



## Why Do Teaching and Learning Business Studies in South African Rural High Schools Face Challenges?

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### **Abstract**

This study discursively explored the challenges of teaching Business Studies as a subject in Grade 12 in various rural South African secondary schools. The study further discussed diverse strategies that can be employed to enhance the teaching and learning of Business Studies in grade 12. Business Studies is one of the subjects offered in secondary schools across South African schools. The subject is also necessary for careers in business-related programmes/qualifications in higher education institutions. The authors discussed the concept of Business Studies as a school subject, the challenges of teaching and learning Business Studies in schools, and strategies to enhance the teaching and learning of the subject. The subject provides a good foundation for learners, who want to take careers in business or commerce-related jobs. Hence, the subject is critical to learners' admission into higher education institutions, for the qualifications in business and commerce-related careers. Lack of qualified teachers, inadequate professional development, lack of adequate and necessary learning and teaching support materials, overcrowding of learners in classrooms, and learners' lack of interest; are some of the challenges. The study recommends the provision of adequate resource materials to rural schools, as well as the capacitation of Business Studies teachers., among other recommendations.

**Keywords:** *Teaching and Learning; Rural Schools; Challenges; Professional Development; Curriculum Delivery*

### **Introduction**

Business Studies in rural South African high schools need careful planning and customised techniques (Mbonambi, Gamede, & Ajani, 2023). Rural South Africa has socio-economic, infrastructural, and educational differences relative to urban areas. These issues greatly affect rural high school Business Studies instruction. This introduction highlights some of the main issues rural South African teachers and learners encounter when teaching and learning Business Studies. Business Studies is crucial for tertiary

business, commerce, and management learners. According to the National Curriculum Statement and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, the curriculum in Further Education and Training is lengthy and difficult, which deters many potential learners. These documents help learners acquire and use relevant and valuable skills. The 2012 Department of Education (DoE) curriculum emphasises regional knowledge and global demands.

Parker, Osei-Himah, Asare, and Ackah (2018) concur that teachers' lack of confidence in teaching subjects outside their competence is obvious in lesson planning. High-quality Further Education and Training education permits learners to choose the main subjects. This can affect their tertiary career prospects. Ashmore and Robinson (2015:131) say assessment is essential to teaching. To do this, teachers should prioritise building rapport, trust, and openness with learners. Since learners will become entrepreneurs, business teachers must fully prepare them. Therefore, teachers who teach these key courses must have a specialised background and previous experience teaching them throughout the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, particularly in grade 12 (Mbonambi et al., 2023).

According to the Business Studies Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the Department of Education's principal purpose is to teach learners entrepreneurial skills and promote their autonomy as responsible citizens. Parker et al. (2018) said teachers must stay focused during teaching. Clear learning objectives help learners understand the purpose of a session or intervention, stay focused, and improve learning, especially when dealing with difficult material, according to pedagogy studies. According to Hattie (2009), teachers need excellent subject knowledge to be considered experts. Teachers need content knowledge to coach pedagogy. Teachers must know their subjects well. If they don't know enough, it can hurt their learners' academic progress. According to Coe (2014), effective teaching requires demonstrating excitement, dedication, and experience in engaging learners.

Effective learning goes beyond information delivery. Effective teaching and learning require a complete understanding of the subject. Teachers must understand the material to succeed. Killen (2015:30) advises mastering the subject. Teachers must comprehend the core concepts, principles, and relationships of their subjects. Learners must also comprehend how professionals in their industry conceptualise and apply these principles. This study examined the challenges and responsibilities of teaching Business Studies in rural South African high schools. This initiative improves Grade 12 education in rural South African schools. Well-structured exercises assist learners in digesting knowledge systematically, according to Killen (2015). Effective teaching methods are necessary for good academic performance.

