

**EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP  
IN MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED SCHOOLS IN LIBODE DISTRICT,  
EASTERN CAPE**

**By**

**MAWANDE AKON TSHOZI**

**A Research Report submitted in partial fulfilment of the academic  
requirements for the degree of Master of Education to the School of  
Education in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand,  
Johannesburg**

**SUPERVISOR: DR S.E. MTHIYANE**

**September 2020**



## STATEMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR

I, Dr. S.E. Mthiyane,

As the candidate's Supervisor, agree/ do not agree to the submission of this Research Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. E. Mthiyane', written over a horizontal line.

Supervisor's signature

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr S.E Mthiyane for the continuous support of my M Ed study, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge.

Besides my supervisor, I would also like to thank Prof. R Chetty, Prof. J Cronje, Dr Gxekwa, Dr C Mosito, Mr Mawethu Sitoyi, Clement Khoza and Mr Welcome Madinga.

I would also like to thank all my research participants; without them I was not going to be able to finish this research project.

All my classmates from Wits University especially Tracy Tshuma and Sisi Ntombi Malinga thank you for pushing and believing in me and for their insightful comments and encouragement, but also for the hard questions which made me to widen my research from various perspectives.

A special gratitude to Liso Ntuli and Anathi Zengethwa who accommodated me and assisted me with finding accommodation when I first arrived in Cape Town to do my undergraduate degree.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my family members: my father, Zandisile, my brothers Mphura, Qaks, Aya and our late brother Siviwe, my sister Zomzi Ndlumbane and my friends Siphelo Maphanga, Vuyisa Ndlela, Sibulele Mketi, Zingisa Ngwane, Siya Skeyi, Lwando Poni, Talita Nikelo, Aluta Gcelu, Lizwi Siganga, Sinoyolo Mziwakhe, Lwando Mpike, Sinethemba Dangazela, Siseko Madolwana for supporting me spiritually and financially throughout writing this research report and in my life in general.

**To God be the glory!!!**

## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my mother

Nominentle Ntamo Tshozi

1952 – 2017

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of servant leadership principles in managing multiple deprived schools in Libode District. The conceptual framework for the study was based on Greenleaf's work in servant leadership as expressed in 10 characteristics of servant leaders defined by Spears: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. This study used the qualitative research approach which was located in the interpretivism paradigm. Furthermore, a case study design was used, and it allowed for an in-depth understanding of the servant leadership phenomenon. Two schools in the Libode District were sampled on the basis that they seemed to implement servant leadership.

The analysis of the generated data and presented data led to the findings that teachers do understand the servant leadership phenomenon however they lacked implementation skills. On the other hand, the general view of the principals was that they are committed in serving the need of their followers and of the community. The major recommendations were that anyone applying for a senior school position must have a post graduate qualification in education management and school leaders and teachers must be workshopped on application of servant leadership. A significant conclusion of this research is that it is evident that servant leadership can be used to manage multiple deprived schools.

# ETHICAL CLEARANCE

## WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2019ECE032M**

**PROJECT TITLE**

Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode District

**INVESTIGATOR**

Mawande Tshozi

**SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR**

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

**DATE CONSIDERED**

09 September 2019

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE**

Approved unconditionally

**EXPIRY DATE**

Date of submission of the project report

**ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE**

12 September 2019

**CHAIRPERSON**

(Dr. Paul Goldschagg)

cc: Supervisor: Dr. Siphwe Mthiyane

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**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR**

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** emailed to the Ethics Office: [Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za](mailto:Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za) .

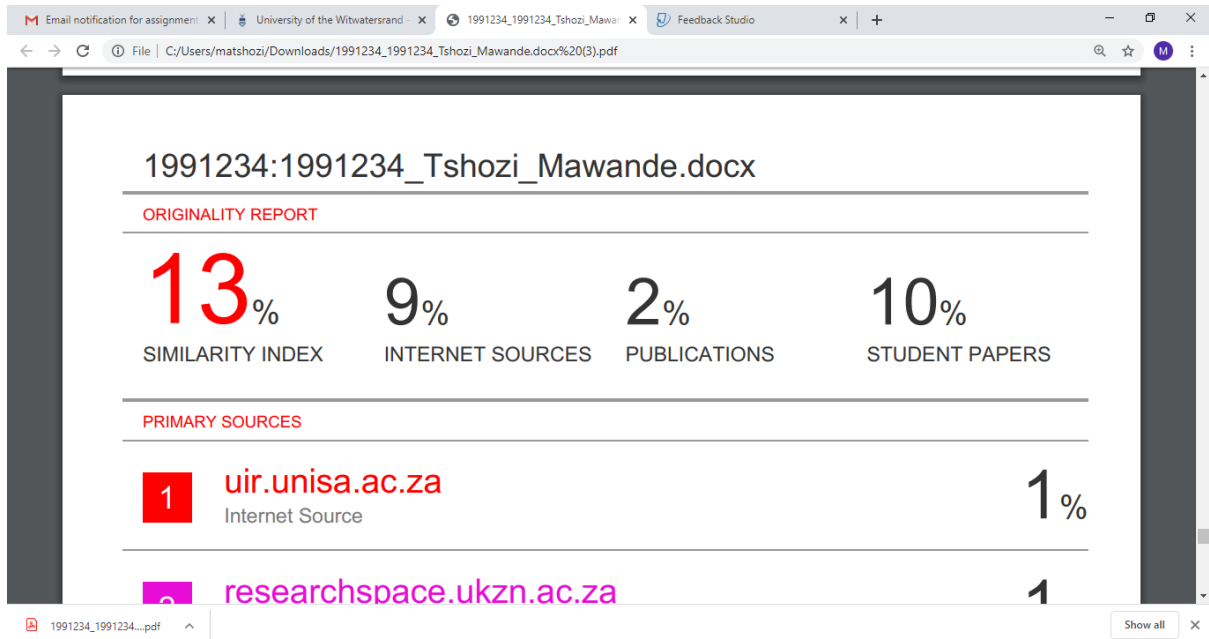
I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES**

# PLAGIARISM REPORT





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# CHAPTER ONE

## ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### **1.1 Introduction and background**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide preliminary background information to contextualise the study. It clarifies the focus of the study and highlights critical elements that will be unpacked in greater detail in the subsequent chapters. Also, it specifies the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. Lastly, this chapter outlines the structure of the thesis. The study investigated the implementation of servant leadership theory in managing multiple deprived schools in Libode District in the Eastern Cape. Christie (2010) posits that there has been a growing concern among parents and educational officials at national and provincial level with regards to underperformance of government schools. This is a persistent aspect within under-resourced black schools since the beginning of the democratic South African education system. Williams (2011) argues that the adverse performance of teachers is usually recognized in the process of performance appraisal exercise, and from the learner examination results, in particular the National Senior Certificate results. Such a dismal performance is mainly blamed on poor teaching practice; however, the broader reflection is the nature of leadership in such schools which regarded as failing to ensure good teaching practices and also good performance from the learners (Bush, Kiguundu & Mooros, 2011).

Van der Vyer (2014) states that studies in the area of management of teaching and learning reflected on a concerning extent of confusion within education leaders regarding what can be done, or which leadership theory can be followed to overcome challenges faced by schools. Consequently, education policymaking has shifted in the previous two decades with integration of outcome-based accountability, performance benchmarks and measurement, and flexibility (Steyn, 2016). These changes can be located and identified in some of the South African education policies that include the South African Schools Act (SASA) and the Integrated Quality Management System. Grant (2019) asserts that main purpose of these changes has been ensuring effective leadership in the context of South African schools.

Effective leadership should be a priority for public schools in South African schools, effective leadership usually revolves around the school leadership prioritising good outcomes for the school. Van Nierkek and Muller (2017) posit that good teaching practices will lead to positive outcomes for majority of learners in the school system. Such a scenario requires the suitable and appropriate type of leadership in schools. Bantwini and Mooros (2018) state that the type of leadership that is required should focus on enhancing learner outcomes and distributing leadership throughout the school community. Similarly, Sibanda (2017) confirms that school leadership in particular, principals should have the capacity to empower teachers in areas where they require assistance. Given their roles as leader, school principals are appropriately positioned to produce and maintain the circumstance for a positive development of learners if these conditions exist. According to Zuze and Juan (2018) the type of leader that is required in schools should empower teachers and generate social transformation that articulates and reflection changes. Such type of leaders should be able to take of the teachers and enhance institutional services to resolve the school's needs and to enhance learner performance (Du-Plessis & Heystek, 2019). There are four components that are required in such context. The leader should have an ideological impact, which implies that the school leader should be a role model for his or her teachers. This should include positive behaviours that should positively influence and motivate the teachers. In addition, such type of leadership should be able to motivate the teachers (Bush & Glover, 2019).

Hallinger (2018) posits that motivation is an essential element of leadership; individuals are able to conduct their duties effectively with the presence of leadership that motivate them positively to exercise their duties and roles. The type of leadership that is required should also take into consideration the desires and needs of the teachers. This will allow the teachers to be effective and be motivated in conducting their duties. Lastly, school leaders should not be rigid, which implies that they have to encourage creativity and innovation among their teachers (Makhasane & Khanare, 2018). Allowing teachers to be creative and critical in their thinking will be essential to generate new ideas and also ensure that there are effective in their duties. Msila (2017) argues that the absence of the qualities described above can have negative implications for the whole school system, including poor performance of teachers and negative learner outcomes and performance.

All in all, the discussion from the literature reveals that the essence of effective leadership in the context of schools should prioritise specific activities that should ensure positive learner

outcomes (Nkabinde, 2017). This means that amongst other things, quality teaching practices should be encouraged. However, such quality teaching practices requires a suitable environment so that it can sprout (Lituchy, et al, 2017). In this context, the role of school leadership, especially principals should be creating a suitable and conducive environment for both learners and teachers. Ogina (2017) states that if this achieved, then good teaching practices and consequently and positive learner performance and outcome can be achieved.

This entails that specific principles should be encouraged to ensure that these benchmarks are achieved (Botha, 2016). Principles like creating transformation, teamwork environment, leadership development which entails that the leader is able a role model and model positive behaviours, ethical leadership, which recognize the desires and needs of teachers. Lastly, school leadership should also recognize the individual differences among the school staff. Gage and Smith (2016) argue that this type of leadership has been lacking among deprived schools in the context of rural South Africa. The consequence has been that, there is some imbalance between these deprived between these schools in terms of leadership, quality of teaching and consequently learner outcomes and performance. This difference is also reflected in terms of school infrastructure, nonetheless this difference has a negative bearing on the efforts adopted to ensure a balanced and inclusive school system (Fouri & Van de Merwe, 2017).

There are numerous strategies and transformation adopted to ensure that schools produced the desired outcomes. Masakhane and Khanare (2018) posit that legislative framework like the South African Schools Act promises a favourable environment for school leadership and governance through decentralising of powers to school level, establishing the School Governance Body. The SGB has considerable right to exercise specific powers that are outlined by the SASA. Wills (2019) states that regardless of this transformation there are specific challenges with regards to leadership in South African schools, especially in under-resourced and public schools. These challenges lead to mismanagement of school funds, poor learner outcomes, lagging behind in terms of school infrastructure and poor teacher performances (Mestry, 2017). Such challenges will have negative impact on the main objectives of education system which is to produce learners who can fit into the modern economic system.

The literature has outlined specific challenges encountered with regards to school leadership and governance in the South African context. These challenges are perceived to reflect the extent of the circumstance (Maringe & Sing, 2017). In addition, some of these challenges are

a result of the dilemma and ambiguity created by the SASA itself. Smit and Scherman (2017) posit that though ambiguity on the role that should be played by the members of the SGB is one of these challenges, there is concern with regards to some members lacking specific skills to effectively exercise their duties. According to Kate and Heystek (2019) the distinction between school governance and professional issues is one the challenges created by the SASA. Some of the skill deficiency include lack of specific financial and policy development and implementation is one of the main challenges encountered by the SGB members. The management of school resources, in especially finances and facilities management, which applies to specialized skills and therefore corresponds to the earlier point, is also stated (Tsoetsi, 2008 and Xaba, 2011). Conflict interactions between members of the SGB, arising from discrepancies in expectations about the functions and/or efficacy with which members perform their duties, are also observed as challenges. Conflict partnerships manifest in parents not engaging in SGB activities (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mncube, et al., 2011 and Xaba, 2011), which is not an independent option. Non-participation in the activities of the SGB, whether in the form of absenteeism or presentism, simply disarms a minority voice rather than engaging everyone in decision-making.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

The study was conducted in two rural schools within the Libode District under the Eastern Cape Department of Education. These schools are both rural schools and they face challenges like difficult to reach because of poor roads, the physical conditions in both schools are inadequate, and learner performance in comparison to schools elsewhere is weak. Although there have been significant infrastructural improvements since 1994, according to the National Education Infrastructure Management System: National Assessment Report published by the Department of Education in 2007, many rural schools still lack clean running water, electricity, libraries, laboratories and computers. More than one-quarter of the schools in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo have more than 45 learners per classroom. However, despite these challenges, some South African high schools facing multiple deprivation in rural areas can produce above average grade 12 pass rates.

While there is a considerable body of current literature focused on schools facing multiple deprivation, there is scarce research on leadership enactment and leadership forms in schools

afflicted by multiple deprivation, particularly servant leadership in the South African context. Therefore, this study investigated the implementation of servant leadership practices of successful high schools afflicted by multiple deprivation.

