influences (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). An understanding of temporality as context contributes towards the bigger picture of context to TPACK since the use of ICT in education is also related to 'Times' in the life of a teacher which in itself is evolutionary, informed by the past and the foreseeable or future events. Context, like TPACK, is dynamic and when linked to temporality creates greater awareness of the nuances.

**Context - Sociality and TPACK** – sociality as context – Teacher's lives are experiences lived in a context which is personally, professionally, socially, politically and economically influenced. They see things as consequences of their micro, meso and macro experiences including the influence of socio-political, cultural and economic matters that penetrate their classes (part 1, in chapter 5, and chapter 6). These lead them to value, see, feel and do things the way they do (part 2 in chapter 5). Their inclination to use technology and pedagogy are linked to the societal realities which also determine their judgement and pedagogical choices. Technology therefore is not to be considered as an exclusive agenda of policy makers in want of advancing a technology agenda. The critique towards 'technological determinism' is therefore maintained (Selwyn, 2011) in critiquing an overstatement of anticipated promise of changing education in many contexts.

**Context – place and TPACK** – Teachers' contexts in terms of place are intertwined with sociocultural aspects of their personal and professional lives (Section 6.4, 7.3). Place is not static for its meaning is imbued with the social, the personal, the macro, micro and meso structures. Physical and virtual notions of place comprise of own spaces, formal and informal places which also determine teachers' relationships with technology in education. Place can be either liberating or limiting for the development of technology in education and depends on trust, comfort and control level of teachers as well as the type of environment. Place as

context, therefore adds a new dimension to TPACK indicating it can influence the use of ICT and OERs.

Context, therefore inclusive of temporality, sociality and place, can add meaning to TPACK in understanding what happens in Pedagogy in our current context. It also confirms the importance of the narratives in allowing the views of teachers to emerge. The next section further builds the argument on TPACK as the main theoretical lens.

### **8.2.3 Implications for the use of ICT**

From the findings in ‘Technology in Education’ in Chapter 5, teachers recognise that technology could also be a distraction in classrooms (Kulkulsa-Hulme et al., 2009) and heavily criticise the tablet project of the Ministry as being an investment in education that is rarely if at all used. Poor management of resources was also questioned and inadequate follow up from regulatory bodies (Chapter 5) prevented the confident use of ICT enabled technologies in education.

I here agree with the view that ICT should be used in ways in which it is integrated, assessed and focused on school-based activities and improves teacher quality (Moon and Mayes, 1995; Moon et al., 2007). I also relate to the view that spending in ICT does not equate to improved performance more so when the phenomenon has not been sufficiently explored in the Mauritian context. I also agree with Selwyn (2011) in redeeming the position of the teacher who is often blamed when technology fails to be used ‘effectively’ while the reality is that their silences demand more investigation. The blame is representative of the external urge to force an internalisation of technologies through the process of policy and external logic (Nye, 2007).

In the context of this research therefore, light has been shed on how teachers who are familiar with OERs integrate ICT in teaching and learning although the main focus was not to evaluate the validity of ICT in Education. I also accord with Selwyn (2015) in that technology is not the ‘ready solution to existing educational problems’ (Selwyn, 2011, p.33) and Moon (2010) in that in the African context we need an integrated resource and support approach. This probes for further research in the Mauritian context too and implies that in future, adequate management of resources and training will have to be reconsidered.

This thesis also consolidates knowledge and stories as obtained from teachers who work with OERs and OEPs. Instead of finding teachers at the far end of the educational structure,

perpetuating dominating agendas, voices of policy protagonists or even research from the north in the field of OERs, this study places the stories of teachers at the heart of what is happening in pedagogy using ICT in the Mauritian context. ICT is enabling in relation to OERs and education (5.3, 5.4) but school environment can limit its reach too (6.4), especially due to administrative and logistic negligence. The dynamic TPACK model in action needs reconsideration in changing times and in dynamic contexts.

#### **8.2.4 Complexity of teachers' lives**

The study offers the view that participants' lives are complex and puts them at the heart of a dynamic society while acknowledging that their experiences in a context contribute to make them do things the way they do (sections 7.2-7.3). It is important to emphasise this complexity as it is related to the decisions they make. For instance, teachers may have a set of resources including OERs in their repertoires, as well as clouds of ideas, events and circumstances around their lives. Teachers can then select or not from this repertoire of OERs and may decide to use a particular strategy at a point in time, depending on the contextual demands. These clouds or banks of OERs are themselves evolving and can be perceived to be more or less significant at a time, depending on the circumstances in a teacher's life. Things are always happening in the lives of teachers and denying these understandings in research would mean denying an understanding of the importance of how teachers function by being mindful of what happens in a context (Part 1, chapter 5). Teachers' lives are eventful and occasioned by the contextual elements in their lives. It relates to Siemens' nodes of interaction (2005), illustrating how teachers currently feel the connections around them and how they connect to things, issues, society around them.

##### **A creative response**

Given the complexity of teachers' lives, their context and the complexity of pedagogical approaches perhaps what would be relevant in today's times is not just a recognition that context matters. What would be more useful is perhaps a firmer stance towards their unique and creative responses to teaching and learning. I here join the point of view of Kneyber (2014) in that the voices of teachers should be more represented so we know whether they are able to gain confidence and therefore transfer knowledge and expertise or even take risks in other relevant contexts/situations.

This leads us to further value Russell's model (1996) in that he proposes the use of innovation and the development of new skills but adds the creative application to 'other' and new contexts. A creative response is also advocated by Bates (2010) and Loveless (2003, 2012). Given that the current study values contextual knowledge gained from teachers and recognises their repertoire and consideration as key assets to teachers, perhaps it would be valuable to re-give the power to teachers in the form of trust so that they can teach creatively. Obviating teachers' ability to make informed choices, giving them the confidence and trust they need to teach the way they need by being mindful of the context, and engaging creatively with OERs and OEPs, would then equate to learning from teachers. This is equated to the adoption of a bottom-up approach or individual champion based approach (Wolfenden et al, 2017) instead of a policy driven top down approach that teachers mistrust (Chapter 5). Creativity and practice with OERs are arguably non-static but relate to a subjectively driven approach: As observed from the narratives of teachers, it is ideally free from positivist/objective judgement from quarters, such as MOE or stakeholders or inspectors (chapter 6). A creative response would therefore elude antagonistic bonds with regulatory bodies or current form of supervision in favour of a form of freedom users prefer (Nazeem and Shaloney's case – illustrating lack of support from Regulatory bodies).