## ***Literature Review***

Business Studies in secondary education is crucial to learners' pursuit of tertiary education in business-related fields, particularly in the Faculty of Commerce in the Business, Commerce, and Management Sciences (Mei & Siraj, 2018). Mei and Siraj (2018) state that trainees must have basic entrepreneurial abilities. Business Studies improves workplace understanding and decision-making, according to Ola (2017). According to Briggs (2019), Business Studies teachers must teach learners how to operate in the business sector to prepare them for life after school. Ajayi (2018) suggests early entrepreneurship education for Further Education and Training learners to reduce the likelihood of unemployment and boost job creation and economic growth. In a study conducted in Malaysia, the Malaysian Examination Council (1998) devised the Business Studies curriculum to prepare learners for higher education in business management and entrepreneurship (Mei & Siraj, 2018). These authors explain that learners need basic entrepreneurial abilities to be average entrepreneurs. Ukata, Dikibo, and Deborah (2019) define teaching as helping people learn skills, attitudes, knowledge, or ideas. The teacher acts as a teacher and must change the learner's behaviour.

Teaching requires insight, humility, work, and dedication (Briggs, 2019). Seemingly, Killen (2015) says teaching goes beyond subject presentation. It entails providing well-structured learning exercises that encourage critical thinking and thorough subject understanding. While Gbaranen, Dunnebari, and Amaewhule (2019) define teaching as guiding learners toward structured activities to help them learn the most from their experiences. Learning involves long-term changes in knowledge, attitudes, and skills, according to Leuren and Van Den Branden (2016). This process involves overcoming obstacles, correcting mistakes, refining behaviours, creating new understandings, and modifying beliefs. Joseph and Magnus (2018) describe learning as the changing of behaviour due to teacher-learner interaction in a classroom. Interaction-based learning is their theory.

Blazar and Kraft (2017) argue that pedagogy and cognitive theories help learners develop skills beyond academics. Joseph and Magnus (2018) state that teaching and learning are inseparable from human growth. According to Bose (2019), the curriculum is all school-planned and led learning, whether done in groups or individually, within or outside the school. Similarly, Mei and Siraj (2018) agree that the curriculum should focus on the subject matter while meeting learners' needs and society's need for informed citizens, parents, workers, and other stakeholders. The authors explain that a curricular approach includes curriculum understanding, curriculum creation, a system of principles, and fundamental views about the world, community, and ethics that underlie comprehension and principles. Killen (2015) agrees that teachers who organise new knowledge, monitor progress, and provide corrective comments help learners learn.

Kimweri (2014) defines teaching approaches as tactics used to structure participation and improve learning. The number of learners, age, and topic content affect these strategies. According to Briggs (2019), teaching approaches or strategies are essential to a teacher's strategy for success. According to Van Wyk (2016), the South African Department of Education introduced the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for all courses. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) emphasises learner-centred problem-based learning. To ensure classroom efficacy, teachers must rethink and reimagine their teaching practices. The above methodology is driven by an interactive and engaging pedagogical approach (Department of Basic Education, 2010), which has implications for including Business Studies in the secondary school curriculum under Business, Commerce, and Management Sciences. Business Studies in secondary schools develops business skills, according to Wokocho, Kelechi, Babalola, James, and Brown (2017). Elezi and Bamber (2017) agree that Business and Management curricula design is important. The authors explain that the evaluation methods and appraisal of learners' educational attainment should accurately reflect the professional realm, preparing them for job interviews and a successful career with prospective employers.

Areekkuzhiyil (2017) agrees that entrepreneurial competence is a fundamental quality of an individual, covering motives, qualities, skills, image elements, knowledge, and appropriate motives that permit varied entrepreneurial talents. Wahid et al. (2019) say entrepreneurs start businesses using their business skills. Ezenwafor and Amobi (2016) say business learners' performance remains a concern. Teaching and learning Business Studies in South African rural high schools presents a unique set of challenges that require careful attention and targeted interventions. This literature review provides an overview of existing research and scholarly work that has explored the challenges faced in the context of teaching and learning Business Studies in rural high schools in South Africa including:

#### *Limited Resources and Infrastructure*

Numerous studies highlight the challenges posed by limited resources and infrastructure in rural high schools. Nleya and Sibanda (2020) note that inadequate access to textbooks, teaching materials, and technology inhibits effective teaching and learning. This lack of resources restricts learners' exposure to practical applications of business concepts and hampers their understanding of real-world business environments.