### **1.3 Motivation of the research**

The concept of servant leadership in education started to impress me this year in our master's in education classes. It reminded me of my primary school teachers who dedicated their lives and their own resources to serve my poor rural community. I was also motivated by leaders like Nelson Mandela who were selfless leaders who fought the harsh Apartheid regime that promoted inequalities in our country. I want to understand how these teachers are following on the footprint of Nelson Mandela in their own unique way to bring change in their own capacity. As a teacher in a public school, I noticed that teachers were not motivated, and they didn't have a sense of serving the community that we are teaching in. Many teachers are not motivated they just go to school so that they can be paid on the month end. This really hurt me hence I decided to do a study on school servant leadership.

Greenleaf (1991) states that the main aim of servant leaders is to serve the needs of those they serve. If principals from multiple-deprived schools apply servant leadership theory learner's needs will be met and they will succeed in their education and become better citizens. My other motivation was that there is not much research that has been done in using servant leadership theory to manage multiple-deprived schools here in South Africa.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

Leadership is critical to students achieving academic success. Therefore, this research is significant as it attempts to assist rural school leaders in dysfunctional schools afflicted by multiple deprivation through the illumination of servant leadership practices of successful school leaders educating learners facing multiple deprivation in rural areas, identification of servant leadership strategies to navigate issues of multiple deprivation in rural schools, and determination of servant leadership strategies employed by successful rural school leaders educating learners impacted by multiple deprivation. A lot of servant leadership studies have been done in private sector organisations (Hoch et al., 2018; Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora, 2008).



Little is known about servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools. Even though few studies have been conducted mostly in townships and suburban schools, there is very few studies that has been done in rural schools. This study aims to fill this gap by conducting this study in rural areas. The findings of this research will help to improve development of theory on servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools. Due to the aim and reason, this research is important, it will disclose what teachers know about servant leadership. It will also give evidence on what aspects of servant leadership are easy or difficult to practise. This study will also share some perspective on efficient techniques and methods that are effective in teaching and practicing servant leadership. The study might also assist teachers to teach one another on how to use servant leadership to enhance learner performance.

### **1.5 Study objectives**

The main objective of this study was to explore the implantation of servant Leadership by teachers in order to transform the lives of poor rural school children.

This study is underpinned by the following research objectives:

- To understand the research participants` conceptualisation and experiences of servant leadership.
- To explore the views of the research participants on the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership in the researched schools.
- To find out how the principles and values of servant leadership can be applied to the practice of school leadership.
- To assess the enabling factors and challenges to the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership to school leadership.

### **1.6 Critical research questions**

- What are the research participants` conceptualisation and experiences of servant leadership in the researched schools?
- What are the views of the research participants on the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership to school leadership?
- How can the principles and values of servant leadership be applied to the practice of school leadership?
- What are the enabling factors and challenges to the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership to school leadership?

## **1.7 Clarification of key concepts used in the study**

### **1.7.1 Servant leadership**

The terms servant and leader form a paradox when brought together (Northouse, 2016; Spears, 2005). Robert K. Greenleaf (1904-1990) pioneered the concept of servant leadership by uniting his industry experience in organizations with the reading of Herman Journey to the East. A leader must first be a servant (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2005 and Northouse, 2016,). The standard of good servant leadership considers how people who are served develop: wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants, as well as how the least privileged in society benefit from service (Greenleaf, 1904 as cited in Spears, 2005).

### **1.7.2 Rurality in South Africa**

South African rural areas are faced with factors such as ill health, undernourishment, a deprivation of privileges, backlogs in education, unsupportive environments (informal settlements like mud houses and gravel roads, lack of water), communication and language deficiencies, limited social status and a negative view of the future. This is supported by Myende and Chikoko (2014) when they argue that rural contexts often suffer social issues like such as disease, poverty, low levels of education, low learner achievement, low self-esteem among those who live there.

### **1.7.3 Multiple-deprived communities**

Multiple deprivation in South African communities' manifests in adverse factors such as human rights violation, high rate of crime, HIV pandemic, a deprivation of privileges, backlogs in education, poor infrastructure, lack of basic human needs like access to clean water, limited social status and a negative view of the future. South Africans living in poverty are vulnerable, powerless and isolated. These adverse conditions are created by factors such as inadequate education, low wages and unemployment, malnutrition, an opportunity-deprived existence, technological backwardness, overpopulation, disadvantageous surroundings, conflict, violence, crime, moral degeneration, substance abuse and psychological degradation. These, in

turn, prolong and aggravate the culture of poverty, thus forming an escalating cycle of deprivation (Landsberg, 2016).

### **1.8 Demarcation of the study**

This research will be done in two rural schools at Libode District which were purposively selected. The area is multiple-deprived. It is an impoverished village. The rural area is situated in Libode a small village town in the former Transkei and the learners are getting a feeding scheme.

### **1.9 Structure of the study**

**Chapter One:** This chapter outlines the research problem of this study as the functioning of servant leadership in two schools in Libode district, Eastern Cape and to determine how teachers are following in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela to change the lives of multiple-deprived learners that they serve.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter provides a detailed discussion on servant leadership in managing multiple deprived schools. In this context, the chapter will provide a robust discussion on the literature in implementation of servant leadership, values of servant leadership, challenges of servant leadership and theory of Greenleaf.

**Chapter Three:** This chapter will have a comprehensive discussion on qualitative research that is used to answer the research questions for the study and methods that were adopted in the data collection process. Furthermore, the chapter will provide justification for adopting these methods and methodologies.

**Chapter Four:** chapter 4 will provide an analysis of the research findings

**Chapter Five:** this chapter will provide conclusion and recommendations of this study.

## **1.10 Chapter summary**

This chapter gives the orientation of the study by presenting the problem statement; the purpose and rationale for the study; the significance of the study; this was followed by the study objectives and the critical questions. The chapter then presented the demarcation and the outline of the study. The following chapter is the literature review and theoretical framework of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter one provided the context and description of the research report. It drew attention to the underlying issues and reasons for the research and issues related to the methodology to be used in this analysis. This chapter focuses on literature review on servant leadership theory and its potential for school leadership in multi-deprived schools. Literature analysis is used for different aims. This study is using literature review to establish the latest theories about Servant leadership philosophy and its potential for school leadership in multi-deprived schools. The term servant- leadership was first coined by Greenleaf (1904-1990) in a 1970 essay titled “The Servant as Leader” (Latif & Marimon, 2019).

#### **2.2 Educational leadership**

Before discussing theories in managing teaching and learning, it is essential to commence with a broader conceptualisation of educational leadership (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2017, p.8). In this study, educational leadership is the professional activity of the leader(s) in the administrative role(s) of collaborating with, directing and having an impact on educators in a specific setting to improve learning and other educational processes (Grundy, 2017). These leaders in a school context are referred to as a school management team (SMT).

Educational leadership ideas have been developed over time from a number of interdisciplinary models (Harling, 2018). As a consequence, leadership theories can be seen as evolving, fluid and subject to further evolution. In addition, any theory of educational leadership is subject to study by researchers in educational centres, colleges, and university settings who aim to do so, to better comprehend the dynamics of leadership in a diversity of educational setting (Clarke & Donoughe, 2017).

Beyond the foundational notions and ideas of educational leadership, the creation of and often innovative theories adds to current canonical literature in the field. Nevertheless, most educational leadership theories contain essential elements, often including skills, strategies and

activities (Lytle et al., 2018). However, majority of educational leadership theories include essential elements, often including skills, approaches and practices. However, a closer look at these elements reflect theoretical forms of educational leadership (e.g. patterns, attributes, and behaviours), characteristics of educational leadership (e.g. management versus leadership, authority, coercion, conceptual frameworks) or operation (Shields, 2017). Dimension depends on the educational setting within which it takes place and requires considering of various and global of interest in different and global societies of the 21st century (Young and Winn, 2017).

### **2.2.1 General Overview of Educational Leadership Styles and Related Theories**

Whereas literature on educational leadership types and similar leadership theories has been questioned by researchers in works such as Spillane, et al. (2004), representative research addresses leadership styles as applicable to the field (Ryan, 2017). Contributions to educational leadership styles provide a reference point from which to begin a more in-depth analysis of educational leadership theories. Having knowledge with these works, for instance whereas literature on educational leadership types and similar leadership theories has been questioned by researchers in works such as Spillane, et al. 2004, representative research addresses leadership styles as applicable to the field (Ryan, 2017). Contributions to educational leadership styles provide a reference point from which to begin a more in-depth analysis of educational leadership theories. Having thorough knowledge and understanding of these works (for instance, servant, authentic, instructional, pedagogical, distributed, transactional, transformational) is essential for students, those who aspire to be leaders and scholars whose interest is mainly in the field to comprehend the manner in which theories have been generated and examined in educational context (Baltaci & Balci, 2017).

### **2.2.2 Types of educational leaderships**

#### **2.2.2.1 Transactional leadership**

Transactional leadership focus on positive outcomes. It follows a specific current order within the organisation and quantifies success in relation to the organisation system of rewards and penalties (Rosebanch, 2018). It is accountable for sustaining routine through handling individual performance and coordinating group performance (Afsfar et al., 2017). Transactional

leaders set the benchmark for their employees in relation to previously defined standards. Performance reviews are standard criteria for judging employee performance. This type of leadership is suitable when employees are motivated by the presence of reward-penalty system. This implies, it will not bring positive outcome if employees are not motivated (Kark, Van Djiki & Vashdi, 2018).

Most organizations and institutions maintain their structure and system through this type of leadership (Baskarada & Watson, 2018). Nonetheless, the difference between this type of leadership and other types of leaders, for instance charismatic and transformational leaders, is that whilst charismatic leadership emphasize influencing a group or organisation in a way which will bring positive outcome (Xenikou, 2017). Transactional leadership emphasize on handling the performance of the individual and establishing how the employees execute his duties in an organised environment (Delegach et al., 2017).

Transactional leadership focus on commanding or telling, whilst transformational leader is mainly a selling style (Jensen, Anderson & Bra, 2018). Similar to most types of leadership in the education system, transactional leadership has specific benefits to institutions and organisations like the school system (Ma & Jiang, 2018). The benefits of this type of leadership is that structure and requirements act as benchmark for the individuals in the institutions. Transactional leadership is not complex, rather it is easy to learn and does not need extensive training (Tung, 2016).

#### **2.2.2.2 Transformational leadership**

The idea of transformational leadership began with James V. Downton in 1973 and was applied to James Burns in 1978. In 1985, researcher Bernard M. Bass further extended the definition to comprise strategies to measure the effectiveness of transformational leadership (Hawkins, 2017). The model allows leaders to show real, strong leadership with the hope that workers will be motivated to follow suit. Although Bass ' model stretches back to the ' 70s, it is still an important style of leadership practiced today — this style of authentic leadership rarely shifts, only the context in which it is used. It is applicable to all sectors (Willis, Clarke & Oconnor, 2017). It can also be applied to the educational institutions like schools (Carletton, Barlin &

Trivisonno, 2018). There are specific hallmarks and features that constitute this type of leadership. The following paragraphs will provide a clear picture of these hallmarks.

Employees on the leadership path will also be trained to become transformative leadership. As argued by Bass, these characteristics and hallmarks differentiate transformational leaders from other types of leaders (Day, Qu & Simmons, 2016). Amongst other things transformational leaders should be able to encourage and motivate in a manner which will bring positive development of followers. In addition, the leader should also exemplify moral benchmark within the organisation and also stimulate the same from others.

### **2.2.2.3 Emotional leadership**

Emotional leadership can be described as that type of leadership in which the leadership is mainly about the feelings and motivation of the employees (Kraus, 2017). The requirements of this type of leadership is mainly about the nature of the leader who should have emotional intelligence, the employees should also be motivated through emotional intelligence (Bergethon & Davis, 2018).

## **2.3 Historical Background of Servant Leadership**

Robert K. Greenleaf (1977/2002) coined the term servant leadership, constructed, and conceptualized servant leadership through exercise in his lifetime. Greenleaf's (1977/2002) idea of the servant leader came out from his studying of Herman Hesse's *The Journey to the East* and this narrative is described as follows: In this tale we see a band of fellows on a legendary journey, probably Hesse's own journey (Frey, 2017). The central figure is Leo, who accompanies the birthday celebration because the servant who does their menial chores, however who additionally sustains them along with his spirit and his music. He is a person of splendid presence (Eva et al., 2019). All goes nicely until Leo disappears. Then the group falls in disarray and the adventure became deserted. They can't make it without the servant Leo (Chicca, Frank & Hagg, 2018). The narrator, one of the events, after some years of wandering, finds Leo and is taken into the Order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known as servant, became in reality the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit, a high-quality and noble leader.



### **2.3.1 Defining Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership is a principle of leadership and a collection of management techniques, which include sharing authority, putting the desires of others first and motivating human beings to perform in addition to possible (Chiniara & Bantien, 2018). Servant leaders promote loose, social, political, environmental and economic conversation in society. This kind of management upholds many ideas of Ubuntu management, together with compassion, humans-centredness, modesty and loyalty. It is the style of management that is much like Ubuntu management (Clark, 2018). Greenleaf defines the position of servant leader as follows (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2018.) The servant-chief is the primary subordinate. This begins with the inherent intuition that one desires to serve first (Lewis, 2016). Then a deliberate selection takes one to intending to lead. That character is dramatically one of a kind from the leader first, likely because of the want to ease an uncommon energy pressure or to benefit fabric possessions (Green & Rodriguez, 2016).

### **2.3.2 Leadership effectiveness**

As mentioned above, Greenleaf's definition of leadership effectiveness pertains to the quantity to which servant leaders are capable of meet the improvement wishes of those served (Spears, 2010). The outcomes upon the least privileged in society and the volume to which harm is brought on to others (Shekari & Nikooparvar, 2012). The test is: "do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will he benefit, or, at least, will he not be further deprived? I would now add one further stipulation: No one will knowingly be hurt by the action, directly or indirectly." (Frey, 2017, p. 243).