### **8.2.5 Pedagogy and OERs and OEPs**

As indicated in Chapter 2, the critique that pedagogical dimensions of OERs have been evasive are acknowledged (Atkins et al., 2007; Wiley and Gurrell, 2009) and so is the critique about the emphasis on online design and implementation issues in the African context (Foote 2005; COL). Further, even if the view of Butcher (2011) recognises the pedagogical dimension of OERs, the statements so far focused too much on the Internet enabled or online OERs, whereas the practices at non-online modes, or classroom level have been less represented. This study illustrated more such related practices and described three themes (chapter 5) including their teaching techniques and more about the pedagogical stances of teachers who are engaged with OERs and OEPs, thus drawing from their professional lives.

This thesis contributes to the pedagogical dimension in teaching and learning using OERs by investigating in the little OERs sites such as those described through the individual narratives. It adds insight in teacher education and OERs and OEPs while recognising the complexity of the term pedagogy itself (Gore, 1993). It further supports the idea of Rennie and Weller (Ibid) as well as Perraton (2010) in investigating into 'Little OERs' or small sites

of success stories of OEPs (Canole, 2010) while confirming that the pedagogy of teachers who work with OERs is not exclusively about using OERs (section 7.2).

This view therefore questions the reliability on a singular school of thought or pedagogical theory given the uniqueness of teachers' dispositions, choices and decisions themselves are dynamic. This leads me to agree with Lam and Kember (2006) who state that beliefs and practices in teaching and learning are not static and uncovering dispositions and assumptions become important. Teachers create their own nodes through sociality (chapter 6) and depend on online sources for various reasons, thus creating their own nodes, (Connectivism: Siemens 2004:2005) and determining their own dynamic pedagogy and developing their own community of practice.

The pedagogical approaches with regards to OEPs today are also embedded with practices that lean on an international perspective of OERs, given they access Internet, and free resources and apps. As indicated in chapters 5 and 7, teachers enjoy a sense of mastery and freedom when it comes to choosing, designing or adapting their own OERs. It allows them to be creative, keeps them connected and positive as they address the challenges in the system (Shaloney, Nazeem). A ripple effect is also created if their works are valued either at local or international level as illustrated by Nazeem and Natacha. This leads us to understand that international valorisation is key to repetition of use of OERs and determine teachers' disposition for they then feel valued and part of a bigger community that recognises their effort.

As indicated in section 7.2.1, and chapter 2, the view of Lave and Wenger (1991, 2002) about CoP is reiterated and is here furthered since school climates can promote or demote sharing and in that sharing is physical but also online (section 7.3). From this perspective, Siemens' (2005) node system can be extended to that of practitioners who interrelate and interconnect not only online but face to face also in favour of building a community of practice. Further research would however be needed to examine the implications and considerations of CoP in the context of OEPs.

This view leads to a recognition of Siemens (2004;2005) and Kop's and Hill's (2008) theory of connectivism as the act of constructing together, and 'connecting' with the nodes as a characteristic of the current context. It implies that the way teachers connect today increasingly includes online options facilitated by the Internet. I also propose that the field of connectivism be extended to connecting to people including the learner; for this study

shows the inter-connected nature of learning in our age including in person and online approaches facilitated by the Internet which have revolutionised how people connect to each other. It is also an argument in favour of the inter-reliance of areas and disciplines that are mutually enriching as teachers negotiate, discover, explore and connect to situations events, ideas for their own professional development and for practice. These humane interactions almost determine their later actions leading them to act, resist, connect, to build or disconnect to certain aspects of their approach.

The sections above discussed the contributions to knowledge from a theoretical lens and confirmed the insights with regards to context, TPACK, complexity of teachers' lives and pedagogy. The next section discusses the study in the light of methodological perspective and further reinforces the contribution of the study. This will lead to the proposition of a model which integrates the discussions from this chapter.

### **8.3 Insights gained from a methodological perspective**

Using a narrative inquiry approach led to the examination of participants' experiences and a representation of their narratives which are not exclusively related to OERs but which include OERs. As a researcher, I am aware that a different approach and methodology for example a critical or a positivist stance would have provided a different way of investigating, interpreting and contributing to the field. However, one novelty and demarcation of this thesis is that the lives of teachers who are familiar with OERs in Mauritius, have been investigated using a narrative inquiry because their experiences as a whole and inclusive of OERs matter. I now discuss these contributions in the next section.

#### **8.3.1 Narrative Inquiry and OERs**

In chapter 3, I explained the merits of using a qualitative and narrative approach in the field of OERs, for so far, little insight was perceptible into the stories and pedagogies of teachers who are familiar with OERs. Recent conferences gathering researchers from Africa, the East and the west such as e-Learning Africa (2017), DETA (2017) and OER18 Conference (2018), also confirmed the lack of narrative inquiry approach in the OER movement. This study offers a fresh lens and brings newness, adds value and contributes to the field OERs and narrative methodologies that is based on the narrative analysis. The complementary chapters 5 and 6 give a new reading based on the stories of teachers who work with OERs in the current context in a way that was underrepresented so far. Commonplaces through

temporality, sociality and place illustrates the contributions that this approach could bring to the field while deepening the understandings from the lived experiences of teachers. This could not have been obtained using a traditional qualitative approach that could focus only on a thematic analysis. From a methodological stand point therefore, the study uses the vehicle of narrative inquiry approach compared to other non-narrative approaches in this particular context.

Narrative inquiry in this study also redeemed the narratives of the teacher, thus reclaiming the position that that teacher commands (Kneyber, 2014). So, instead of being at a receiving end, we here learn from the teachers' stories, tribulations and challenges.

Further, although there has been research about OERs in the Mauritian landscape, (Santally, 2011; Gunness, 2012), and there were attempts to use authentic stories or success stories from the Mauritian context (Gokhool-Ramdoo, 2014; OER Africa, 2014) still narrative inquiry in the field OERs had not been explored. The newness in this study therefore also lies in using narrative inquiry in the Mauritian context in the field of OERs. The insights thereof include the emergence of particular new contextual knowledge based on the use of narrative inquiry in the Mauritian context and situated in part of the global south.

Understandings from the above sections have been instrumental for the framework of pedagogy in context that I propose in the next section.