### *Qualified and Experienced Teachers*

Research emphasizes the scarcity of qualified and experienced teachers in rural areas. Shabalala, Singh, and Nkonki-Mandleni (2018) found that rural schools often struggle to attract and retain Business Studies teachers. This shortage can result in large class sizes, limiting individual attention and personalized instruction. The lack of experienced teachers also affects the quality of teaching and the ability to keep up with evolving business trends and practices.

### *Socio-Economic Context*

The socio-economic context of rural communities significantly impacts the teaching and learning of Business Studies. Many rural areas in South Africa face high levels of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to business opportunities. Shabalala and Mji (2016) argue that teachers must tailor the curriculum to address the specific economic challenges and realities of rural communities. Business concepts and theories need to be contextualized to resonate with learners' daily lives and aspirations.

### *Language and Cultural Diversity*

The linguistic and cultural diversity of South Africa poses a challenge in the teaching and learning of Business Studies. Van der Westhuizen (2015) highlights that rural areas often have a high concentration of non-English speaking learners. Language barriers can hinder effective communication and understanding of business concepts. Culturally responsive teaching approaches are necessary to accommodate diverse cultural practices and perspectives.

### *Limited Exposure to the Business Environment*

Rural learners may have limited exposure to the practical aspects of the business world due to the remote location and limited business opportunities in their communities. Sibandze, Dlamini, and Dube (2019) argue that the absence of role models and business networks can hinder learners' ability to connect theoretical knowledge to real-life scenarios and develop entrepreneurial skills. Engaging local businesses and incorporating experiential learning activities can help bridge this gap.

### *Connectivity and Digital Divide*

The digital divide poses a significant challenge in rural areas. Research by Machethe and Mpfu (2019) highlights the limited internet connectivity and access to digital resources in rural high schools. This digital divide hampers learners' ability to engage in online research, access digital learning materials, and participate in interactive learning activities. Addressing the digital infrastructure gap is crucial to ensure equitable access to quality Business Studies education.

In conclusion, the literature review demonstrates that teaching and learning Business Studies in South African rural high schools face multifaceted challenges. Limited resources and infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, the socio-economic context, language, and cultural diversity, limited exposure to the business environment, and the digital divide all impact the quality and effectiveness of Business Studies education. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive efforts from educational authorities, communities, and other stakeholders to ensure equitable access, relevant curriculum development, professional development for teachers, and the integration of experiential learning opportunities. By addressing these challenges, South African rural high schools can provide their learners with a solid foundation in Business Studies and equip them with the skills needed for future success in the business world.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

In Ajani's (2022) study, theory is an authoritative source, and a theoretical framework is the study's foundation. Thus, the use of a theoretical framework provides a lens that underpins the study, for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, with an appropriate theory or theories. Adom, Huissen, and Agymem (2018) suggest using a theoretical framework in research to provide a foundation for the study. According to Creswell (2013), a theoretical framework includes a theory, such as systems theory or self-efficacy, and linked empirical and conceptual research. This study adopted Constructivism as the theory that underpins the study. Bada and Olusegun (2015) argue that constructivism is an educational approach that bases knowledge acquisition on cognitive construction. Bada and Olusegun (2015) describe a constructivist learning environment as follows:

#### *Teaching and learning as collaborations between teachers and learners*

Constructivism engages learners in the learning process, improving outcomes and making learning more fun, according to Bada and Olusegun (2015). Bada and Olusegun (2015) also believe that education should emphasise critical thinking and comprehension over memorising. Constructivist learning also transfers. Thus, constructivist learning allows learners to create their own organising principles for different learning environments. Constructivism's focus on learners' enquiries and investigations allows them to own their learning. Constructivism, or social constructivism, is often paired with interpretivism in qualitative research, according to Creswell (2014). Social constructivism says people try to understand their surroundings. Subjective interpretations of experiences focus on individual objects or things. Constructivism requires certain assumptions, according to Creswell (2014). People interpret and value their surroundings. Qualitative researchers often ask people open-ended questions to get their thoughts. Humans understand their environments by their historical and social backgrounds, and researchers interpret their findings through their personal experiences. Meaning is created in the community. Qualitative research uses an inductive approach to interpret field data. Constructivism comes from the English word "organisation," according to Gaun, Yusof, Rahim, and Mamat (2018). The authors also claim that constructivist learning includes cognitive reorganisation. Constructivist epistemological, psychological, pedagogical, and learning theories highlight pre-existing knowledge. Thus, learners grasp Business Studies by constructing knowledge from classroom instruction. According to Adom, Yeboah, and Aknrah (2016), the constructivist philosophical paradigm holds that people learn about the world via experience and reflection. This idea is based on the idea that people learn most from firsthand experience. Thus, teachers can increase Business Studies comprehension.