While conventional leadership theories understand that staff development is vital for the organization to grow, this is viewed as a step in achieving the vision and mission for the institution (Lewis, 2019). This is sharply exceptional to Greenleaf's view (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). The above definition is stimulating and really widespread. It goes manner past the degree to which the chief's unit is able to meet objective measures of performance which

includes profitability or return on funding and consists of the outcomes of a frontrunner's moves on contributors of society. Non-damage is a universally valued human fee and isn't regularly taken into account in management choice-making. Neither is the effect upon the ones least privileged in society (Greenleaf, 2018).

Effective leadership also relates to the extent to which a company is unified through an outstanding dream, a concept that inspires and unifies (Greenleaf, 1998b). Effective leadership includes the leader serving and being visible as serving, the dream and attempting to find a higher one (Gubanc-Anderson, 2018). Effective leaders are open to persuasion through those inside the corporation who dream the best goals. They also speak religion in the dream to be able to enlist the dedicated support had to move humans closer to accomplishment of the business enterprise's challenge (Holtzhausen, & de Klerk, 2018).

### **2.3.3 Explaining Servant Leadership in Education**

To understand the emergence of servant leadership in education, Greenleaf (1977/2002) stated that liberal arts education offers the best context to equip young people to venture into the unknown, and to face the intricacies of life with assurance (Latif, 2017). He added, "But, having said that the conventional liberal arts curriculum is the best context for such preparation, I must also say that it usually does not contain the preparation and it should" (Dalati, 2016, p. 268). As a consultant, Greenleaf (1999) would not recommend the above operational goal to replace one that is already in place in an organisation, but he would, rather, suggest for the institution to consider adopting it for a limited program and limited number of students who are strongly magnetised by it, and for faculty who are enthusiastic to participate or get involved in it.

Greenleaf (1999) emphasises that to implement the above-mentioned operational goal we need, at the start, a strong educator (for example, a potential servant leader who is committed to helping students grow) who is guided and supported by a consultant to meet the following tests: He or she is deeply committed to the goal of helping prepare a few students to serve and be served by the present society (Baroca, Neto & Silveira, 2017).

They have prepared themselves by thoroughly understanding the two basic needs, learning to cope with the inevitable ambiguity, and faith in the dependability of one's creative resources to produce, in the situation, answers to one's going-in questions as one ventures into new

experience (Robinson & Neubert, 2018). They are prepared to make their way through the faculty-decision process and to keep their colleagues informed and at least acquiescent. (Allen et al., 2016). To understand the above analyses of servant leadership in education, the following review of recent literature on servant leadership in the context of leading public schools illustrates important characteristics of the servant leadership model of leading within educational settings (Harris, 2018).

## **2.4 Implementation and benefits of servant leadership**

According to Hamilton (2008) as cited in Anderson (2011), several outcomes are expected to be derived from servant led organizations. In this part of my research I have looked at the benefits of servant leadership and how they can be applied in schools facing multiple deprivations.

**Mission and value focus:** School principals, who are servant leaders use mission and values to set priorities, build unity and give directions to its members. Clear mission and values in a school serving impoverished learners can be very valuable because the mission and values can be used to clearly state what must be done in order to transform the lives of learners (Quureshi & Aleemi, 2017). Principals communicate their vision through relationships with staff and students and they built these around core values. (Harris, 2018, p. 18).

**Creativity and innovation:** school principals who are servant leaders have the ability to produce new and unique ideas and an ability to implement their creative ideas. This will bring positive change to the school that will be of benefit to the learners. This skill can be used in coming with creative ideas on how to overcome challenges that are faced by those the school serve.

**Responsiveness and flexibility:** servant leaders lead people with openness. This is supported by Harris (2018), he argues that principals in successful multi-deprived schools generated a high level of commitment in others through their openness, honesty and the quality of their inter-personal relationships. (Harris, 2018, p. 21).

**A commitment to both internal and external service:** servant leaders are committed people; they serve their followers with their best ability. They get work done. Harris (2018) in his study emphasized the need to establish an interconnectedness of home, school and community. This shows that principals in successful multi-deprived school are committed in developing both the school and the community that they serve.

**A respect for employees, employee loyalty:** when employees are respected, they become more productive. A leader who respects his followers easily supported by his followers. The school become a healthier place for work. This boost the confidence of teachers because they feel valued. This is benefit is also supported by Harris (2018), he argues that principals in successful multi-deprived schools generated an excessive degree of dedication in others with their openness, honesty and the exceptional of their inter-personal relationships.

**A celebration of diversity:** leaders who are servants celebrate diversity, they do not treat people based on their gender, sexuality, race, religion and class. If everyone in an organization is treated equal everyone develops. Teachers will become motivated to do their work and learners will also enjoy coming to school because they know they are accepted and loved as they are (Sullivan, 2019).

## **2.5 Challenges in implementing servant leadership**

There are numbers of hindrances that prevent the application of servant management style. Some of these are related to the way of life of the place of work, the response of followers, and the attitude of leaders (Latham, 2014). Furthermore, though servant leadership consist of diverse positive aspects, this leadership has different limitations. Initially, the paradoxical nature of the term servant leadership constructs a semantic noise that weakens the capacity of the significance of the leadership style (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Since the title seems to be contradicting itself, which implies that servant leadership could end being observed as fanciful or whimsical. In addition, other scholars have argued that the features described in servant leadership do not resonate with the inherent features of leadership, since it implies that the leader is following (Palumbo, 2016).

Even though the effect of the servant leadership is incorporated, the system of how impact operate as component of the servant leadership is not thoroughly explained in the method. In

addition, some scholars also support the criticism of this approach, Nayab (2011) points out that its soft approach, which is inappropriate for a challenging environment, is linked to a key servant's critique of leadership (Trastek, Hamilton & Niles, 2014). This is because the servant leader lags behind his employees, as Nayab (2011) states. Nayab (2011) also states that, as the servant leader emphasises on 'loving' and 'inspiring' followers, transparency or duty is diminished, stating that most of the key features of the servant leadership seem insufficient on many instances since, first, the servant leader is more often than not forced to sacrifice the characteristic of accountability in order to sustain confidentiality and confidentiality.

Second, in conflict situations, service leaders find themselves faced with the need to terminate listening and consulting processes and to be enforced to issue strict orders (Nayab, 2011). There is also lack of comprise and agreement on the main traits and characteristics on what can be termed servant leadership. Hence there is no ideal definition and common traits, abilities and behaviours that refers to servant leadership. In this context, there is a fierce argument among servant leadership researchers on the central dimensions of this form of leadership. Hence, this makes it difficult to implement servant leadership since there are no ideal benchmarks, criteria and standards for it.

Nayab (2011) argues that the key purpose of leadership is to bring the employee-organization into line by corresponding individual priorities with organisational objectives. Servant leadership gives significant priority to individual needs and aspirations and intend to inspire employees to execute their organizational duties (Sendjaya et al., 2008). This approach does not consistently function and does not sufficiently address aspects regarding to the fitness of individual organisations (Northouse, 2013). The benefits and discrepancies of the Servant Leadership Theory techniques shows that this leadership strategy contributes to unaddressed instances of individual principles and objectives that contradict with organizational objectives and values, and results in organisational objectives that remain unmet.

An examination of other forms of leadership reveals that the servant leadership is merely a utopian. In this instance finding an individual whose personality might fit into this form of leadership might be challenging and complex (Zhong, Stouten & Liden, 2017). The nature of those who lead is that seek specific praise and incentives from those whom they serve. Another limitation to the leadership of the servant is that it requires time to put in place (Van Meter, Chonko, Grisaffe & Goad, 2016).

Another limitation of servant leadership is that it might fit into specific institutions and organizations (Savel & Munro, 2017). The school environment is one of those particular institutions. The school as an institution and organization mainly focus on one outcome, which is the performance of the students (Allen et al., 2017). Such a situation requires competent employees, especially the teachers that interact daily with the students. More importantly, in this instance the situation a hands-on approach and making strong decisions and monitoring the daily performance of teachers. Such type of leadership does not fit with the ideal features of servant leadership (Bennesh, 2017). One of the recurring limitations of servant leadership is that it implies that the leadership have to sacrifice their authority. This contradicts with the ideal of leadership in which the leadership is supposed to make decisions (Blanchard & Broadwell, 2017). The idea feature of servant leadership is that the leader has to sacrifice his personality to fit into servant leadership model. This might erode the leader`s ability to make decisions, which is the main of the leader in the first instance. If the leader`s capacity to make decisions is fragile and weakened, it can be challenging for him to Qualitative study methods were used to study the role of the principal in managing and leading teaching and learning in two secondary schools. Two research methodologies were used in the study drive the organisations and also ensure that organisation to achieve its outcomes (Dube, Zikhali & Dube, 2017).

### **2.5.1 Workplace culture**

Research shows that servant leadership is affected by the workplace culture. Some individuals at work may not react well when they are asked to work beyond the call of duty. At work there are people with a perception that they only do what they are paid for. This is supported by Gonaim (2019), who argues that some individuals in the workplace do not react well if required to work outside of their “comfort zone” or have their regular routine disrupted. She further explains that they may be without experience of servant leadership and will, in consequence, tend to oppose it (Gonaim, 2019, p. 107).

### **2.5.2 Followers' reactions**

Gonaim (2019) argues that Individual personalities vary greatly so not everyone will appreciate a servant leader. She explains that some may take advantage of the servant leader and become lax in fulfilling their responsibilities (Gonaim, 2019, p. 107). This study agrees with her;

servant leaders are people that believe in Ubuntu and they can be easily taken advantaged by followers who are not committed to do their job.

### **2.5.3 Inadequate training**

Some leaders don't have a clear understanding of what is servant leadership. This makes it difficult for them to apply this type of leadership. Gonaim (2019) argues that the lack of professional preparation for leadership is one of the obstacles to adopting the servant leadership style.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

The researcher's approach to the study was informed by the servant leadership theory. The terms servant and leader form a paradox when brought together (Northhouse, 2016 & Spears, 2005). Robert K. Greenleaf (1904-1990) pioneers the concept of servant leadership by uniting his industry experience in organisations with the reading of Herman Journey to the East. He claims that a leader must first be a servant (Greenleaf, 1977; Northhouse, 2016 & Spears, 2005). Standard of good servant leadership considers how people who are served develop: wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants, as well as how the least privileged in society benefit from service (Greenleaf, 1904 as cited in Spears, 2005, p. 2).

The concept of servant leadership has since been applied in various settings (Spears, 2005). Parris and Peachey (2013); Magda, Raja, Panaccio and Wang (2016) and Schulkers (2017) state that servant leadership has been researched in organisation, including rural-community hospitals, the non-profit sector, and financial organisations (McCann, Graves & Cox, 2015; Rezaei, Salehi, Shafiei & Sabet, 2012 and Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). Arrington (2015) and Paul and Fitzpatrick (2015) argue that the application of servant leadership in education is relatively new and it has been explored in various areas including student satisfaction, student leadership in social work education (Litten, 2008), administrator perceptions of servant leadership (McDougle, 2009), faculty as servant leaders, servant teaching (Drury, 2005; Noland & Richards, 2015 and Varney, 2017), and with student success in historically black colleges (Mathis-Lawson, 2017).

In this study, the ten elements of servant leadership (listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, foresight, conceptualisation, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community), first identified by Greenleaf (1977) and later developed by Spears (2010), were considered in relation to managing multiple-deprived schools (McClellan, 2007 and Paul et al., 2012).

### ***Listening***

Servant leaders are known to pay interest with cause; they are seeking for to find out the desire of the corporation and allows to make clear with a view to; seeks to receptively concentrate to what is being stated. Listening is growing the capability and willingness to listen humans out, higher apprehend them, and examine something new (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). Listening talents are crucial for building healthful relationships. True listening builds strength in exclusive humans (Greenleaf, 1977). This characteristic can create a conducive work environment in which it is straightforward for folks who are led and served to raise their concerns with no fear of being victimized (Jackson, 2008). Harris (2018) argues that leaders in SFCC are, specifically, people centred. (Harris, 2018, p. 24). This method that they concentrate and positioned the ones they serve first. Active listening not best affords a medium for sharing information but additionally provides the possibility for building relationships (Dambe & Moorad, 2008).

### ***Empathy***

This characteristic can benefit those learners who are from impoverished families and school employees who are facing difficult challenges in life like bereavement. The school will become an environment with people that care for each other (Mehta & Pillay, 2011). "Caring may improve teaching outcomes, and hence be a competency worth developing for pedagogical reasons. Caring may help leaders produce better outcomes, and hence be a competency that leadership courses might put forward" (Nandram & Vos, 2010, p. 235). Greenleaf (1977) stresses the importance of empathy as a quality at work. Greenleaf (1977) further states that servant leaders need to trust their employees to organise work in ways that create conditions in which employees learn to respect, trust, and value one another.



### ***Healing***

Learners from poor communities are faced with lot of social ills like rape and poverty which have bad impact in their personal well-being (Liu, 2019). Leaders who possess this characteristic will help learners and staff members cope and heal from social ills that they are faced with and with challenges they face in school. Harris (2018) argues that effective leaders in schools facing challenging circumstances are constantly managing tensions and problems.

### ***Awareness***

Servant leaders possess general awareness, especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader (Sun & Shang, 2019). School leaders who know their strengths, weaknesses, style, personality, preferences etc. improve their leadership skills every day because this enables them to be able to reflect on their leadership and what works and doesn't work for them and where they can improve.

### ***Persuasion***

Servant leaders possess primary reliance on persuasion rather than positional authority in making choices within a business enterprise. Influential college leader can be capable of include unpopular selections and be able to inspire workforce contributors to implement them with success (Van Meter et al., 2016). The servant chief seeks to persuade others in preference to force them to comply. When humans are satisfied to do something, they come to be extra efficient than while they're pressured (Johnason, 2017).