## 8.4 A Framework of pedagogy in context

Initially, the third research question was about understanding how a Model of Pedagogy in context could possibly evolve. As the study evolved, however, the reflections led to an understanding of the term 'Framework' rather than a 'model' as for to me it resonates more with a flexible approach rather than a static approach rendered by the term 'model'. I also put forward the view that it is very limiting at this point, to suggest a definite 'Framework of pedagogy in context' after having completed only a single in-depth study. Instead, what I propose is therefore insights that could inform a foreseeable 'framework of pedagogy' in context.

What I propose below therefore are insights based on my findings, analysis and conclusion of how teachers function today. The suggestion is the insights gained for the development and emergence of an initial draft conceptual framework that is essentially dynamic and evolving given the dynamism of contexts, the criticism on TPACK, the complexity of teachers' lives and the evolving pedagogical practices enabled by a methodological narrative analysis.

The next section now explains the main steps towards the conceptualisation and knowledge insights gained to develop the proposed framework. While two main diagrams show its evolution below, the progressive diagrams are annexed as figures 6 to 10.

**Step 1:** I value and recognise the contribution of commonplaces as a framework for narrative inquiry that adds insight to the study investigating the experience of participants who are familiar with OERs.

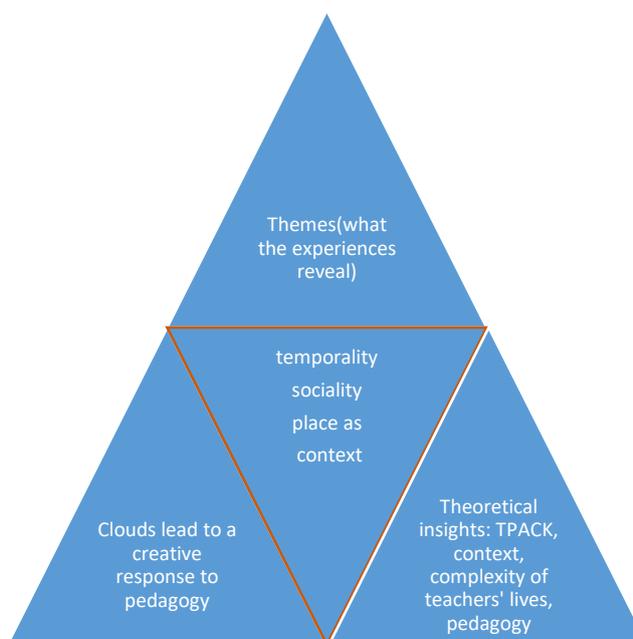
**Step 2:** I recognise that the lives of participants who are familiar with OERs are complex, and they connect to a bank of ideas depending on their needs (figure 6 in appendix). The bank of ideas can be linked to OERs.

**Step 3:** Coming to terms with the main thrusts, I recognise that the findings related to OERs lead to a novel understanding along with the theoretical lens used in this study. (See figure 9 in appendix).

**Step 4:** I recognise that there could be insights gained from a conceptualisation of pedagogy that is complex and dynamic and that is mindful of context (figure 10 in appendix). This includes elements of context as elaborated through 'commonplaces'.

**Step 5:** I propose a framework of pedagogy in context with ‘context’ at the centre since it informs and also determines other concepts in the triangular model.

**Step 6:** I recognise knowledge gained from this study contribute towards the insights for a framework of pedagogy in context. This shows context as temporality, sociality and place at the centre of pedagogical interactions for they informed the clouds of ideas, themes, and the TPACK model in this study as illustrated in the figure below:



**Figure 5: Insights for a framework of pedagogy in context - A triangular model**

## **8.5 Implications of the study and future research**

This research revealed significant insights into the lives of teachers who are working with OERs and who are located in Mauritius in the global south area. It also proposed an emerging framework for integration of context-based dynamic pedagogy to TPACK thus foregrounding context rather than just technology, pedagogy and content knowledge. Further bearings of this study are multiple as illustrated below.

Firstly, this study proposed to revisit TPACK model that for so long has focused on an unelaborated view of context within this framework (see chapter 2). Further research is still needed that would shed light on other contexts to gain more insight.

This study also implies that the views and experiences with OERs and OEPs from the global south matter in developing a framework, in advancing policy and in developing understandings about what happens in the current context in relation to OERs. Teachers' lives are laden with a complexity of events and circumstances in their lives which determine how they do what they do.

A more liberal rather than restrictive view of technology is also suggested. While I do concur with Selwyn (2011, 2015) in resisting the idea of technological determinism, I also agree that technology supports pedagogies of teachers who work with OERs and OEPs today but in ways that are contextually relevant. This lens to TPACK is thus proposed. Further areas of study are proposed below.

### **Further research in pedagogy**

In addition to the above and in the light of the current study which led to a contextual view of pedagogy in the context of OERs and OEPs in our age, perhaps what would need to be further investigated are;

- a. connectivism in our age (Siemens, 2005) in relation to an approach of evolutive and dynamic pedagogy and in relation to the ways teachers engage with OERs and connect to communities;
- b. the relationship between connectivism and communities of practice in our age
- c. a creative response to teaching and learning while engaging with OERs

- d. a contextual approach to meanings of pedagogy in our age
- e. furthering the understanding about the emergence of a framework to examine the relationship between a contextual approach to pedagogy and OERs and TPACK.

## **8.6 Relevance and recommendations**

### **8.6.1 Policy, and regulatory bodies involved with OERs**

Based on the realities of the Mauritian context and the budding area of research in OERs in the Mauritian context, this small-scale study serves as a grounding for knowledge about OERs in the Mauritian context, and adds insight in the field of OERs. Given the slow process of policy and inadequacy of research in the field in the Mauritian context, it is hoped that this study will not only support general national policy about copyright and creative commons licence or the public good but that it will also support tertiary institutions in valuing grass root or micro OER projects with more pedagogical insights. This is crucial prior to its institutionalisation of OERs and national accreditation of OERs that influences policy (Bissell, 2009) by learning from the experiences of teachers in the Mauritian context.

A further recommendation implies the ability of Mauritian regulatory bodies to redeem the trust and confidence of teachers, for instance, rewarding and valorisation of their professional practice that includes OERs. It suggests that stakeholders adopt a more collaborative stance with teachers who expressed their disillusionment because of the harsh but silenced realities of our times.