Modern research on the brain, learning, and constructivism underpins constructivism teaching (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). Bada and Olusegun (2015) further explain that constructivism supports parallel processing in the brain. The mind can process cognitive, emotive, and socio-cultural information simultaneously. Learning involves the entire physiological system. Teachers can't just teach cognitive skills, teaching works because it recognises that meaning is personal and idiosyncratic and that learners' comprehension is changed by their experiences. Patterning determines meaning. Pedagogy works because it links different ideas and data pieces and integrates them into overarching concepts and themes. Patterning requires emotions. Emotions, feelings, and dispositions affect learning. Thus, the brain may simultaneously process parts and wholes. Failure to consider either the individual elements or the complete subject matter makes learning difficult. Learning requires focused attention and incidental awareness. Environment, culture, and atmosphere affect learning.

Learning requires both deliberate and instinctive cognitive processes. Learners need time to absorb both the subject and the approach. Vygotsky's constructivism underpins this study. Educational institutions can optimise teaching and acquisition using the theoretical framework. Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory promotes social and cultural interactions in learning. This theory lacks phases, unlike Jean Piaget's. Vygotsky's theory states that social contact builds knowledge. McLeod



(2018) claims that Lev Vygotsky's (1934) work has informed many cognitive development investigations and ideas, especially in Social Development Theory, for decades. According to McLeod (2018), Vygotsky's theories underline social interaction's importance in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky believed the community is crucial to meaning-making. Teachers can use their collaborative discussions to influence Business Studies education and learning.

The notion suggests that providing numerous opportunities for knowledge creation can help business learners learn. This study uses classroom experiences to interpret research questions and build data collection equipment. Social constructivism's justification in Business Studies education is crucial. Constructivism philosophy offers new insights into learning and teaching, according to Jia (2010). This paradigm emphasises learners, according to Jia (2010). To promote learning, teachers should focus more on learners' emotional and social needs. Constructivism promotes improving learners' overall quality, according to Jia (2010). Vygotsky's work paved the way for social constructivism in education, according to Jones (2002). Vygotsky's emphasis on social context and the importance of others in learning has made teachers rethink education's individualised nature.

### ***Research and Methodology***

This study adopted a systematic review of literature sources (Cooper et al., 2018), to provide in-depth information on the challenges of rural teachers in teaching Business Studies in rural schools across South Africa. Various sources such as EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, were consulted to retrieve various peer-reviewed publications on the subject (Morakanyane, Grace & O'Reilly, 2017). The retrieved publications were systematically pruned to concentrate on the most relevant publications (Kraus et al., 2022). These publications were further analysed thematically, to generate useful information for the study (Cooper et al., 2018). The available literature sources This study used 46 Scopus and Web of Science studies after a systematic literature assessment. Quality assessment was adopted in the selection of these studies. Journals' techniques, theories, modelling, and research outputs were assessed in the sample literature (Post et al., 2020).

### **Presentation and Discussion of Findings from extant studies**

#### *The subject of Business Studies as a pedagogical discipline*

According to Mbonambi et al. (2023), South Africa implemented entrepreneurship education in Grades 8 and 9 as part of Economics and Management Sciences in General Education and Training (GET). Youth should have an entrepreneurial mindset. Business Studies, Accounting, and Economics in Grades 10, 11, and 12 of the Further Education and Training (FET) phase foster entrepreneurial abilities. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in 2014 (p. 15) and Ajayi (2018), Business Studies helps learners learn about entrepreneurship. Business Studies teaches knowledge, skills, perspectives, and concepts needed for competent, efficient, ethical, and accountable interaction in formal and informal economic arenas. This topic covers the underlying ideas, theoretical frameworks, and practical applications that underpin entrepreneurial endeavours, sustainable businesses, and economic growth (DoE, 2011). Business Studies, according to Ajayi (2018), examines the strategic planning, coordination, invention, and advancement of goods and services by a group to suit consumer needs. Business Studies teach decision-making and daily living, according to Iwu et al. (2021), Sarfraz, Khawaja, and Ivascu (2022). According to Wokocha, Kelechi, Babalola, James, and Brown (2017), Business Studies is an important part of vocational education that emphasises cognitive and practical skills and promotes the acquisition of specialised training for business and industry at the junior secondary school level. Authors define business education's goals:

Learners' Business Studies competency helps them learn fundamentals. Business Studies provide assistance and basic skills to start a job for those who may not continue their school. Business Studies teach basic skills for future use. 6. The programme links learning and the national economy. According to Gidado and Abdulla (2016), business education is a component of vocational education that helps learners learn, understand, and develop the skills and attitudes needed to work in business or teaching. According to Gidado and Abdullahi (2016), business education includes accounting and management. Business education helps learners contribute to a capitalist economy, according to Okiridu, Ikpo, and Onwuchekwa (2012). Business Studies involve keeping basic financial records and managing office equipment and operations. Ability to recognise values and take responsibility for tasks. Applying classroom business concepts to real-world situations is the goal. Administrative decision-making requires skills and competencies. Thus, teaching, and mastering Business Studies is essential for learners to move to business jobs in higher education (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019; Meintjes, 2023).

### *Teaching and learning Business Studies*

According to Briggs (2019), Business Studies teachers must provide learners with the skills and knowledge to succeed in the business world and prepare them for life after school. According to Copley and Patston (2018), teachers should be experts in their domains and pedagogical practices rather than generalists. Amiruddin, Zakaria, Venny, and Arviantia (2019) found that the Republic of Indonesia Constitution N0.04 of 2005 requires teachers to have academic qualifications, competencies, teacher certificates, physical and mental well-being, and the ability to embody national education objectives. James, Simiyu, and Riechi (2016) state that a school's main goal is to give learners better education opportunities. They argue that teachers' competency, expertise, and dedication are a school's greatest asset in achieving this goal. Olutunji (2017) claims some teachers know curriculum objectives. The curriculum guides learners, teachers, and families. Curriculum goals hold teachers accountable for their lessons and set benchmarks for assessing their performance (Govender, 2018).

Biesta (2017) claims that teaching learners as passive vessels is problematic. This approach simplifies education to depositing information, with teachers as depositors and learners as passive recipients. Leuren et al. (2016) argue that teachers boost educational efficacy. Sindjindawong (2017) claims that further training can create a new, skilled teacher. Briggs (2019) found that using a variety of educational methods improves classroom efficacy. Effective teaching strategies increase learning results, according to Briggs (2019). Onwugbu (2011) and Obiwusi (2013) summarised good teaching methodology as activities that progress from simple to complex, educational material that inspires learners to participate and should be customizable.

Effective pedagogy engages learners in real-world tasks. The curriculum should address learners' basic needs (Govender, 2018; Du Plessis, 2019; Meintjes & van Wyk, 2023). Learning must involve all five senses—hearing, seeing, feeling, testing, and touching—to retain and transfer knowledge. The best strategy inspires people to do more while avoiding monotony. Havekes, van Boxtel, Coppen, and Luttenberg (2017) suggest numerous teaching principles. The seven "C's" describe successful teacher behaviour. Teachers care about their learners. The teacher tries to understand learners' mental states on numerous topics. Challenge- the teacher expects learners to learn a lot and work hard. Learners are asked to explain their answers while the teacher forbids learners from quitting. The teacher encourages learning from mistakes. Clarify—the teacher simplifies complicated ideas. The teacher explains every topic using several effective approaches. The teacher uses alternative approaches to explain concepts when learners struggle. Captive - the teacher engages learners. The teacher makes lessons fun. Teachers try to avoid boredom. Confer - the teacher gives learners many chances to discuss their ideas. Learners have input on classroom operations. The teacher values learner feedback and ideas. Consolidate - the teacher checks the learner's understanding of the topic. The teacher critiques learners' academic assignments to help them improve and fix mistakes. After a lesson, the teacher reviews the learners' new skills. Control—the teacher keeps learners engaged and productive. Learners respect their peers and teachers.