### ***Conceptualisation***

Servant leaders seek to nurture their abilities to 'dream big dreams'. Visionary school leaders who are big dreamers that will inspire and help learners grow and become better citizens (Ruhwio & Elkin, 2017). These school leaders are transformational leaders who love progress and growth of those they serve (Sengupta, 2017). The process of conceptualization is rooted in relationships and shared meanings. Principals in SFCC were good at developing and maintaining relationships (Harris, 2018, p. 21).

### ***Foresight***

Servant leaders have the characteristic that enables them to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future (Kaya, Ayadin & Ongun, 2017). School leaders who possess this characteristic will make calculated decisions that will benefit the school and the community that they serve. Greenleaf (1977) implies that an excellent leader has a high stage of intuitive perception about the way the past and the present connect up with the future (Allen, Winston & Taten, 2018). Foresight is set being capable of perceive the significance and nature of occasions before they arise. A servant chief makes use of foresight to help shape the vision so as to make the future a remarkable one for anyone (Keith, 2008).

### ***Stewardship***

Servant leaders generally “hold something in trust for another”; they use openness and persuasion rather than control. School leaders who possess this characteristic take care of the school and make it their responsibility to ensure the success of the school (Knox, 2018, p. 28). They serve and apply the principles of Batho Pele which are promoted by government of South Africa across departments. Greenleaf (1977) believes that each one establishment are locations in which the COEs, staffs, and trustees all play enormous roles in conserving the establishments in believe for the greater right of society.

### ***Commitment to the growth of people***

In addition, servant leaders recognise the notable duty to do everything possible to nurture the growth of employees (Allen et al., 2016). School leaders who own this characteristic will assist inexperienced persons from impoverished families be triumphant and they will also help personnel individuals develop and come to be well evolved right instructors that during return will gain inexperienced persons that they may be coaching. The assignment of the servant leader is to become aware of and meet the desires of others. The servant leader ensures that people get the assets that they need to be achievement. Servant leaders train, educate, and mentor in order that others will use their energy for the coolest of the agency. Principals in a multi-disadvantaged schools modelled teacher management through empowering and inspiring others (Harris, 2018 and Mareus & Peterson, 2019).

### ***Building community***

Servant leaders identify some means for community building among those who work in a given institution (Frick, 2018). School leaders who possess this characteristic will benefit the school by establishing developments that will help staff members learn from each other to grow their own teacher identity and become excellent teachers that will benefit learners. Building network calls for an end result of all of the nine traits formerly mentioned. It is about coming collectively with one purpose.

### **2.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter targeted on literature evaluate encompassing conceptual and theoretical problems that underpin the constructs of servant management. Further to this, literature overview had topics that designated understandings of servant leadership, values wanted for servant management, strategies for servant leadership implementation and challenges and enablers of servant leadership. The next chapter makes a speciality of the research design and technique of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The aspects that are discussed in this chapter are related to the following: research design, research methodology, sampling techniques, methods of data collection, analysis of data as well as the reliability and validity of the methods adopted. In addition, the chapter explores the research methods used as well explaining and justifying each method, i.e. sampling procedures, data collection instruments and the reasons for choosing them over other methodologies.

#### **3.2 Description of study Site**

The study was conducted in the town of Libode. Libode is small town comprising of 5000 inhabitants situated in the Eastern Cape Province. The town mainly serve as the administrative seat of the Nyandeni Local Municipality, which is situated within OR-Tambo District Municipality. Libode is part of the geographical area, previously known as Pondoland. In addition, the economy of Libode is mainly agricultural dominated by subsistence farming and tourism. Libode comprises of the following schools, Wabana Senior Secondary School, Dumezweni Senior Secondary School, Bhekizulu Secondary School, Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary, Chief Henry Bokleni Senior Secondary School, St Patrick's High and Victor Poto Senior Secondary School. These are some of these schools from which the participants for the study were obtained.

#### **3.3 Population and sample**

Qualitative methods of research use different sources of information that include individuals, groups, documents, reports and sites. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) indicate that regardless of the data source, purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. Purposive sampling was used to select these two schools as the researcher had studied and worked in the district and had seen evidence of servant leadership in both schools. Also, having worked with the SMT and educators of both schools as the career guidance volunteer, the researcher had developed a working relationship and familiarity with respondents. Respondents were

therefore comfortable with the researcher and, because of established trust, they were open to questioning. This was advantageous for the study in that vital information was gained easily.

HODs and educators were chosen from teachers who are involved in extra curriculum activities like Saturday classes, career guidance, Arts and Culture and sport, the reason being that these are the teachers that are showing servant leadership characteristics by giving more of their time to the school without extra payment. The principals and HODs were chosen because they were considered to be most knowledgeable about the management practices of the school. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) suggest that researchers choose people that are most likely to yield fruitful data about the research question and are most knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena of interest.

### **3.4 Data collection strategies/research instruments**

Qualitative study methods were used to study the exploration of servant leadership in two secondary schools. Two research methodologies were used in the study. The data collection strategies included (i) questionnaires and (ii) semi-structured interviews for the principals, HODs and educators. These methods are useful for the qualitative approach, operating within the natural setting of the school. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that interviews permit a clearer understanding of how the participants understand their worlds and allow for behaviours to be studied as they naturally occur.

After obtaining permission from The Eastern Department of Education and the school, the principals of each school were contacted to arrange times for the questionnaires to be administered and dates and times for the interviews to be conducted. The responses of the individuals during the interviews were recorded in writing by the researcher, as the participants were not comfortable in being recorded. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) point out that in many situations, handwritten notes may be the best method of recording. The recording of interviews by hand proved to be a difficult task, as it was taxing to keep pace with the replies and also, they were speaking in isiXhosa and I had to translate their responses to English. However, this did not influence the integrity of the interview process or the data that was being collected.

### *Semi structured Interviews:*

Standardised open-ended interviews were conducted, in which the questions were predetermined. The principal and HODs were interviewed for approximately 45 minutes each. The interviews allowed for direct data collection from the informant. “In a standardised open-ended interview, participants are asked the same questions in the same order....” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 355). The use of open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide more information, including feelings, attitudes and understanding of servant leadership, giving the researcher better access the respondents' perceptions on the issue.

### *Questionnaires:*

In order to ensure reliability and validity of data collection, questionnaires were also used. The HODs and educators in each school were asked to complete the questionnaire, through which the perceptions, beliefs and practices of the SMT regarding the implementation of servant leadership were elicited. Educators were also asked to complete the questionnaires in order to maximize the validity and reliability of the results obtained from the principals. The uses of questionnaires had both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages were that they were relatively quick to administer, covered a large number of participants and ensured anonymity (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 195). The disadvantages of the questionnaires were that they did not allow the researcher to probe follow up questions.

### **3.5 Analysis of data**

From the transcripts taken during the interviews and from the questionnaires, brief summaries were typed for manual review. As indicated by McMillan and Schumacher (2010), interviews and questionnaires are designed to elicit the opinions, feelings and knowledge of the subjects. In order to analyse these, the researcher highlighted and identified relevant emergent themes. This was done by coding the data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) show that highly structured qualitative data (like open-end responses from surveys or tightly defined interview questions) is typically analysed using codes. Coding involves reading the data and demarcating segments within it. Each segment is labelled with a ‘code’ – usually a word or short phrase that suggests how the associated data segments inform the research objectives (MacMillan &

Schumacher, 2010.p. 371). MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) further define codes as the perspectives or views of participants.

### **3.6 Reliability and validity**

In order to enhance the validity, the researcher employed multi-method strategies of data collection (like, semi structured interviews and questionnaires). These multimethod strategies allowed for triangulation of data, thereby providing different insights into the topic of research and making the findings of the research more credible.

Triangulation is a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) triangulation uses different sources, situations and methods to see whether the same patterns keep recurring. Methodological triangulation involves using more than one method to gather data, such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents. By using different data collection strategies, the researcher was able to ensure that the research was adequate and accurate. This allowed the researcher to compare responses during the interviews and questionnaires and find consistency in the responses.

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

Ethical Considerations can be specified as one of the most important parts of the research. Research participants should not be subjected to harm in any ways whatsoever. Respect for the dignity of research participants should be prioritised. Full consent should be obtained from the participants prior to the study (Ryen, 2016). There are six specific ethical areas which need to be included in a research study. In this study, the following research ethics were adhered to, voluntary engagement, informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, the potential for harm, the recording of results and more basic ethical issues.

During fieldwork, the researcher recognized the principles of informed consent and confidentiality. Participants were made aware of the rationale of the research and it how it affected them before they agree to participate. The researcher followed a procedure of informing participants that they had the right to choose not to participate. This ensured that

participants that were willing to participate were interviewed. In the context of qualitative research, the primary objective of the researcher is to engrave, identify and comprehend topics through their natural environments. To order to accomplish this, therefore, the researcher had to establish a relationship with the participants under investigation. In addition, the researcher ensured that ethical issues had a high profile in terms of entry, maintaining privacy and ensuring trust. a. It was therefore the researcher's ethical obligation to protect the interests and well-being of information sources. The researcher therefore taken the preceding steps to ensure that all ethical issues have been addressed.

### **3.7.1 Gaining Entry**

Prior to data collection, the researcher attained the right to conduct a study from the Wits University Human Research Ethics Committee and from the Eastern Cape Department of Education. An ethical clearance certificate was issued. The researcher promised to share research findings with some of the participants for peer review purposes prior to publication. In accordance with this, it was agreed to the participants that the findings of the study would not be falsified and would therefore be evaluated as objectively as possible. Participants were therefore told that the information collected in this research would only be used for academic reasons and would be handled with absolute discretion.

### **3.7.2 Willing participation**

Participants willingly participated in this study and expressed their opinions on the implementation of the servant leadership in multi-deprived schools. The researcher had to initially build mutual trust with the participants, so they were free to share their information with the researcher.

### **3.7.3 Confidentiality**

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured, where appropriate, in a bid to protect the rights of the participants. For example, participants were told not to reveal their names, where they came from, their occupation and other details that they found irrelevant to share with the researcher. This allowed them to explore their narratives without fear of being victimized.



### **3.8 Chapter summary**

The main aim of this chapter was to provide a detailed explanation of the research methodology and methods utilised in this study. In that context, the following aspects have been discussed. The research methods, sampling methods and techniques, data collection instrument, data analysis approach, and ethical issues. The preceding chapter discusses the research findings and data analyses and describes the systematic and careful application of the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to provide a detailed analysis of the data findings which were collected through in-depth interviews with research participants. In this context, the data for this study will be categorized into themes, since the data analysis is mainly informed by the thematic data analysis. Thematic analysis is one of the common forms of data analysis method in qualitative researches which categorize data into themes and subthemes (Castleberry & Nolen, 2016). More importantly, the themes for the study were derived from the critical research questions explored at length in the introductory chapter.

#### **4.2 Conceptualisation and understanding of servant leadership**

In this context, the study found different conceptualisations of servant leadership. This conceptualization is analysed in the following themes. Majority of the participants conceptualised servant leadership from the individual experience and their perspectives. Hence the research presents the findings from the perspective of the participants.

##### **4.2.1 Growth and well-being of the school community**

One of the conceptualisations of the servant leadership was that it emphasizes mainly on the improvement, growth and well-being of the community. This is supported by the following statement from Mrs Zulu a post level one teacher at Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School said:

*What differentiates servant leadership from other types of leadership is that, the servant leadership is empathetic towards the community he serves, in the school context, it implies that the leader will be concerned with the growth and welfare of the school community which extends from teachers, pupils and the parents of the pupils.*

(Mrs Zulu a post level one teacher at Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School)

*Servant leadership is essential in the sense that it prioritizes the needs and the welfare of the people, individuals and broader community, this in contrast to traditional forms of leadership. My understanding of servant leadership is that needs of the community should be given significance*

(Mr Ndamase a Principal from Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School).

Another participant (Mr Ndabula a senior teacher from Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School) also stated the following,

*Serving the community is one of main features of this type of leadership, this implies that the servant leadership understands that whatever situation that is facing the community should be addressed, in the context it might entail improving the pass rate, recruiting new teachers, improving the school infrastructure since the aspect also benefits the community at large.*

(Mr Ndabula, a senior teacher from Tutor Ndamase Secondary School)

The findings revealed that the participant perceived that servant leadership is essential for the growth and wellbeing of the community. The participants stated that in the context of servant leadership, the difference between the community and the school become thin. This is because, servant leadership regard school as part of the community, hence it is necessary to promote the growth and wellbeing of the community. Mr Ndabula a senior teacher also supported this perception, by stating that servant leadership prioritize the needs of the community. Ms Munetsi a post level one teacher also noted that servant leadership is essential since it is empathetic towards the community.

The importance of servant leadership to the wellbeing of the community is confirmed by Kiersch and Peters (2017) who state that in the school context, the community is broader; it includes teachers, pupils and the parents. The role of the leader is to ensure that the objective of the school is met. In the context of the servant leadership, focusing on the growth and wellbeing of the community entails that the leader will focus on the welfare of the individual teachers. Temple and McCaslina (2017) also support this notion by stating that servant leadership assist the community wellbeing through creating conducive working environment. Ensuring that their growth as professional teachers. Servant leadership tends to have an impact on the emotional wellbeing of workers through focusing on "one-on - one contact to recognize the strengths, wishes, interests, aspirations, and abilities of those individuals “supports

employees in their ability to articulate themselves on the job. In addition, their employer's nurturing causes them to return the same nurturing towards their co-workers.