### **8.6.2 Research in the field of pedagogy OERs and TPACK**

This research is also necessary for it relates to a theoretical gap in translating OERs to OEPs as experienced by teachers (Wolfenden, 2010; Keats 2003) and where little is known about the pedagogy when using OERs.

While it has been relatively easy to explicate the why of technology in teacher education, teaching and learning from a Euro-centric perspective or predominantly by a TPACK theory, little has been explicated as to the pedagogies as experienced by teachers and the context in which the adoption takes place. It is an overt expectation that further studies will shed more light with regard to how TPACK as a model can be further informed through the pedagogy of teachers who are familiar with OERs. These will give more insight into the contextual and theoretical dimensions informing research in TPACK and OERs.

### **8.6.3 For methodology and research in OERs and TPACK in contexts**

So far, a large-scale comprehensive examination of the development of OER and how teachers use them in Mauritius have not been done in teacher education. Instead appropriation of models is becoming a more recurrent feature without necessarily weighing the influences on the perceptions of those who matter a lot: Practitioners. From a methodological perspective, therefore and in line with what Bruner (1990), Samuel (2009), Goodson (2013), Clandinin and Connole (2000) recommend, I concur with the view that experiences and stories of teachers need to be analysed in a view to provide a contextual and meaningful reading of what happens in their lives. It is expected the current insight gained from this study will contribute to knowledge and meaning-making in the field of OERs, and TPACK given the lack of research using narrative inquiry in this field.

### **8.7 Generalisability and limitations of the study**

Bassey (1981) suggests that we should be less bothered about generalisations and be less prescriptive for the teachers. He suggests that if studies carried out are systematic and critical and the aim is to improve education and can be relatable and if the study extends the boundaries of knowledge ‘then they are valid forms of educational research’. He adds that pedagogic research should avoid the claim of generalisations and instead ‘should actively encourage the descriptive and evaluative study of single pedagogic events. In this way, pedagogic research will continue to improve pedagogic practice’ (p.87).

I concur with the above and also relate to the view that ‘Open’ generalisations are more useful in pedagogic practice and that single events are a more profitable form of research where the merits of single events do not rest on whether it is generalisable or not but has more value when a teacher who reads it can relate to his or her own teaching (Bassey, 1981. p. 73). This view is also shared by Ellet (2011) who concurs that more stories need to be told describing why teachers stay in the profession rather than why they leave the profession. Bassey (1981) also suggests that ‘perhaps the thorough study of single events may be more valuable than the extraction of common factors from a series of single events’ (p.84).

In the light of the above therefore, I resist views of generalisation for it is not my purpose to present one generalisable model or truth. Instead, I opt for a truth that has the merits of bringing forward understandings and knowledge from the 14 participants who work with

OERs in Mauritius situated in the global south and in the light of the insights gained for a framework of pedagogy in context.

The limitation includes the reach and extent of the study for it is bounded by restricting factors such as time and scope that this study could contain. The practical considerations also led to sieving of narratives for deeper rather than larger representations of experiences. With regards to the 'framework of pedagogy in context', although insights have been gained, and these informed understandings related to OERs and TPACK in context, as a researcher I cannot claim to confirm or generalise any framework. More research is still needed to generate further understandings about 'pedagogy in context'. At present, what would perhaps be valuable is a balanced view while considering TPACK rather than adopt a common universal and generalisable framework.

As a researcher, I also declare that I am not neutral but through the process I learnt, I practiced sieving of my own biases and assumptions as an insider researcher and as an interpretivist. As a way to negotiate this process, the practice of 'bridling' (Ellet, 2011) or bracketing helped to inform my reflexive stance as a narrative inquirer. It allowed me to develop greater awareness of my positioning and challenges experienced. Further challenges and insights related to my personal stance as a researcher gained, are highlighted in the next section.

## **8.8 Insights gained and relevance for my professional practice**

From my professional practice stand, the findings from this research add to academic positioning and perspective. Essentially working in the field since 2009, through this study I have discovered new and broader dimensions such as the limitations of models, the challenges faced by teachers in pedagogical initiatives in our context, as well as the pertinence of OERs, OEPs, technology and context in Education. These truths and stories lead me now to adopt a less passionate perspective to OERs for there are multiple realities. These include the view that teachers are not driven by OERs first but by context first, that OERs are peripheral and influential in many cases. This understanding would not have been reached, if I had not done the study.

It also adds to my view of exploring more teacher-generated knowledge rather than adopting a dominant biased conceptualisation of OERs, north-literature dominant view of TPACK

model or a dominant methodology of research in OERs. Teacher knowledge from the local context has allowed me to gain deeper insight in the way I view things now.

This study has been instrumental in re-informing and educating me about how I could learn, unlearn what I knew, re-learn from the views of others by keeping a more open outlook on new knowledge coming from different quarters. It allowed me to deconstruct some notions of OERs and pedagogy, ICT and the nature and relevance of experiences of teachers as a whole. These leave me to reflect about the relevance of any model or framework at all, given the complexity of pedagogy in context and given the nature of the context as dynamic as a whole.

This study has also added to my own academic and emotional stance as a professional involved in the field. Apart from the learning gains derived from the study as a whole, the processes involved made me reflect continually on the emotional demands related to the academic assumptions one carries when immersing, distancing and analysing in the context of narrative inquiry. As an insider researcher, I learnt to negotiate the emotional setbacks and boosts, grew increasingly aware of the micro-processes, overcame emotional and writing blocks while learning at every step (Auckloo, 2018b).

### **8.8.1 Commonplaces: temporality, sociality and place for the narrative inquirer**

As a narrative inquirer, an important part of this process of living in and with the inquiry relates to co-constructing the inquiry for representation and discussion. This process also relates to what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) call “collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or a series of places and in social interaction with milieu” (p.20). It also involves a reflexive understanding of my own disposition with regard to temporality, sociality and time as a narrative inquirer.