### *Challenges of Teaching Business Studies*

Ajani (2019, 202, 2021) Iwu et al. (2021), and Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) found that effective learning involves crucial teaching skills and subject expertise. Teaching and learning encounter several problems, which vary by place (source). In a study conducted in Botswana, Business Studies teachers in Botswana's secondary schools face a variety of issues, according to Sithole and Lumadi (2013). Ottewill and Macfarlane (2003) identified three clusters of obstacles for business education teachers: business subject matter, teaching setting, learner motivation/expectations, and diversity. Business Studies must use standard teaching methods to engage learners and meet course goals.

Okoye (2016) laments that excellent teachers using authorised teaching methodologies have several challenges. Njoku (1992), Arowolo (2004), Okwuanaso (2004), Ogbonnaya and Awuah (2019) list some of the barriers to teachers using effective teaching strategies as many.

To make teachers extremely effective and dedicated to business education, school finance issues must be addressed (Kayembe & Nel, 2019). Teachers require numerous resources to teach the curriculum. (Ajani & Gamede 2021). To meet programme goals, appropriate teaching materials should be maximised. Festus et al. (2019) note that large classes make teaching and learning Business Studies difficult (Warui, 2015). Warui (2015) acknowledges that large classes make teaching and learning difficult. According to Olatunji (2017), Business Studies teachers' biggest classroom concerns include learner mobile use in class, with vibration, bells, and texting distracting learners during the lessons; poor lesson plan; teachers neglecting discipline; insufficient parental, administrative, and school board support; insufficient technology, with many schools lacking computers. Festus et al. (2019) say poor equipment and disillusioned teachers make teaching Business Studies difficult. In a study conducted in Nigeria, Olatunji (2017) found that Nigerian Business Studies teachers lack topic understanding and need to keep up with business trends.

### *How changes in curriculum impact the teaching and learning of Business Studies*

The curriculum is the official document that specifies how, when, and what should be taught and learned in every school topic. According to Ngema (2016), changing subject curriculum is a global issue that adapts to social changes (Moodley, 2013; Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). The Department of Education does not provide the tools needed for this rapid transformation (Moodley, 2013; Gamede & Ajani, 2020), leaving teachers and learners confused and stressed. Since teachers are not involved in curriculum modifications, they must implement them (Moodley, 2013; Mouton, Louw & Strydom 2012). This means teachers can accept or reject the curriculum. Curriculum modifications succeed when supporting elements work together (Patekur, Wulandari, & Pangabbean, 2002). To meet curriculum goals, Patekur (2022) says teachers must be more creative, imaginative, analytical, and practical in learning and assessment. Mohata (2020) agrees that education teaches new skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Patekur (2022) adds that curricular changes demand teachers to be more creative, imaginative, analytical, and practical in learning and evaluation to meet curriculum goals.

Whether teachers own the curriculum affects curricular change acceptance. When confronted, individuals choose what they desire (Tshiredo, 2013). The modifications may confuse teachers and learners if they are not properly trained (Tshiredo, 2013; Savide, 2017; Zenda, 2020). Festus, Dikibo, and Deborah (2019) found that a lack of new technical tools has hindered teaching and learning because learners lack the entrepreneurial skills they need to be self-sufficient. According to research, curricular modifications require a lot of administrative effort (Moodley, 2013), which demotivates teachers and causes them to return to old teaching methods (Tshiredo, 2013). Ngema (2016) also claims that improper teaching approaches affect learner achievement.



*Professional training of teachers and their subject content knowledge*

Ngema (2016) claims that teacher content knowledge affects learner performance. Mwenda et al. (2013) say teachers are crucial to curriculum delivery. Spaul (2013), Ihejieta and Nwokedi (1993), and Ogbonnaya (2011) emphasise that they must be well-trained to present the curriculum. Education is only as good as its teachers (Ajani, 2021, Meintjes, 2023). Unqualified teachers provide bad results (Dekkers & Mnisi, 2003; Ogbonnaya, 2011; Lebata, 2014). Modise (2016) agrees that content difficulties stem from teachers' need to grasp it. Sithole and Lumadi (2013) imply teaching challenges cause stress. Ukata, Philip, Dikibo, and Deborah (2019) in their study conducted in Nigeria, state that unqualified teachers teaching Business Studies disadvantage qualified Business Studies graduates and that the Nigerian government prioritises other services over education. Mohammed and Molepe (2018) discovered that teachers' insufficient training and language proficiency had an impact on Somalian education. Azib and Samuel (2019) agree that inadequate teaching equipment and materials and a lack of manpower to handle the growing learner population in Delta State, Nigeria, affect the Business Studies curriculum at the secondary school level. Ola (2017) found that business textbooks, equipment, and other infrastructural facilities are inadequate for effective Business Studies teaching and learning.