Furthermore, Savel and Munro (2017) state that servant leadership prioritizing of the welfare and needs of the community emanates from the fact servant leaders understand themselves as servants of the community being led. In the context of the school, it means being servant to the whole school community which comprises the teachers, pupils and parents (Savel & Munro, 2017). What should be emphasized in this context is that servant leadership prioritizes encouraging a sense of community in every organization. Stewart, Carino and Stewart (2017) argue that sense of community is different from each organization, for instance private organisations, corporations, individual departments, public agencies (Stewart, Carino and Stewart, 2017). In this sense the school system as a community does not involve the teachers only. In addition, the dynamics of the school system does inherently the sense of community to extend and broaden beyond the scope of teachers. In this instance to include other important stakeholders, for instance the school governing bodies that have essential contribution with regards to the school as a community.

Whittington (2017) posits that since the servant leader focus on the wellbeing and needs of the community, it implies that they have to accommodate the perspectives of other stakeholders like the school-governing bodies, parents and pupils. Servant leader behaviours promote a sense of encouragement and outreach to the community (Whittington, 2017). The behaviours start with conceptualization that the community being served should be prioritized. Allen et al. (2017) argues that his attitude enables the leader to look at the bigger picture and take the situation into account whilst also being capable of solving a major issue or think about a remedy that meets the organization's morals and values (Allen, et al., 2017). How that could quickly spill over into community support is plain to see. Being able to comprehend a community issue and see how the conceptualization of a challenge for a few can have enduring and over-arching impacts on the whole community. Coetzer, Bussin and Geldenhuys (2017) argue that the perception of community support would be recognized by a servant leader and would be urged to provide the support needed to solve this situation.

#### 4.2.2 Acknowledge other People's perspective

One of the major findings of the study was that the research participants conceptualised servant leadership as one in which the leader acknowledges the perspective of other people, this was substantiated by Mr Jola who noted the following,

*Since servant leaders believe that they are servant of the organization, institutions and whatever entity is applicable, its values and principles are different from other types of leadership in the sense that the servant leader provides importance to listening to other individuals, employees and relevant individuals in the organization*

(Mr Jola a Senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School).

Mr Masango a senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School stated that:

*My conceptualization of the servant leader is that he is supposed to acknowledge and accommodate the perspective of other individuals; these might include other employees, supervisors and junior managers. In the school context, it implies that the principal is expected to acknowledge the perspective of the teachers, school governing bodies and the parents.*

(Mr Masango a senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School)

The findings also reveal that participants acknowledge the role of servant leadership in acknowledging the perspective of other individuals, especially subordinates. In most traditional leadership, the leader does not provide his followers and those below his hierarchy the platform to express their perspective. This is actually different in servant leadership does provide the platform which accommodate different perspectives. This was cemented by the statement from Mr Jola a senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior secondary who stated that servant leadership, the orientation of servant leaders is that they are actually servants of the community and the institution. Hence it implies that they should accommodate different perspectives. In addition, another senior teacher from Bhekuzulu, Mr Masango, also argued that naturally the servant leader is oriented to accommodating opinions from other individuals.

The literature also supports in particular Robinson and Neubert (2017) who argue that since the main purpose of servant leadership is to serve the community since the leader is a servant of the community? It implies that the servant leadership should be accommodate and include the ideas of other individuals This is through acknowledging the perspective and contribution

of other individuals. When applied to the school context, it implies that the principal should include the perspective and other individuals when making decisions. This is also supported by Spears and Lawrence (2017) who state that decisions made by the principals affect the pupils, parents and the teachers. For instance, the parents might advise the school to recruit new and better qualified teachers. In addition, the teachers might also advise the principal to improve their working conditions, for instance new books and furniture. Chiniara and Bentein (2018) argue that the servant leader is compelled to listen to these perspectives and accommodate them when making decisions. Participants also noted what is said by the authors.

Slyven and Crippen (2018) argue it is mainly from the idea that the servant leader should be open-minded, the servant leader needs to be open-minded, as significantly focuses on the concept of creation, teamwork and servitude. He has to be open to listening to people's ideas and welcoming their important. It's important that the leader not only take this in passively, but that he or she should actively pursue out different opinions, different ways of viewing at things and approaches to try and overcome the manner in which conventional leadership styles is conducted. In the school context, the main objective is attaining sustainable learner outcome. Covey (2018) states that this implies that the perspective of every essential stakeholder should be accommodated, from the teachers, parents, the school governing bodies and the pupils. In this context, servant leadership does provide the platform for every individual to express his or her ideas. This will contribute immensely to the overall objective of the school community.

#### **4.2.3 Maximising the potential of others**

One of the major findings was that servant leadership can be conceptualized as emphasising on the maximising the potential of others. Since the school community includes students, teachers and the larger community. In the school context, servant leadership should be seen as prioritising the potential of these individuals. It stems from an understanding that the servant leadership should focus on serving those who should be led, this was supported by the following from Mrs Majola:

*The essence of servant leadership is that; it maximises the potential of others. In particularly those who should be led, when applied to the school system, it might mean the teachers, pupils. Maximising the potential of others implies that the servant leader should be selfless*

(Mrs Majola, Senior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

Mr Khumalo, Senior Teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School said that:

*My understanding of servant leadership is that, the leader should prioritise the welfare of other individuals, in addition this also imply that leadership provide significance to maximising and enhancing the potential of other individuals. In the school system it entails that the potential of the following individuals, the teachers, pupils, community and the school governing bodies should be prioritized*

(Mr Khumalo, Senior Teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

Additionally, Mr Kunene, post level one Teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School stated that:

*Traditional leadership has always consistently emphasised on ensuring that the power and essential decision making rests on the leader, however servant leadership is the opposite of conventional leadership styles, it a sensitive and ethical leadership in which the leadership give significance to the potential of those being, it then mean the servant leadership should maximise their potential*

(Mr Kunene, post level one Teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

The response from the participants reveal that servant leadership does emphasize on maximising the potential of other individuals, for instance their followers. This was echoed by the perception of Mr Majola a senior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary who noted that in the context of the school, maximising the potential of pupils and the teachers. In addition, Mrs Khumalo a senior teacher at the same also noted that servant leadership does provide a conducive environment for ensuring that the potential of their followers is enhanced. Since the opinion of other individuals will be accommodated, the servant leaders must ensure that the potential of such individuals will be improved. Mr Kunene a junior also stated that servant leadership is uniquely positioned to maximise the potential of others, especially their followers.

The literature also substantiates this perspective, (Kgatle, 2017) argues that applied to different organisations, the conceptualization of servant leadership as maximising potential might have different implications. In the school system, it implies for instance if certain teachers lack specific skills and experience, these skills can be improved through conducting workshops (Kgatle, 2017). It might be newly trained teachers that are struggling to integrate themselves in the environment. It could also be senior teachers; whose skills need abilities to accommodate novel skills that are applicable in the current setting. Timiyo and Yeadon-Lee (2016) argue that

the current system allows for the school governing bodies to be accommodated in terms of their contribution. However, some of the members of the school governing bodies might lack specific relevant knowledge on how the school is operated, some might lack general literacy.

In addition, they might also lack knowledge on policy related school. However, since their contribution is essential, it is important that their potential be maximised. In the context of servant leadership, it entails that some of leadership training and skill development should be provided to the school governing bodies. Members of the SGB may be equipped to prepare themselves to carry out their duties adequately. The training provided relates to the roles of an SGB and not specifically technical or leadership skills

Jensen (2017) posits that since one of the hall marks of servant leadership is listening and having an awareness of the issues facing those being led. It also signifies that leadership should accommodate their followers through improving any weakness that they have. The main aim of every organisation is to meet its objectives, this can only be accomplished if everyone's potential is maximised. In the school system, it also implies that the leadership should have an awareness of how the potential of schoolteachers, school governing bodies and the pupils can be maximised. In this context, a participant noted the following: Thompson (2017) notes that traditional leadership has always been practiced as a pyramid, in which the decisions of those individuals who lead were not questioned (Thompson, 2017). However, servant leadership provides a platform for every individual to contribute towards the whole organisation. In this essence maximising the potential of others is part and parcel of this type of leadership.

#### **4.2.4 Empowering Others**

One of the conceptualisations of servant leadership is that it emphasises on empowering others, servant leadership is rooted in the belief that the leadership should develop some form of trust between them and their followers (Gotsis and Grimani, 2016). This trust should extend to the leader empowering those being led; in this context Mr Solontsi noted the following:

*Unlike other form of leadership in which the leader has no sympathy for those being led, in servant leadership this is different. The first step is to establish trust between the leader and the followers. This will lead to the leader empowering his subordinates. In the school context, it entails that the leader should empower those around him*



(Mr Solontsi, principal from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary school).

In addition, another research participant noted the following:

*servant leadership is a form of a leadership in which the main purpose of the leader is to attain the main objective of the organization, amongst other aspects through building trust with those being lead, in addition also empowering them to ensure that their capacity to contribute to the organisation is improved*

(Mrs Lulama, principal from Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School).

Another research participant who was a principal also noted the following:

*Since one of the main aim of servant leadership is to ensure that contribution of other individuals should be involved and accommodated, it also mean that the servant leader prioritise empowering them so that the contribution will be important for the organisation*

(Mrs Blossom, principal from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

*The main essence of servant leadership is that the leader should accommodate the perspective of others, including those being led. Since the main aim is to ensure the contribution is essential to the objective of the organisation, the servant leader goes beyond accommodating their perspective through empowering those that are being led in the organisation*

(Mr Ndlovu, principal from St Patrick High school).

Another participant also noted the following:

*Servant leaders empower their followers through different aspects, perhaps the most important form of empowerment is through improving their skills and capacity. It could be through providing them with essential educational skills which contribute immensely to their growth as professionals within the organisation*

(Mr Dikeni, principal from Wabana Senior Secondary School)

*Servant leadership focus on Empowering and improving individuals: holding people responsible for their own actions in the workplace. By empowerment the leader of the servant respects workers ' skills and abilities. The servant leader always needs to encourage workers in their actions and in their personal growth*

(Mr Mkhize, principal from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School)

*One of the ways through which servant leaders empower their followers and employees is through providing employees with positive and constructive feedback about their performance. It implies that the feedback might have negative aspects*

*of the employee's performance, however the leader will motivate the followers so as to improve their performance*

(Ms Maqubeka, principal from Chief Henry Bokleni Senior Secondary School)

The response from the participants reveal the findings that one of the hallmarks of servant leadership is ensuring that their followers are empowered. This is supported by the statement from Mr Solontsi, a principal from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School, who states that what differentiates servant leadership from other forms of leadership is its sympathy for others, especially the followers. This position servant leadership to empowers others given that the contribution of followers should be prioritized in servant leadership. In addition, another principal from Tutor Ndamase Senior Secondary School, Mrs Lulama also argued that empowering others is very essential for building trust between the servant leaders and their followers. Mrs Blossom a principal from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School noted that since servant leadership is meant to accommodate the perspectives of their followers, empowering others is essential. A principal from St Patrick High School, noted that servant leadership goes beyond empowering its followers to including their contribution in making essential decisions.

Roberts (2017) states that an aspect which has been emphasised in this context has been the fact servant leadership should emphasise on among other aspects, teacher empowerment. This entail that they should be good relationship between the principal which translate to the principal empowering his subordinates that include teachers. Roberts (2020) posits that there are many ways through servant leadership empowers those being led, it could be through delegating responsibility to them. For instance, in the school context the principal might provide or delegate authority and responsibility to deserving senior teachers or those who are working hard. In addition, servant leaders might also empower others through educating them, if applied in the school context it means the principal might prioritise the growth and development of the teachers, school governing bodies and school employees. Organizations consist of different individuals with different talent; hence empowerment recognise that this diverse talent should be develop for the sake of the organisation. In this context, another participant also noted the following:

Setto and Sarros also notes that the Servant-Leaders choose to empower people and teams. It is important in the workplace that Servant-Leaders allow workers to reflect, conduct and act accordingly to manage their work and make decisions as separate, autonomous individuals. The power allows employees to take control of their own destiny at work and in their lives.

Servant leadership empowers employees within the organisation through valuing the contribution of the key stakeholders in the organization. Consisting of the following individuals, the employees, junior managers and whatever is applicable to the organization (Stouten and Liden, 2020). Stouten and Liden also add their perspective by noting that one of the ways in which servant leaders is through provide positive feedback. One of the most relevant feedback targets is reward and recognition. Employees want to know how and deserve constructive feedback. Servant-leaders realise the importance of conversing with employees, thanking them and evaluating the performance of employees while respecting the worker. The research participants are in line with what has been said by the scholars.

Work challenges are system based and not individuals. Servant-Leaders realize that the first reaction when there is an issue in the workplace is to look at the work system. What had caused workers to fail in the system? How to change the program to facilitate employee success? (Jerayaj & Gandolfi, 2019). According to Jerayi and Gandolfi (2019) Servant-Leaders always choose to tackle the problem rather than attack the individual. In the context of the school system, for instance the school might be failing to get positive learner performance. In this context, problem might be mainly the teachers. It could be a myriad of aspects that include lack of proper infrastructure like textbooks, learner walking long distance leading to constant absenteeism. Hence in this context, the servant principal takes a closer look on these problems and find a solution.

#### **4.2.5 Achieving results**

One of the main findings regarding the conceptualisation of servant leadership was that servant leadership is that type of leadership that prioritise on achieving results that are favourable to the organisation. In this context, Mr Mutambirwa noted the following concerning servant leadership:

*Servant leadership prioritise on achieving results for the organization, in this context the values and principles of the servant leadership function as networks or nodes in the sense that, in achieving the desired results the leader has to implement other principles and values of servant leadership, like listening to other, empowering employees. However, the main aim is to achieve the desired results or outcome*

(Mr Mutambirwa, Senior Teacher from St Patricks High).