I realise that my tenure and thoughts evolved in the process especially during the process of data collection and analysis that spread throughout two years. Each narrative interview was different from the other, through which I experienced rich emotions, including sharing moments of happiness to moments of disbelief, awe and sadness depending on the nature and turn in their narratives. Practising ‘distance’ was not easy for this relationship and the depth also depended on trust and bonding for participants to feel comfortable. Without compromising any of the rules related to anonymity and in line with the ethical stance, I also had to be empathetic with the participants and suspend my judgment to attend to their

narration in a 'one-to-one approach'. The emotional demands grew higher and led me to realise the importance of trust which led them to feel comfortable to narrate deep and meaningful events in their lives. For me, it also meant I felt the pressure to do justice to the events in their lives, to responsibly co-construct the representations, which I felt was most challenging at the time of data analysis where the dilemmas I faced led to almost a year of writers' block (Auckloo, 2018b). The data analysis process led me to go back psychologically in time at the site and time of the interview and I attempted to represent the data in a succinct manner that was authentic, relatable and fair. A related challenge was also experienced at the waiting end, as I waited for participants to return the transcripts and inform me whether I could go ahead with the analysis- some took up to three months to return same.

With regard to place and site, I often felt I was at a disadvantage for I was at the waiting end for teachers to decide their preferred place for the interview. Although my ethical demands included that participants chose their site of interview, the language and the time, the places of interview often made me feel more or less comfortable depending on the level of formality the context demanded. The interviews which were done in schools, were often shorter and I realised I was more anxious in schools than in the participant's homes, restaurant or on Skype. The bell toll reminded the teacher of the remaining time while we were still discussing, and often sent messages of anxiety, over the noise of the students, in the background or off-tasks moments provoked by the routine of the schools. These were even more complex when teachers were at a peak moment in the narration and were suddenly interrupted by a voice or other distraction. The feeling was completely opposite when I was in their homes, or in a restaurant, for participants showed more poise and comfort and made me feel more at ease too, given the lesser level of distractions. The level of familiarity increased and there was less tension. I learnt that by then I had developed a greater sense of self-awareness in relation to my environments and these sharpened my approach to the methodological stance used.

### **8.8.2 Changed identity and recommendations for my own practice**

While the phenomenon of experience of teachers has been discussed in the thesis, as a researcher and narrative inquirer I have gained experience in context which leads me to interpret the influences and recommendations for myself as follows:

My notions and understandings of the field of OER since 2009 was so far largely dominated by my experience as a teacher educator and insider researcher in the field of OERs. As a consequence of doing this research, I am today more aware of the strengths and limitations of my long-standing passion and experience in the field which is largely dominated by my role as an academic at MIE and my involvement with the international research community. My participation and experience of presenting papers at recent conferences such as the UOB annual conference in Mauritius (2018), OER18 Conference in Bristol, and seminar discussions at the OU, UK (2018), as well as participation in CC summit in Canada (2018), allowed me to present some ideas from Ed.D and OER related research projects. These have allowed me to gain more experience and also sharpened my will to contribute to more research and publication in the field once this thesis is complete. This research altered my view in that it has led me to pause and stop over teachers' voices, instead of what research only says or instead of what my practice and experience of the field lead me to understand. The implications for me are therefore suggested as follows:

### **8.8.3 My creative response: Research and practice**

As a teacher educator and researcher in the field I am increasingly aware of the understanding of what context can bring to a study or a phenomenon, and as a determinant for teachers to engage in OERs and ICT related initiatives. Today I see myself at the centre of the triangular relationship between temporality, sociality and place and drawing meaning from the context. It then means that more than the voices of the researchers and policy makers, I have to continue being increasingly aware of the contribution of the voices of the teachers and their narratives because they contribute to advance the pedagogical agenda as users. This means that further and continuing research in this area is a necessary venture for it could lead to important avenues that could bring teachers and policy makers on more collaborative endeavours rather than opposing each other. It also means that today I am now more inclined to do research that represent voices from the global south and aid the research community that would benefit the global OER and ICT community of researchers. Prior to the study, the main criteria that would lead me to do research would be passion but today I develop a more poised, reflexive stance and grow more alert about the implications of multiple truths from different quarters.

As concerns the proposed framework of pedagogy in context, as a teacher educator in Mauritius, I also imagine myself at a median communicative point between one end, which is the community of researchers' and advocates' group of OERs and ICT in Education and

the other end which is the teachers or consumers of the services and facilities. It means that as much as I propose that the framework of pedagogy in context to derive understandings from the context, I myself have to begin the process by trialling out what it means to my practice to be the communicative link between stakeholders. My role in the OER movement is then to continue to work with teachers in the field and do research simultaneously for they inform each other. I have developed the readiness to be less overtly passionate, I contain and suspend my emotions about incidents and events in education for more reflexive considerations. I now am in a position to confirm that as a narrative inquirer, meanings will keep changing and change being the only constant, I will probably not be able to anticipate all the implications thereon but those mentioned above are what form the basis of my understandings for greater awareness and recognition of the worth and importance of multiple truths.

## **8.9 Conclusion**

This chapter examined the contributions of the thesis in relation to the gaps identified and discussed the contributions to knowledge in the field of TPACK, narrative inquiry, insights for the emergence of a framework of pedagogy in context and, also highlighted the recommendations and limitations of the study. It also included a reflexive examination of my own role and responsibility in the context of the study and ended with the foreseeable possibilities for my professional practice.

The highlights include the statements that teachers' experiences are diverse, dynamic and multi-layered and that context is complex and influences teachers' pedagogy, use of OERs and use of ICT. Based on these understandings, the chapter also offered insights for the development of a framework of pedagogy in context. For further research, this could be a consideration for more representations of the human agent and their stories to avoid an over-determinism and over-representation of the generalisability of the use of TPACK, OERs or even technology in education. From a methodological, as well as, from a theoretical perspective, this research has added additional teacher knowledge that cautions us against ambitious models. Future research will now need to be done to further investigate the types and areas of contextual demands that could additionally influence pedagogy in context, or technology in context or TPACK in relation to OERs.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Information sheet

University of Brighton

Mauritius Institute of Education

#### Information sheet to teachers

**Researcher information:** Pritee Auckloo, Senior Lecturer, MIE. Email: [priteeauckloo@gmail.com](mailto:priteeauckloo@gmail.com), [p.auckloo@mieonline.org](mailto:p.auckloo@mieonline.org)

Phone numbers: office 230 401 65 55          Mobile 5495 4787

Supervisors: Prof A. Loveless, University of Brighton, Dr B. Oogarah-Pratab Mauritius Institute of Education

Date: 14 August 2015

Dear teachers,

**Research project study: The pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in early 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mauritius.**

In the context of the above project, I would be grateful if you could spare some of your time to read the following information.