According to Azib and Samuel (2019), pre-service teacher preparation is vital because it develops communication skills, professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help teachers identify learners' teaching and learning needs. Thus, Jerotich, Kurgat, and Kimutai (2017) believe that effective curriculum implementers are subject-savvy teachers. Jerotich et al. (2017) found that most unskilled Business Studies teachers use teaching as a stepping stone to other employment. Thus, untrained teachers struggle to execute the new Business Studies curriculum. Business Studies curriculum at Kenyan secondary schools suffers from unpreparedness, attitude, and morale (Nwanewezi, 2013). Kimotho (2016), and DBE (2019) also thought business teacher training and retraining lacked practicality and wondered how a teacher could teach what they didn't know. According to Parker, Ose-Himah, Asare, and Ackah (2018), inadequate subject knowledge is one of the main factors that contributes to teaching challenges and affects the development of pedagogical content knowledge and teachers' self-confidence and attitudes.

*Strategies to enhance teaching and learning of Business Studies*

Teachers require teaching resources to boost learner achievement. Thus, adopting multiple teaching resources will improve secondary Business Studies instruction. Teaching resources enhance learning, according to Gbaranen et al. (2019). Ola (2017) agrees that Business Studies should be taught using suggested textbooks, business equipment, and other infrastructure. To stay current in classroom practices and school development, Ajani (2020) recommends appropriate and regular teacher professional development. According to Ajani (2022), proper professional development can improve school teaching and learning. Govender, Ajani, Ndaba, and Ngema (2023) believe that rural schools can improve teaching and learning by contextualising teacher professional development. To facilitate learning and the acquisition of skills, information, and habits, Omorohwvo (2018) suggests teacher training and retraining. Omorohwvo (2018) further adds that teachers guide learners in formal and instructive contexts. Oqvist and Malmstrom (2017) also believe that the teacher-learner relationship is the most important factor in learner success (Matoetoe, 2021; Iwu et al., 2021).

Okoye (2017) believes teaching strategies are important for secondary school business education. Field trips, group discussion, simulation, demonstration, project method, questioning, assignment, and drill and practice (DBE, 2018; Oke et al., 2020; Zenda, 2020). According to Briggs (2019) and Osokoye (2016), teaching method strategies or plans describe how a teacher will attain goals. Briggs (2019) agrees that Business Studies learners score higher after employing the lecture approach. According to Joseph and Magnus (2018), teaching Business Studies in different ways improves learning. Stakeholder engagement should support educational systems (Ahmed, 2015; Muthala et al., 2022). Govender (2018) found that

teachers need Department of Basic Education support for their teaching practices. Ajani (2021) agrees that rural schools lack numerous teaching and learning resources. Similarly, Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) claim that rural school learners perform poorly due to a lack of school resources. Curriculum development determines what, how, and when learners learn school subjects, hence, teachers designing subject-specific learning content makes curriculum delivery easier. Rural teachers struggle to adapt curriculum content to the realities of their classroom practices. Urban schools have resources to improve curriculum implementation. Thus, rural teachers should be supported to contextualise the subject curriculum. This will help shape rural school curricula for their schools.

Teaching and learning Business Studies in South African rural high schools present unique challenges that require specific attention. The literature highlights several key challenges faced in this context, including limited resources and infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, the socio-economic context, language and cultural diversity, limited exposure to the business environment, and the digital divide. Limited resources and infrastructure in rural high schools have been widely recognized as a significant challenge. Nleya and Sibanda (2020) point out the lack of textbooks, teaching materials, and access to technology, hindering effective teaching and learning. The absence of resources limits learners' exposure to practical applications of business concepts and real-world business environments.