*Servant leadership focus and prioritise achieving results within the organisation, however the understanding is that this can only be achieved, if the employees and other stakeholders are motivated in conducting their duties. In this context, what it implies is that motivating employees will translate to desirable outcome and results for the organisation*

(Mrs Ajayi, a post level one Teacher from St Patricks High).

The findings also reveal that servant leadership focus on achieving results within the organization. This was substantiated by Mr Mutambirwa a senior teacher from St Patricks High, who noted that the servant leader is oriented towards achieving results within the organisation, in the context of the school it implies learner outcome. In addition, Mrs Ajayi a post level one Teacher from the same school also supported the statement by stating that servant leader does realise that achieving results for the organization should be achieved through motivating employers within the organisation.

As argued by Sendjava (2016) ethical leadership depends on the ability to represent efficiently and build trust. Servant leaders encourage others and work toward a better society through commitment. Servant leaders generate organizational results by prioritizing their followers ' interests and those they serve. In the context of the school system, achieving results will mean that the servant principal should prioritize learner outcome, and this can be achieved through providing significance to the welfare of the schoolteachers, empowering other essential stakeholders within the school system.

Hall (2017) notes that servant principals believe that, the only way to achieve results is to value the contribution of other individuals within the organization. This can be achieved through prioritizing other principles of servant leadership, valuing the contribution of employees, improving and maximizing the potential of employees. The literature Welty et al. (2017) highlight that servant leadership if properly implemented might achieve desired outcome within the organization. This is because, it values the welfare of its employees before it prioritises achieving the results of the organisation. This mainly from the understanding that achieving results and objectives of the organisation if the employees are motivated.

### **4.3 To explore the views of the research participants on the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership in the researched schools.**

One of the main objectives of the study was to explore the perspective of the participants on the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership in the school. In this context, the following section will provide the analysis linked to this objective, the analysis will also be arranged into themes and subthemes.

#### **4.3.1 Create an environment of working together**

One of the main research findings was that the research participants perceived servant leadership as promoting an element of collective working together to achieve the main objective of the organisation. In this context Mrs Mbatha noted the following:

*I think the ideals and principles of servant leadership allow the organization and its people to collective work together, since the decision-making process does not merely rest on the leader, however the leader does prioritise to ensure that everyone is able to contribute to the decision-making. This will create an environment of working together*

(Mrs Mbatha a post level one Teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School).

Additionally, (Mr Wana, Senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School) stated that:

*Traditional form of leadership was mainly hierarchical in nature; this create an environment in which only few individuals made decisions regarding the organisation. Such a scenario does not promote teamwork and working collectively, however in servant leadership every individual `s contribution is valued by the organisation through listening and ensuring that their potential is maximised and improved*

(Mr Wana, Senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School).

This was further stated by Mrs Makapela a junior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School when she said:

*Work together as a team should be a priority within the organisation, this entail that the manner in which reward and recognition are offered should not create conflicts and competition within the organisation. In this context, a servant*

*leadership is suitably positioned to promote the organisation working together to achieve the organisation results. This is achieved through ensuring that there is no conflict of goals within the organisation*

(Mrs Makapela a junior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School)

The participants also expressed the servant leadership emphasise on working together. This comes from the fact that servant leaders are oriented towards ensuring that every individual does contribute to the organization. This was reinforced by the statement from Mr Mbatha, a junior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary who stated that, servant leadership is conducive and oriented towards collectively functioning within organisation. Initially, making essential decisions does rest primarily on the leader. However, it also includes other stakeholders, especially the subordinates. Mr Wana a senior teacher also reiterated the same idea by stating that unlike, traditional types of leadership. which excludes others in making essential decisions. Servant leadership does emphasize on combining ideas and working together. In addition, a post level one teacher from the same school, Mr Makapela posited that working together should be a priority within the organisation.

According to Burch (2017) the servant leader has to work collaboratively in the way you work. Part of his job is to create a spirit of cooperation and of team. The ability to trust his team and inspire them to do the job is vital to this, as he support them instead of directing them. In addition, Sullivan (2017) also states that servant leadership is bound to have cooperation and collective effort in the sense this type of leadership focus on building a sense of community within the organisation. It means no one should be left out in the essential process of the organization. Vickery (2016) supports this idea by noting in instances, when the organisation does not achieve the desired outcome and results, the servant leadership does not emphasise on merely criticizing the performance of the individuals. Rather he or she prioritise checking the system and the organisation and identify the main issues affecting the organisation which could be beyond the employees (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). Gandolfi and Stone (2018) argues that in this context, it does indirectly promote the idea of working together collectively to ascertain the main problem. In this context, every day's input will be valued.

Burton and Peachey (2017) note that servant leadership is bound to create a conducive environment in which the team and employees work together collectively to achieve the main objective of the organization. This is done through identifying the main issues and challenging

facing the organisation, and later identify solutions collectively with the rests of the organisation. Irving and Longbotham (2007) state that management would encourage staff to cooperate rather than compete with each other. In the context of the school system it implies, the objective of the school is to attain desired learner outcome, which implies that teachers, principals and school governing bodies should not compete against each other, rather they should work together to achieve the main goal of the school as an organisation. This is to ensure that learner outcome is desirable and improved if there are any cases where there is reduction in performance. In this context a research participant agreed with the authors.

According to Bensch (2019) in Servant leadership, the leader work tirelessly to ensure that individuals sacrifice their personal goals for the benefit of the organization. Sacrificing their individual goals, implies that the common is mainly to achieve the organizational objectives. Larsen (2019) also supports this by stating that, the style of servant leader is especially well equipped to achieve this clarification and confidence in their teams. Servant leaders undertake this through actions that place team members as a priority, inspire and help them grow and thrive as individuals and as members of the team. The literature state that by encouraging team potency in this way, servant leaders could lead teams to better perform and participate in the organisation.

#### **4.3.2 Fosters autonomy**

The significance of leadership in the school system should not be undermined; principals and school leaders are essential and uniquely positioned to achieve main purpose of the education system, which is producing skilled learners (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017). In this context, school leadership plays a vital through recruitment of quality employees in the organisation. In the context, one of the major findings regarding servant leadership was the perspective it creates an environment of autonomy. In the context of the school environment this implies that the leader or the principal will ensure that teachers have autonomy in the classroom, though there will be guided with the common goal of ensuring improved learner outcome. Fostering autonomy is particularly importance, especially in the school and education system where school leaders have been accused of creating a rigid and a robot environment in which only their decisions are respected. In this context, this was supported by Mrs Tekeleng when he said:

*Unlike other type of leadership, in which the leadership is commonly hierarchical in form hence creating environment in which the employees and those being led have no authority and autonomy in their working environment. In the context of servant leadership ensuring autonomy is a priority, in addition the leadership is also obliged to provide positive feedback for the employees to ensure that the employee does not divert from the main goals*

(Mrs Tekeleng, post level one teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary school).

In addition, another participant noted the following:

*Unlike other forms of leadership, servant leadership does not foster a rigid environment, it ensures that everyone work collectively, however through providing everyone with the autonomy to achieve the main goals of the organisation*

(Mr Qumba, teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary school).

*In the context of the school education system, servant leadership does provide autonomy with regards to decision-making, this is particular important especially for teachers who are well positioned to make decisions on the content that should be taught to students, the curriculum that should be followed and it should be implemented in the classroom*

(Mrs Katikati, a senior teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary school).

*Another research participant noted the following, servant leadership is actually important especially in the school system, historically majority of the leadership implemented in the school system have a tendency to closely monitor teacher performance, and how they teach in the classroom, their instructional strategies. This does not foster creativity rather it reduces teachers to robots*

(Mr Mdantsane, a senior teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary school).

*Servant leadership is essential in ensuring that teams within the organisation have autonomy when executing their duties within the organisation. More importantly, the servant leader does provide an environment which lead to autonomy, through for instance empowering the employees within the organisation*

(Mr Mhlongo, a post level one teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary school)

The perspectives expressed by participants reveal that, they regarded servant leader as essential with regards to providing the platform for autonomy. Which means that followers and workers in the organisation and institution are not controlled by the superiors and the leaders. This



allows them to make autonomous decisions and more importantly to make significant decisions within the organisation. This was echoed, by Mrs Tekeleng a post level one teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary School, who expressed that unlike other forms of leadership, servant leadership does prioritise ensuring that followers and subordinates have conducive environment for being autonomy. In addition, another post level one teacher from the same school, Mr Qumba also noted that expressed, servant leadership is a rigid form of leadership, since the leader does allow autonomy in making decisions. This is mainly from the orientation that everyone should have a say or contribute immensely with regards to making decisions within the organisation. Mrs Katikati a senior teacher from the same school, also noted that allowing autonomy is of particular important for those individuals who are well positioned to make important decisions. Mrs Mdantsane a senior teacher from the same school, also stated that historically, teachers were not allowed to be autonomous. However, servant leadership is essential in changing such traditional way of doing things and provide the platform for autonomy.

According to Qui and Dooley (2019) the reason why servant leadership fosters autonomy is that the leader has believe in the potential and ability of his followers. Since there is sense and environment of trust between the leader and the followers. As shown by Hall (2016) servant leaders acknowledge and respect every individual's thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, desires and recommendations to provide them with the appropriate circumstance conditions for developing their creativity and ability. Greenleaf (1970) notes that the leader of servants wants to serve others so that they can evolve as people, become healthier, smarter, freer and more independent. One particular through which servant leadership fosters autonomy among employees is through empowerment; this is in the same context as realised by the participants.

Leader servant ensures he empowers his followers. Chiniara and Bentein (2016) posit that empowered employees accept responsibility for their actions, take initiative, are innovative and learn from their mistakes, leading them to experience autonomy which in turn leads to increased performance of tasks. Ferris (2018) notes that in the context of the education system, autonomy will imply that the servant principal will provide autonomy to the teacher in relating to what they teach students and how they should undertake it. This is a major issue of discussion; the argument is that autonomy will ensure that teachers are able to make professional, responsive and creative decisions. Limiting their autonomy will lead to the opposite. As highlighted by Mareus and Patterson (2019) servant leadership in the school

system has an understanding that teachers are well positioned to make decisions regarding the teaching of students (Mareus & Patterson, 2019). This also includes among other aspects the instructional methods, designing lessons. This is different from traditional leadership in the school system that attempts to micromanage the teacher. In this context, a research participant mentioned what has been said by the authors. Green and Rodriguez (2017) state that in this regard, stricter regulations, tougher job standards, greater administrative supervision or more burdensome teacher-evaluation processes, for example, would ultimately suppress teachers' educational imagination and sensitivity, which could create a range of negative outcomes, like lower student performance or higher job dissatisfaction and teacher attrition rates. Since no legislation applicable to all teachers will take the variety of strengths and needs of students into account, the argument goes, major decisions about educating students should be reserved to teachers.

Kreets and Abaldo (2017) reflects that likewise, local school leaders and administrators are better placed to assess teacher performance, rather than specific policies that apply to all teachers in a district. In the context of servant leadership, it implies that the school leaders and administrators should reserve majority of the decision-making to the teachers (Kreets & Abaldo, 2017). However, this does not imply that they will be no checking and monitoring to ensure that the main outcome needed is achieved. However, in the context of servant leadership, in the instances where providing autonomy to teacher does not lead to desired outcome. This can be corrected through collectively working together to find a solution, in which both the teachers and principal check and identifying the main issue leading to difficulties in attaining results.

### **4.3.3 Foresight**

Research participant stated that servant leadership in the school context is able to have foresight regards to issues that might affect the school. In this context, Mrs Mhlaba noted the following:

*One of the major hallmarks of servant leadership is the ability to understand foresight and understanding how specific issues might negatively impact the organisation should be corrected and addressed before they occur, in the school context it might entail recruiting new teachers with experience, improving the*

*infrastructure of the school, it might also mean identifying issues in the curriculum that might impact learner outcome*

(Mrs Mhlaba, Senior Teacher from St Patrick high).

*Traditional leadership through failing to accommodate the perspective of other individuals, does not create an environment for foresight and predict problems, challenges that might have an impact the organisation. However, servant leadership through providing everyone the platform to speak and voice their perspective create a conducive environment foresight, this is particularly important in the education system where aspects like curriculum, instructional strategies, infrastructure and content should be checked regularly to identify potential issues that have negative impact on outcome*

(Mr Arendrese, a post level one teacher from St Patrick High)

Servant leader is appropriate for foresight which means it is able to make calculated prediction of what might occurs in the near future. This was also supported by the statement from Mrs Muhlaba a senior teacher from St Patrick High, who argued that foresight is very essential within the context of organisation, it ensures that the organization is ready for a specific issue before it occurs. For instance, in the context of school, the leader or principal might make decision to improve the school infrastructure. In addition, Mr Arendrese a post level one teacher also supported this claim by stating servant leadership through a conducive platform for contribution ensuring that there is foresight within the organisation.

A servant leader is able to use the available information and interpretations to represent and predict future happenings. According to Sipe and Frick (2009), a servant leader is capable of creating and imagining possibilities while predicting potential outcomes, then continuing with intent. Barbuto and Wheeler (2007) also identify servant leaders as capable of anticipating the impact of specific aspects on the organizations. Greenleaf (2006) states that a fundamental tenet of leadership is the capacity to interpret the past, present and future in this way.