I am currently enrolled on the EdD programme with the University of Brighton and I am working on the research entitled: *The pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of OERs and OEPs in early 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mauritius*. I would be much grateful if you could participate in this initiative by accepting to be one of the voluntary participants for the study. Your participation in this project would imply the following:

- Your name will remain confidential and data will be treated anonymously
- Your participation in the study will not cause any prejudice to you

- You will participate in an interview that should last about 90 minutes and will be audio-taped
- You will be invited to read and sign a consent form prior to the interview
- You may decide to stop the process at any point in time
- You may use the language of your choice and the site and time of the interview will be jointly agreed with the researcher and yourself
- You will be invited to read and send back the transcript of the interview when this is available from the researcher
- The data obtained for this research will be used for this research only and will be destroyed within 3 months after the final submission of the work.
- You will participate in the research without expecting any financial gains
- You will be able to contact the researcher for queries or concerns you may have

I might contact you again in case the information is incomplete or I need further clarification subject to your agreement.

*If you wish to participate further in this research, please contact me on any of the contact details above. Thank you.*

## Appendix 2: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

Mauritius Institute of Education

### Participant Consent Form

**Researcher information:** Pritee Auckloo, Senior Lecturer, MIE. Email: [priteeauckloo@gmail.com](mailto:priteeauckloo@gmail.com), [p.auckloo@mieonline.org](mailto:p.auckloo@mieonline.org) phone number: office 401 65 555. Mobile 5495 4787

Supervisors: Prof A. Loveless, University of Brighton, Dr B. Oogarah-Pratab, Mauritius Institute of Education

**Research project study: The pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in early 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mauritius**

I voluntarily agree to take part in this research as part of an EdD Doctoral project that aims at understanding the pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in early 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mauritius.

The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved. (See information sheet).

I have read the information sheet and I understand the principles, procedures and possible risks involved. (See Information Sheet).

I am aware that I will be required to participate in an interview that will last approximately 90 minutes.

I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without incurring consequences from doing so.

I agree that should I withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point may be used by the researcher for the purposes described in the information sheet.

I agree to be audio-taped, to review and return the transcript when this is available.

Name.....

Email address.....

Contact phone number ..... Signed .....

Date .....

### **Appendix 3: Letter to Director, MIE**

14 August 2015

The Director

Prof O Varma

Mauritius Institute of Education

Dear Professor Varma,

#### **University of Brighton EdD Doctoral Research project**

#### **The pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in early 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mauritius.**

I am currently working on the final stage of EdD programme with the University of Brighton and working on the above research title. I wish to apprise you of the following information and seek your clearance to help an early advancement of the project.

1. I am abiding by the UOB Ethical Clearance guidelines and the British Education Research Association (BERA 2011) protocols in line with the UOB exigencies.
2. My participants will be teachers from any sector and many of them can be contacted on MIE as a crucial site for accessing teachers and inviting them to participate.
3. I may be using **the MIE as an accessible site for calling participants through an information poster and interviews as may be appropriate.**
4. I am responsible for contacting the participants on my own through email communications, phone or alternative as will be appropriate.
5. It is my responsibility to see to it that the process does not cause any prejudice to the organisation or does not hinder its smooth running.

I look forward to your positive response very soon.

Yours Sincerely

P. Auckloo

Senior Lecturer

Mauritius Institute of Education

**Researcher information:** Pritee Auckloo, Senior Lecturer, MIE. Email: [priteeauckloo@gmail.com](mailto:priteeauckloo@gmail.com),  
[p.auckloo@mieonline.org](mailto:p.auckloo@mieonline.org) phone number: office 230 401 65 55 Mobile 5495 4787

Supervisors: Prof A. Loveless, University of Brighton, Dr B. Oogarah-Pratab Mauritius Institute of Education.

## **Appendix 4: Communication to colleagues and teachers**

August 2015: Communications poster sent to colleagues and teachers

Dear Colleague,

I am currently doing a research with the University of Brighton and would be much grateful if you could bring the email below and the attachment to the attention of practicing teachers who may ultimately be some of my participants for this study.

Thanking you

P Auckloo

Senior Lecturer, MIE

**(Communication attached to Appendix 4)**

August 2015

Dear Teachers,

I am currently working on an EdD Research project with the University of Brighton in the context of my EdD and working on the research entitled:

'The pedagogical experiences of teachers in the context of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs) in early 21st century in Mauritius.'

In this context I am having to look for in service teachers in the Republic of Mauritius who have the following profile to participate as interviewees:

- a. In service teachers from any sector: Pre-primary, primary and secondary private and public schools.
- b. sharing some familiarity with Web/Online Resources and/or Open Educational Resources.
- c. willing to participate on a voluntary basis in an interview for the research.

This research should help provide a reading of how teachers in the Republic of Mauritius engage with online and open resources. In this context I would be very grateful if you could participate in the study and communicate your response to me either on the present email address or contact me on priteeauckloo@gmail.com or on 5495 4787 as soon as possible.

I am also attaching an information sheet that may be helpful for you to take a decision.

I look forward to your positive response very soon and remain accessible for any information you may require.

Yours Sincerely

Pritee Auckloo, Senior Lecturer, MIE.

Email: priteeauckloo@gmail.com, p.auckloo@mieonline.org phone number:

Office 230 401 65 55. Mobile 5495 4787

Supervisors: Prof A. Loveless, University of Brighton, Dr B.

Oogarah-Pratab Mauritius Institute of Education.