The shortage of qualified teachers in rural areas is another significant challenge. Shabalala, Singh, and Nkonki-Mandleni (2018) emphasize the struggle of rural schools to attract and retain qualified Business Studies teachers. This scarcity often results in large class sizes and compromises individual attention and personalized instruction. The lack of experienced teachers also affects the quality of teaching and the ability to keep up with evolving business trends. The socio-economic context of rural communities plays a crucial role in teaching and learning Business Studies. Shabalala and Mji (2016) argue that teachers need to tailor the curriculum to address the specific economic challenges and realities of rural communities. Business concepts and theories must be contextualized to resonate with learners' daily lives and aspirations.

Language and cultural diversity also pose challenges in teaching and learning Business Studies in rural areas. Van der Westhuizen (2015) highlights the high concentration of non-English-speaking learners in rural schools. Language barriers hinder effective communication and understanding of business concepts. Culturally responsive teaching approaches are necessary to accommodate diverse cultural practices and perspectives. Limited exposure to the business environment is a common challenge for rural learners. Sibandze, Dlamini, and Dube (2019) argue that the absence of role models and business networks hinders learners' ability to connect theoretical knowledge to real-life scenarios and develop entrepreneurial skills. Engaging local businesses and incorporating experiential learning activities can help bridge this gap. The digital divide presents a significant obstacle in rural areas. Machelo and Mporu (2019) highlight the limited internet connectivity and access to digital resources in rural high schools. This digital divide hampers learners' ability to engage in online research, access digital learning materials, and participate in interactive learning activities. Addressing the digital infrastructure gap is crucial to ensure equitable access to quality Business Studies education.

In conclusion, the literature review highlights the multifaceted challenges faced in teaching and learning Business Studies in South African rural high schools. Limited resources and infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, the socio-economic context, language, and cultural diversity, limited exposure to the business environment, and the digital divide all impact the quality and effectiveness of Business Studies education. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive efforts from educational authorities, communities, and stakeholders to ensure equitable access, relevant curriculum development, professional development for teachers, integration of experiential learning opportunities, and bridging the digital divide. By addressing these challenges, South African rural high schools can provide their learners with a solid foundation in Business Studies and equip them with the skills needed for future success in the business world.

## Conclusions

Business Studies is an important high school subject in the South African school system. Teaching and learning are critical components of the education system. The quality of teaching and learning determines the final output of the schools. Hence, the capacitation of teachers, as well as the provision of necessary school resources influence academic performance as well as overall school performance. Various studies have established that rural high schools are inadequately funded and capacitated, hence, studies report that rural learners continue to perform poorly in academic performance. Thus, teaching and learning Business Studies as one of the school subjects in rural high schools suffers enormous challenges, and these result in poor learners' academic performances. Social constructivism argues that learners easily learn, constructing meaning or understanding from the learning experiences. As a result, effective teaching and learning enhance the process of learning or knowledge construction. Therefore, rural teachers require regular, adequate, and appropriate capacitation. Also, the allocation of adequate funds enables the provision of school resources. Seemingly, stakeholders must provide adequate support to enhance the teaching and learning of Business Studies in rural high schools. Conversely, the study explored and established the challenges of teaching Business Studies in South African rural high schools.

## Recommendations

This discursive study examines existing studies on the challenges of teaching and learning Business Studies in rural high schools. Thus, providing ways forward to enhance the teaching and learning of Business Studies in different rural high schools across South Africa, recommendations are made. Teachers teaching Business Studies should be encouraged with appropriate professional development capacitation. These professional development activities should take into consideration, the rural contexts of rural high schools. The Department of Basic Education should provide adequate funding to rural schools, to meet up with their school needs. The existing teaching and learning policy frameworks for Business Studies should be revised to accommodate the realities and diversity that exist in rural schools. The revised policy will support teachers to effectively maximise available resources in rural high schools for all learning and assessments. Learning is dynamic, hence teachers need ongoing professional development, which is school-based, to effectively use technology in teaching and learning. Rural teachers should be involved in curriculum design/development for their subjects. Their involvement enables them to integrate and design what works best for their schools.

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