In the context of the school system, foresight has major implications it might entail that the school administrators exploring current issues and how they might have a negative impact in the future. Often, other types of leadership in the education system attempts to address some issues when they occur. In other instances, it might be too late to remedy the situation. This mean that they could be little time to obtain resources to correct the situation. If there is a

problem with the infrastructure, there could be limited time to find resources from the government and other relevant stakeholders like Department of education, the Ministry. In this context servant leadership is that type of leadership in which such problems are identified before they have a negative impact on the school as a whole (Laker, 2019). According to Laker (2019) foresight could be essential with regards to aspects like improving curriculum, perhaps the current curriculum is not leading to improved outcome and results. This calls for improving the situation through revising it and replacing it with a new one which accommodates improved learner outcome. In this context a research participant noted the following with regards to foresight in the education environment:

As highlighted by Anderson (2016) foresight is a quality that helps servant-leaders to consider the lessons of the past, the facts of the present, and the likely consequences of a future decision. It is embedded deeply in the understanding that specific dynamic issues might have negative impact on the main goals of the organisation. Organisations like the school system needs constant checking, which implies that foresight is particular important to ensure that the main goals are achieved. Without this understanding, the direction of the organization might divert from the desired outcome. This signifies the importance of foresight in organisation.

According to Gonaim (2019) foresight allows prior planning within the organisation, which will avert specific issues from diverting the main goals that should be achieved by the organisation. For instance, in the education or school context, the principal might recruit new teachers for maths and science, before there is a shortage which might have a negative impact learners' outcome. Servant leadership does not merely surround themselves with individuals with foresight only, in addition servant leaders also empower individuals that are close to them to think and execute their duties in the same way. This allows a mentality of foresight inside the organisation.

#### **4.3.4 Ensuring creativity**

Since servant leadership entails more autonomy to the followers, it will create an environment of creativity and improving thinking capacity for addressing the main problems facing the organisation as a whole. This is different from traditional forms of leadership in which this role is mainly delegated to the leader. In this context Mr Mjarha noted the following:

*The ideals of servant leadership allow for the implementation of creative and novel ideas in the concept of school. For instance, it allows the teachers to come up with new and creative ways of teaching learners, implementing instructional strategies in the classroom, identifying new content that can be taught in the classroom*

(Mr Mjarha, senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School).

Mr Kwado, senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School said:

*If properly implemented in the school system, servant leadership will lead to creativity and innovativeness, this is contrary to conventional type of leadership in which the teachers are not provided with the space and platform to think critically regarding their instructional strategies. In the context of servant leadership, the teacher and the principal combine together to ensure that the creativity lead to improved learner outcome. However, the main issue is that the teacher is empowered to think critically and be innovative*

(Mr Kwado, senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School).

Mr Ngobese, a post level one teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School further said:

*Servant form of leadership is better placed than most types of leadership to create an environment of innovation and critical thinking, employees and followers are not micromanaged like robots, there are allowed autonomy. However, in a manner which include providing honesty feedback on how there are performing, in the context of the school it is very essential since it challenges the teachers to think beyond the rules and regulations guiding them*

(Mr Ngobese, a post level one teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School)

An aspect which was highlighted by participants is the role of servant leadership in fostering creativity. Unlike other forms of leadership, the followers and subordinates in organisations practicing servant leadership have the opportunity to communicate and interact regularly with their leader. This was highlighted by a senior teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School, Mr Mjarha who noted that the autonomy and allowing of contribution in servant leader is crucial towards creating conducive environment for fostering creativity. Mr Kwado a senior teacher from the school also argued that, servant leadership should be properly managed in a manner that allows creativity and novel ideas within the organisation. In addition, Mr Ngobese a post level one teacher from the same school also noted that servant leadership is different since employees and followers are not subjected to rigid control.

Williams, Brandon and Hayek (2017) reflect that servant leadership fosters creativity, and the tendency to look from a broader context at an issue or organisation. What needs servant leaders to look beyond the constraints of the day and inspire others to come up with new ideas. As shown by Laub (2018) the reason why servant leadership fosters creativity is that its ideals and principles functions like nodes and networks to create an environment of innovation. Innovation and creativity allow the organisation to regularly check on the issue affecting the organisation in a manner which will ensure consistent improvement. More importantly it will allow the organisation to achieve the main goals, this was also supported by the research participants.

In the context of school context, it implies that the school leader will provide the teachers the suitable environment for creativity and innovation. Innovation is of particularly importance in the classroom and the broader education system. The purpose of the school system is prioritising learner outcome, which means it is in the best interest of the learners that teachers regularly check and identify if their teaching, instructional strategies and the curriculum are suitable for learner outcome. In the context of servant type of leadership, the situation is already suitable for ensuring creativity and innovative. The teacher is already endowed with the autonomy and also empowered to think critically; in addition, there is also collaboration and collectively working which allows checking any issues and weakness that could have a negative impact on the overall outcome and objectives. The research participants had the same understanding of this context.

The school system should allow innovation and creativity; there are too many changes and dynamics that might have an impact on the school system. This implies that inherently education should allow innovation and creativity. This entail instructional, curriculum, teaching and content that are suitable to that period. Blanchard and Roadwell (2018) argues that servant leadership does fit this situation with the manner in which the servant leader provides the follower the autonomy to reflect on their work and identify potential issues that should be changed. At the same time, since they work collectively it creates a situation where both the follower and the leader are constantly checking to identify if there are any issues that could be rectified. For instance, in the school, learners have different capabilities which mean that teachers should reflect on their instructional strategies and identify how they could be applied to accommodate every student. Akinzi and Ekinzi (2017) notes that without servant leadership, to some extent this might take time to change and reflect on these aspects (Akinzi

& Ekinci, 2017). Since the teachers might lack the autonomy to check on these aspects, taking these decisions rest mainly on the leader. Hence in this context, servant leadership is the opposite of traditional forms of leadership that stifles creativity and innovation within the organisation.

#### **4.3.5 Shared leadership which fosters responsibility**

One of the major findings was that servant is a form of collective and shared leadership which generate responsibility. The essence of the servant leader is that majority of the decisions in the organisation should not rest with him, rather he attempts to ensure to ensure shared leadership. In this context Mr Maluleka supported this notion by stating the following:

*What is unique about servant leadership is that it creates shared leadership and responsibility. The servant leadership is aware that decisions should not be dictated nor solely depend on his insights, which imply that every individual should be provided the opportunity to express and contribute. Servant leadership is inclusive in the sense that it values everyone `s input*

(Mr Maluleka, Head of Department, Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School).

*Servant leadership unlike other forms of leadership allows shared leadership through creating an environment of responsibility. The leader emphasize that everyone should partake in the moving the organisation. This is from awareness that decision should be shared and that every individual is conscious and aware of how the organisation can be improved*

(Mrs Majola, a post level one teacher, Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School).

*In the context of the classroom, there are specific dynamics that requires the decision of the teachers, especially relating to identifying ways to improve learner performance. The teacher is well positioned to make decisions that might lead to improvement about the teaching methods. In this context, the ideals and principles of servant leadership does fit with such possibilities*

(Mr Gama, Senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School).

It was also noted that Servant leadership is essential with regards to ensuring responsibility within individuals. There is always misconception that servant leadership does not fosters responsibility. However, the expression and perspectives from participants reveal that

accountability is tied with servant leadership. Mr Maluleka a head of department from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School noted that what makes servant leadership important in fostering responsibility is that it allows every to have contribution in the decisions of the organization. This was also substantiated by Mrs Majola, a post level one teacher from the same school who noted that since everyone in the organisation is aware that they should contribute to the organization it provides the platform for responsibility and accountability. Lastly Mr Gama, a senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School argued that, there are particular dynamics within the context of classroom that assist the teacher to be accountable and responsible.

Shared leadership is when one shares the leadership with others. According to Maxwell (2012) the strongest form of leader is able to hand down their control. It can be hard to want to share leadership with others when you are responsible for others. It's about sharing the leadership, not delegating. According to Carroll and Patterson (2016) by sharing authority with others, it enables others to work together and want to do a better job, because they are responsible for the decisions. Martin (2019) states that in servant leadership, the leader realises that, if the aspects affecting the organisation should be improved regularly. Everyone should contribute in the decision-making and their input should be valued. Most of the research participants agree that a good leader tries to improve the organisation continuously. Norman (2017) posits that in the context of schools, historically schools have been managed through a hierarchical model in which the principal is responsible for the main decisions, managing the actions and decisions of the teachers who in turn who are also responsible for managing the students. Though the principal is responsible for making decisions on how the students should be taught, the teacher does independently in the classroom. Limiting his capacity to make decisions is narrow thinking, since the teacher is aware of the dynamics within the classroom. For instance, the teacher might notice that students are failing to perform in mathematics. In servant leadership the teacher is allowed to reflect on his teaching methods and identify how the situation can be improved.

Servant leadership in the school context broadens the decision-making process to allow teachers and other essential stakeholders like parents and school governing bodies to make valuable contribution. For instance, the school might implement fund raising project for a new block, purchasing new infrastructure, textbooks and other valuable resources. This situation requires the contribution of every individual in this process. The decision of fund raising will



not rest solely on the school principal. Involving everyone in this process will lead to broader decision-making and closely identifying how the issues might be solved.

#### **4.3.6 Prioritising the success of the organisation**

One of the main features of servant leadership is that leaders prioritise the success of the organisation more than anything. In this context leaders undertake actions that will lead to success within the organisation including motivating employees, ensuring that there is a platform for everyone to contribute to the success of the organisation. In this context Mrs Dlamini noted the following:

*What you should understand about servant leadership, is that the leader understands that a lot of aspects should be sacrificed to ensure that the organisation is able to achieve its objective. The leader abstains from imposing his ideas in the decision-making. Rather he attempts to and prioritise different ideas, in a manner which lead success within the organisation*

(Mrs Dlamini, senior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

*In addition, another research participant noted the following, in traditional forms of leadership. There were two things that were mainly prioritised, the power and authority of the leader and achieving the organisation through the decisions of the leader. However, servant leadership disrupts conventional leadership through providing importance to the success of the organisation*

(Mr Majola, junior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

*What should be understood about servant leadership is that there are specific challenges and obstacle that might block the followers and employees from undertaking their duties. He then focuses on removing these obstacles since the main priority is ensuring organisational success; the servant leader is consistently checking how the organisation can attain success through eliminating specific barriers*

(Mrs Ndamase, senior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

*Another research participant noted the following; the servant leaders are constantly assessing what the team members need to be successful. Once the leader has that information, he or she actively work to support their success*

(Mr Khumalo, post level one teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School)

The perspectives expressed by the participants revealed that servant leadership is oriented towards making organisation success a priority. Servant leaders seek to serve the community and the organisation at large. They also understand that followers should be motivated if organisation success is to be realised. This is through providing employees the suitable platform for contributing to the organisation. This was supported by the statement from Mrs Dlamini a senior teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary school who noted that the leader in servant leadership understands that organisation success should be achieved by sacrificing specific aspects within the organisation, one of these aspects is his ego and refraining from imposing ideas like other forms of traditional leadership. Mr Majola a post level one teacher from the same school, argues that in traditional leadership, priority was mainly on the power and capacity of the leader to make decisions alone. However, there is change in servant leadership form, of leadership. Since the leader realises, if organisation success is to be achieved. Other individuals' contribution and autonomy should be prioritised. In addition, a senior teacher from the same school, Mr Ndamase, noted that servant leaders eliminate specific obstacles like rigid decisions that can make it impossible for the followers to contribute to the organization. In that instance servant leadership does foster responsibility, another teacher, Mr Khumalo also noted that what makes servant leadership prioritise organisation success is that the leader is consistently assessing how the organisation can be improved to ensure organisation success.

Grahama (2018) states that servant leadership is the opposite of traditional forms of leadership in which the success of the organisation is mainly achieved through the power and authority of the leader. In the process, the perspective and contribution of other individuals and employees are disregarded. However, the servant leader understands that since the success of the organisation is the main priority. The leader should not impose his ideas and authority on the followers. Smith (2017) understands that servant leader also recognize certain obstacles should be eliminated to allow everyone to have a significant contribution in the organisation. These obstacles might be a rigid approach that stifles creativity and innovation in the employee. Dutta and Khatri (2017) highlight that servant leaders do not focus most of their time directing, manipulating, and coercing members of their team. Instead, they are turning the dynamic force upside down. They use their organisational power to support members of their team. Coetzer (2017) interprets that in the context organisation, obstacles might include issues like lack of proper training, skills. The servant leader will prioritise ensuring that there is some form of training to improve skill deficit in the employees.

In the school context, there are a lot of issues and challenges that might negative impact on the teachers and other stakeholders. Rural schools and low-income schools usually lack proper infrastructure other essential resources like textbooks. A servant leader will focus on removing these challenges to ensure that the success of the organisation is prioritised. Teachers might also lack sufficient training for certain complex subjects, the leader might organise some workshop and extra-training to improve the teachers. This was also supported by the research participant.

Giambatista, Mckeage and Brees (2020) understands that in traditional forms of leadership, specific barriers would only be eliminated if the leader identifies them and take measures to remove them. In servant leadership since there is a platform for everyone to contribute to the organisation through expressing their perspective. It provides the platform for inclusive contribution. For instance, in the school context, teachers might identify that curriculum need to be changed, teaching approaches, instruction strategies should be improved, the infrastructure should also be improved. This is the benefit of servant leadership; in the sense it provides the possibility of identifying these issues that have an impact on the organisation and institution. This is because the main priority is the success of the organisation. This should be achieved through inclusive contribution, contrary through the voice and the perspective of the leader only.

#### **4.4 To find out how the principles and values of servant leadership can be applied to the practice of school leadership.**

There has been debate whether the principles and values of servant leadership are applicable in the school context. The argument is that education typically needs leaders who make strong decisions without disruption. Servant leadership with the way it allows everyone to make contribution, shared leadership might lead to chaos in the education context. However, a closer examination on the principles of servant leadership reveal they can lead to positive in the context of school.