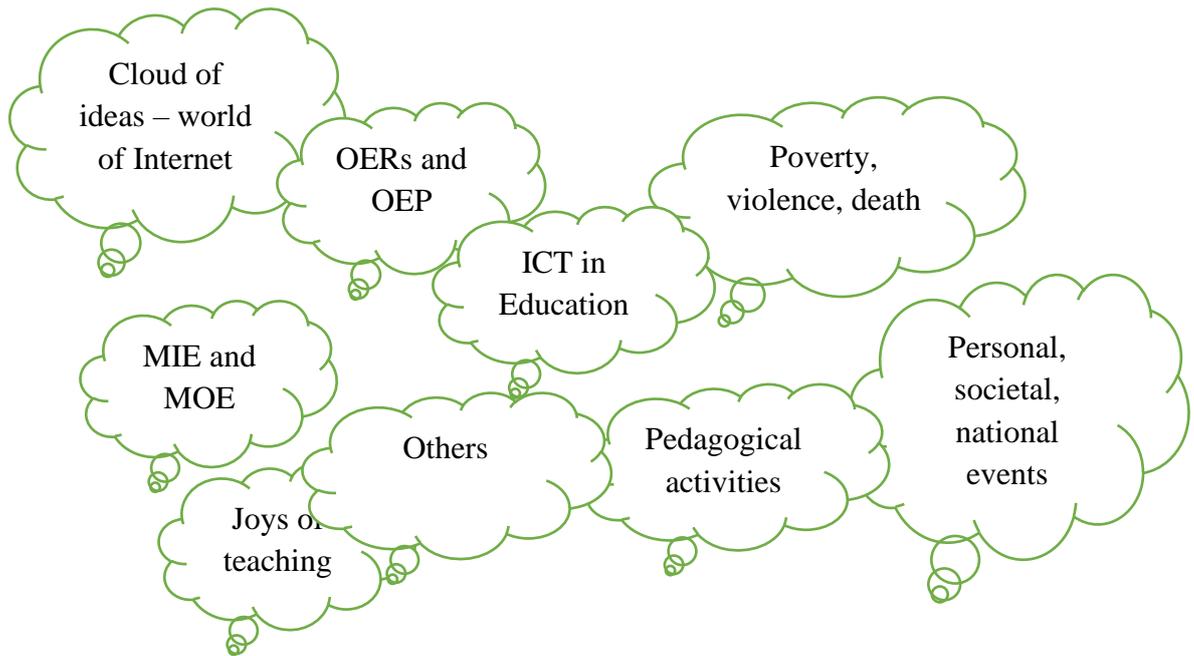
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Auckloo Pritee

S Lecturer

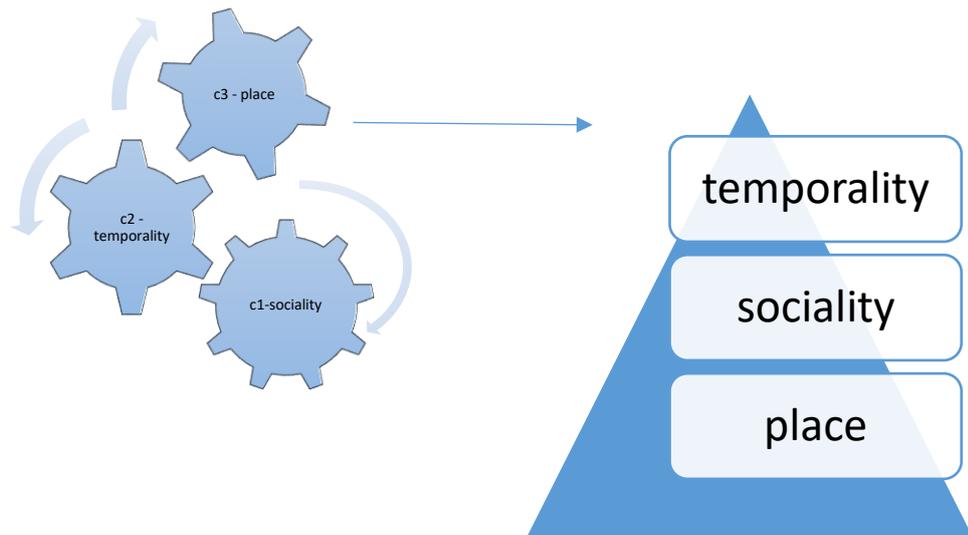
Mauritius Institute of Education

Reduit Mauritius Tel: (230) 401 65 55



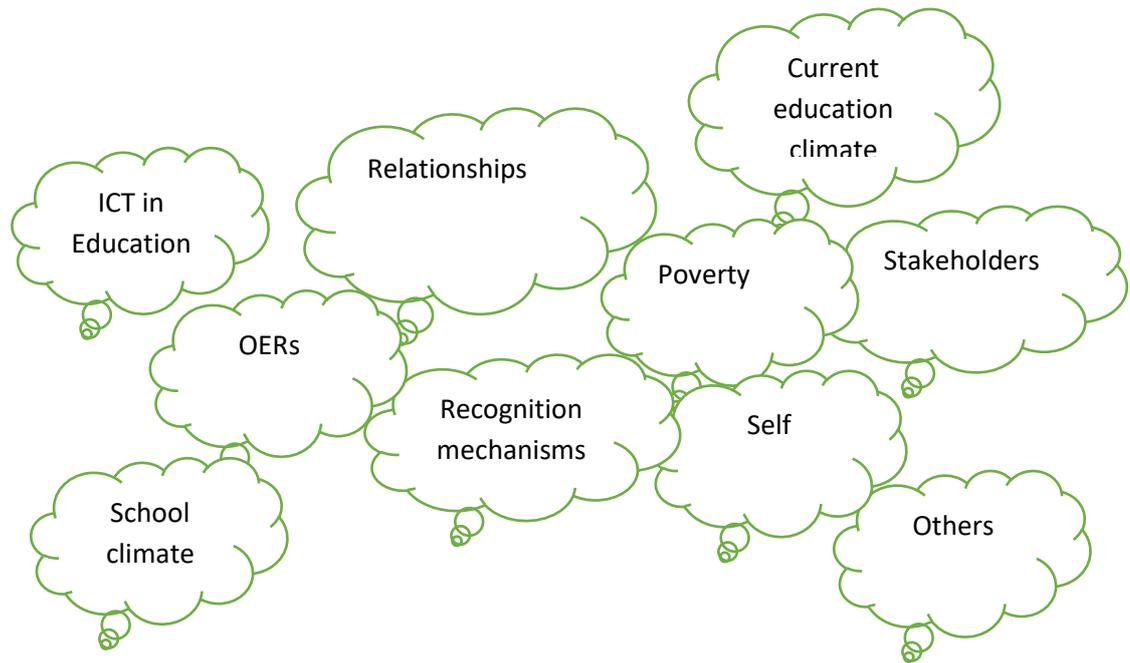
**Figure 6: Clouds of ideas and influences**

One teacher may have a set of assets including OERs in their repertoires, as well as could of ideas, events and circumstances around their lives. Teachers can then select from this repertoire and decide to use a particular idea or cloud of ideas at a point in time depending on the contextual demands.



**Figure 7: Progressing towards the idea of context as dynamic and evolving**

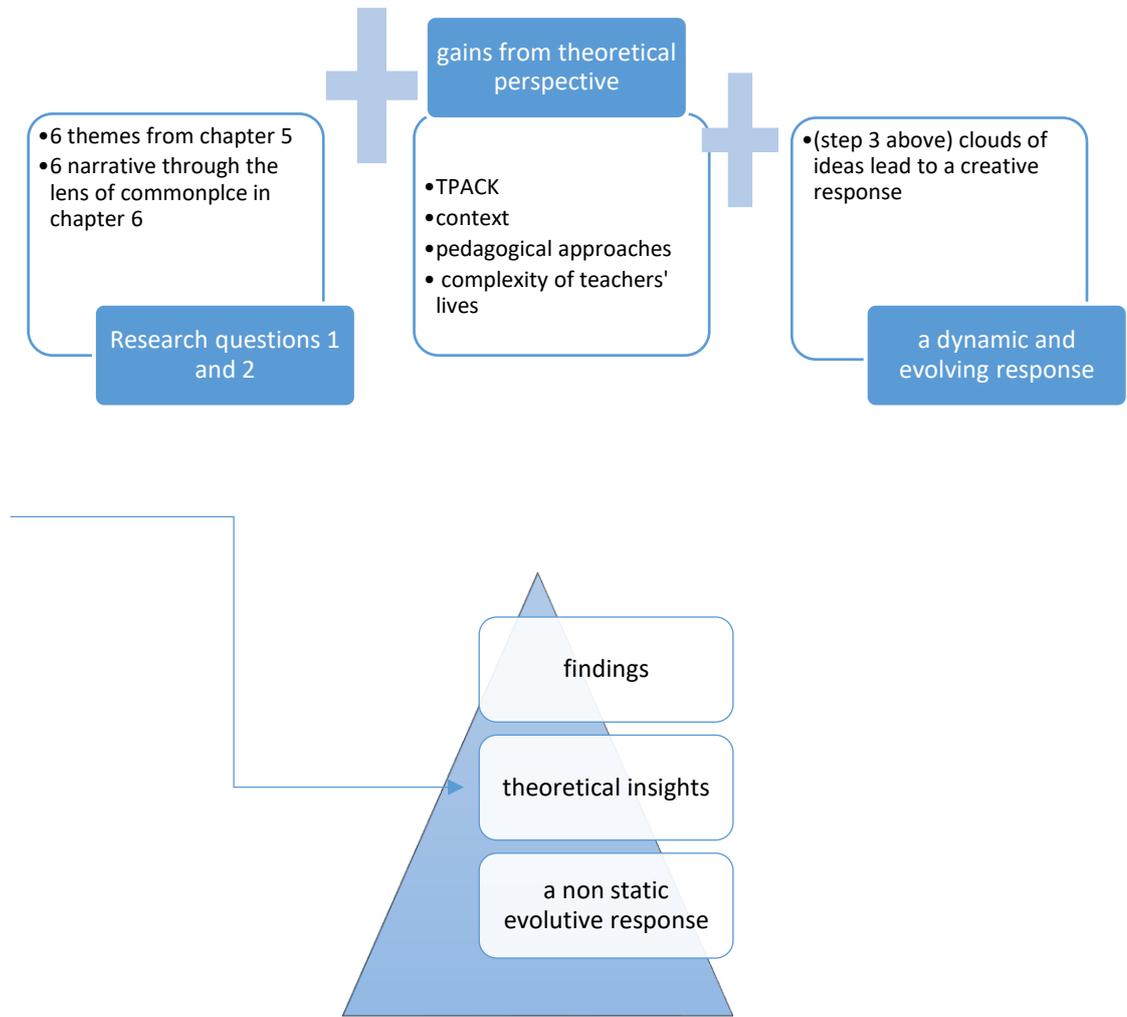
A dynamic, multi-layered, and evolving **context** analysed through the lens of Commonplaces into a triangle with three main components.



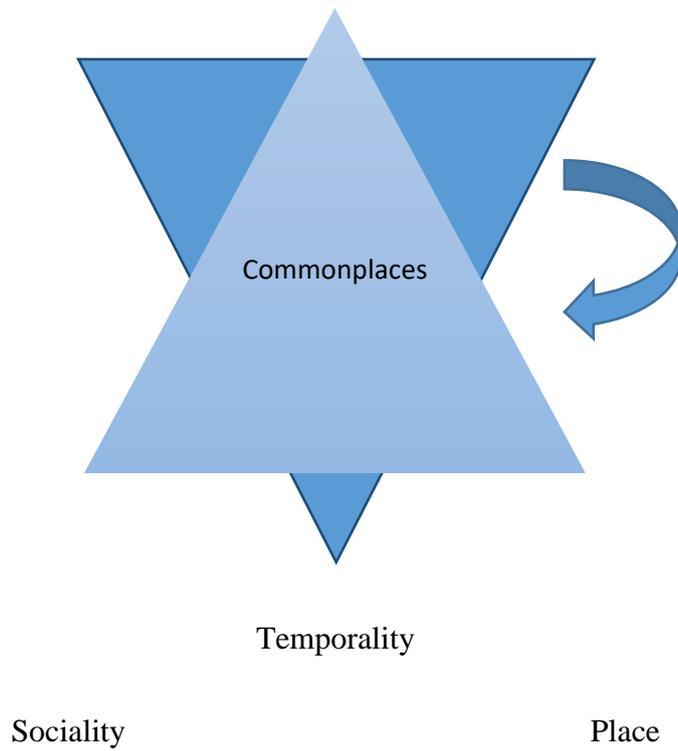
Choice of clouds and influence of clouds influence teachers' pedagogical approaches in a context: Towards an evolutive and creative response to pedagogical approaches today.

Recognition that teachers' lives are complex and they connect to clouds of ideas (figure 2; Cloud of ideas) and can adopt a unique and creative response to pedagogies today.

Figure 8: Clouds influencing teachers' approach to pedagogy



**Figure 9: The main thrusts of the study**



Themes and narratives: Theoretical insights

**Figure 10: Merging commonplaces with the main thrusts**

**Towards a conceptual framework (steps 1, 2, 3 merged). Towards an evolutive pedagogy characterized by unique and creative response to pedagogies today**

**End of Document. Thank you.**