##### **4.4.1 Improved learner outcome**

One of the valuable contributions in applying servant leadership in the context of school leadership is that it will lead to improved and consistent learner outcome. The main objective

of the education system is mainly on consistent performance of the learner. Servant leadership through regularly providing stakeholders like teachers, school governing bodies leads to identifying issues that should be corrected in the school system. This is supported by Mr Mbalo, who was a senior teacher from Bhekizulu Secondary School when he said:

*Servant leadership lead to positive aspects in the education context like consistent learner performance, since the principal who serve as the servant leader contribute to consistent learner performance through motivating the teachers, empowering them, enhancing their potential in a manner that will lead immense motivation among the teachers.*

(Mr Mbalo, who was a senior teacher from Bhekizulu Secondary School)

Additionally, Mrs Maqubela a senior teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary School)

*Servant leadership in the school context leads to consistent learner performance, the teachers who is closely interact with the learners in the classroom is provided with the dialogue and platform to express his views and perspective on how certain aspects should be improved. All in all, this led to consistent learner performance, the teacher also acts as a servant leader in his interaction with the learners in the classroom context.*

(Mrs Maqubela a senior teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary School)

One of the perceptions of research participants with regards to servant leadership is that it leads to improved learner outcome. The perspectives provided by Mr Mbalo a senior teacher from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary support the notion of servant leadership in the context of school improving learner performance, by stating that servant principal empowers, acknowledge the contribution of teachers, in a manner which will lead to improved learner outcome, since the teacher will be motivated. In addition, another senior teacher from Wabana Senior Secondary School, Mrs Maqubela, also noted that in the context of school, the servant leader who is the principal lead to consistent learner outcome. This is through prioritising the motivation of the teachers who are important in teaching and learning. All in all, the servant principal understands that consistent learner performance cannot be achieved without motivating the teacher. Kulak and Li, (2017) argues that modern research has shown that ideals of servant-leadership have a positive impact on the learning environment.

The practice of servant leadership in the education context support teachers in a manner which provides a positive, respectful and demanding atmosphere for them to develop with

creative and insightful thinking (Kulak & Li, 2017). Kulak and Li (2017) understands that servant leaders in the education context put the need of teachers first. Since they are the ones who closely interact with the learners (Amah, 2018). Their needs should be prioritised through providing them a dialogue to express how the school and classroom context can be improved to ensure consistent learner performance. Amah (2018) also notes that the manner in which servant leadership prioritise the needs of the teacher in the education environment will cultivate motivation within the teachers. This will in turn generate an environment conducive for learner performance. This is opposite to imposing teaching strategies, curriculum, content and instructional strategies on the teachers. Participants also had the same comments as stated by the scholars.

Latif and Marimon (2019) understand that one of the misconceptions about servant leadership is that it creates a relaxed environment which does not foster responsibility and accountability. However, this can be debunked by the fact that servant does creates an environment of responsibility and accountability. Since the principles of servant leadership supports creating an environment of autonomy, providing a platform for contribution, empowerment and innovation. In return the servant leader will expect that this reflected through positive outcome and achieving of the main objectives.

In the education context, it implies that the servant leader will hold his teacher account through examining if there are performing in the classroom. All this cyclical process implies that the servant leader will foster a conducive environment for attaining higher performance and achievable outcomes in the school context. What should also be noted is that this relationship also extends to the classroom situation, where the teacher also acts as a servant leader to the learners. Hoghes (2019) reflects that applying the ideals of servant leadership in the classroom will lead to improved learner outcome. Learners will also be provided with the opportunity to express their perspective. The focus when implementing servant leadership in the education context is learner outcome, which is the main goal of the education system. Since the individual who closely interact with the learner is the teacher, servant leaders lead to consistent performance when it motivates the teacher who in return deliver in the classroom.

#### **4.4.2 Constructive feedback for the teacher**

*Servant form of leadership is constructed to provide constructive and effective feedback for the subordinates. This is done through constant interaction between the leader and the follower to ensure that strategies for improvement are adopted; Overall feedback will lead to empowerment, stimulating creativity and innovation through maximizing of current potential*

(Mr Dalinyendebo, senior teacher for St Patrick High School).

*One of the main challenges of implementing traditional leadership in the education context is that it leads to controlled management of teachers. There is no platform and space for positive and constructive feedback. The teacher is micromanaged to such an extent, she does not improve his performance, rather she focuses on only pleasing the leader, however this is different in servant leadership where there is regular platform of positive feedback*

(Mrs Dlomo, post level one teacher from Victor Poto Senior Secondary School).

One of the perspectives expressed by participants pertains the role of servant leadership in creating constructive feedback. Feedback in servant leadership is oriented towards improving followers within the organisation. There is an understanding that, in order to focus on organisation success, there is a need to improve and empowers others within the organisation. Hence this cannot be undertaken without constructive feedback for those in the organisation. This was supported by the claim from Mr Dalindyebo a senior teacher from St Patrick High school noted that ensuring constructive feedback within the organisation is achieved through consistent and regular interaction between the servant leaders and those under his leadership. Mrs Dlomo, a junior teacher from Victo Poto Senior Secondary School, noted that unlike traditional forms of leadership. Servant leadership provides platform for constructive feedback, and more importantly the servant leader does not micromanage his followers.

Barker (2017) states that one of the main challenges in the educational leadership has been creating mechanism in which everyone is held accountable for their duties. For decades' schools have required supervisors to observe and evaluate teachers in an attempt to maintain an accountability process. Ingraham (2016) understands that over time, this mechanism has developed to mammoth proportions, taking up time and resources, culminating in something

called 'feedback' and/or some sort of 'score' indicating the one observed receiving a rank varying from 'ineffective' to 'highly productive'. Such procedures do not allow constructive criticism and feedback especially for the teacher. She or he lives in constant fear of his job, rather improving on his performance in a manner which ultimately impacts the school and the learner. The research participants had the same opinions as the scholars.

According to Lewis (2019) what distinguish servant leadership from traditional leadership in the education context, is how it provides constructive feedback which lead to improving of weakness on skills and abilities. The main issue is not only focusing on blame game, rather it is on focusing on how individual weakness can be improved through constructive reflection. Since there is already a platform for working collectively, it also creates a conducive environment for constructive feedback. Stauffer, (2019) states that the manner in which feedback is created in servant leadership is different from traditional leadership, where it is done mostly for ranking individual performance. Feedback in servant leadership is mainly for constructive improvement. Proper education setting and constructive feedback can lead teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their instructional strategies in learner outcome. This feedback received from the principal will be adopted to improve their instructional strategies. The main aim is to ensure whatever outcome or strategy is adopted does have an impact on the learner performance. This is the benefit of constructive benefit in the context of servant leadership, it is mainly to uplift and empower the individual employee.

According to Tasker, Mitchel and Atah (2019) feedback in servant leadership is possible in the sense that it is conducted through a platform of engagement between the leader and the follower. It deviates from traditional form of leadership in which the leadership merely impose strategies and techniques of improving weakness identified from the feedback. Locke (2019) in the education context, such an interaction will include constant discussion and deliberating between the teacher and the principal on how current teaching strategies can be transformed to benefit learner performance and lead to consistent performance. This purposeful engagement between teachers and the principal is crucial to enhancing instruction and student performance. At the heart of this relationship is the desire of the principal to develop capacity for teachers on the basis of the underlying belief that teachers will flourish in their work. When teachers are aware the principal wants it will motivate them to improve themselves. In servant leadership, the platform for such discussions and engagement already exist since it emphasizes on engaging and providing opportunity for everyone`s perspective and contribution. Generally,

this situation has impact on learner performance, which should be the main purpose in the first instance.

#### **4.4.3 Involving teachers to reflect on teaching instructions**

*In servant leadership, the employee already has the opportunity and platform for transforming his performance, through reflecting on how they can be transformed. In the context of the education setting, this is also crucial since the principal will provide the individual teachers the opportunity to reflect on their individual performance, this will ultimately lead to improved learner outcome*

(Mr Nomathembu, Senior Teacher from St Patrick High School).

*Servant leadership in the education environment allows the teacher and the principal to reflect on how the current teaching instructions can be changed to benefit the learner. The main purpose is to identify weakness on the current teaching practices and improve them. This is conducted through collective effort between the teachers and the principals*

(Mr Ncuthu, post level one teacher from St Patrick High School).

*Servant leadership allows reflection on how current practices and methods can be improved in the education context, for instance essential aspects related to learner performance like curriculum, teaching practices, class resources, content are reviewed to identify this can be improved. In addition, the same process it allows setting up of benchmark that will guide the teacher, school governing bodies and the principal*

(Mrs Qobo, senior teacher from St Patrick High school).

Contrary to general misconceptions on servant leadership in the school context which view it as leading to relaxed environment and lack of commitment. Servant leadership does actually lead to platforms for reflecting and assessing teaching practices in the school context. It is important to note that there is already an environment for constructing feedback, empowerment and improving each other in schools under servant leadership. In this context, Mr Nomathembu a junior teacher from St Patrick High School noted that servant leadership provides positive opportunity for the followers and subordinates to reflect on their performance within the organization. This is particular essential for teachers since it allows them to reflect on their



teaching practices. In addition, Mr Ncuthu a post level one teacher from the same school also noted that servant leadership in the school context does allow teachers to reflect and assess whether their teaching practices are effective. This will assist in terms of achieving organisational goals like learner performance. Mr Qobo, a senior teacher from the same school also noted that allow improving existing teaching practices and methods.

Heyler and Martin, (2018) argue that one of the benefits of servant leadership is that it allows the teacher and principal to engage in a manner which allows meticulously verification of the main teaching practice, curriculum, content and the instructional strategies. The overall purpose is to identify if there are potential aspects that could have negative impact on learner performance. By reflecting on teaching practices and strategies, the teacher identifies any barriers that his or her students face to learning. This lets him or her take time to evaluate and understand his or her own teaching. Practice reflective helps to create confident students too. Students get challenged as the teacher use new methods in the classroom as a result of reflection. The main aim is to come up with new strategies and practices if there is any need to change the existing strategies. This was also supported by the research participant.

Chan, (2018) states that servant leadership as a form of leadership prioritize achieving the main goals and objectives of the organisation. Hence in the context of education reflecting on teaching practices and strategies will lead to attainment of the main goal, which is consistent learner performance through reflecting on their instructional and teaching practice, teachers and servant principals allows identifying of main issues that could have negative impact on attaining the main goals of the schools which is learner performance. Servant leader with its principles of collective effort and teamwork allows the principal and the teacher to reflect on current issues can be changed and transformed to pave way for new methods that are effective in leading to the main goals. Dube, Zikhali and Dube (2019) understand that in the process of reflecting on how teaching practices and instructions can be modified. It provides platform and space for creating rationale benchmark that can be used yardstick or measuring performance. This is particularly essential in the education context, where some sort of benchmark or yardstick should guide the performance of teachers, leaders, school governing bodies and other essential stakeholders like the district office.

Servant leadership in the context of education allows a process in which teachers think about their teaching practices, analyse how something has been taught and how the practice could be

enhanced or altered to better learn results. Teachers have the autonomy and space to conduct this reflection at their own space. This is the benefit of servant leadership, the principles and an ideal of this form of leadership already allows the employee the opportunity and freedom to reflect on herself. Organisation like school recruit different individuals with diverse talents, newly and experienced teachers all work together for the sake of consistent learner outcome. New teachers especially might struggle with the pressure and demands of delivering. Servant leadership allows them to reflect on themselves on their performance can be improved.

#### **4.5 To assess the enabling factors and challenges to the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership to school leadership**

##### **4.5.1 Applicability in the school context**

One of the main research findings regarding the limitation of servant leadership is that it might fail to fit into specific institutions and organizations (Savel and Munro, 2017).

*Servant leadership does not fit into specific organisation, some organization needs hand on leadership in which the leader makes decisions that are trusted to be ideal and suitable for the organization. The manner in which servant leadership describe its principles, refers to a situation where there is no trust in a single leader. This also relates to the education context, where the principal should constantly check on learner performance and also teacher performance*

(Mr Mncudwana, Senior Teacher from Dumezweni, Senior Secondary School).

In addition, Mrs Mdeyama Senior Teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School noted:

*I don't think the ideal and principles of servant leadership does fit into the school context. Decision making in the school and education setting should be mainly reserved to the principal. There are some instances where a need for collective decision or consultation is. However, I believe this should be in selected cases*

(Mrs Mdeyama Senior Teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School).

Regardless of the specific benefits linked to servant leadership, participants expressed doubts with regards to the applicability of servant leadership in the school context. For instance, Mr Mncudwana a Senior Teacher from Dumezweni Senior Secondary School, noted that in the context of the school. The principal is supposed to consistently check on learner performance and also teacher performance. Such a situation requires the leader who is the principal to have

authority and the ability to make decisions. In addition, Mrs Mdyeana from the same school also noted that the ideals and principles of servant leadership conflicts with what should happen in the school context, she noted that the principal should be able to make decisions without being contradicted or challenge. This cannot transpire in the context of servant leadership.

Judging from these perspectives one can argue that the applicability of servant leadership in the school context might be a challenge task. The nature of the school environment requires leaders who can make effective decisions without be undermined or questioned. Allen et al. (2017) argues that the school environment is one of those particular institutions.

The school as an institution and organisation mainly focus on one outcome, which is the performance of the students. Such a situation requires competent employees, especially the teachers that interact daily with the students. Bennesh (2017) states that more importantly, in this instance the situation a hands-on approach and making strong decisions and monitoring the daily performance of teachers. Such type of leadership does not fit with the ideal features of servant leadership.

#### **4.5.2 Limiting leadership authority.**

One of the recurring limitations of servant leadership is that it implies that the leadership have to sacrifice their authority. This contradicts with the ideal of leadership in which the leadership is supposed to make decisions (Blanchard and Broadwell, 2017). The idea feature of servant leadership is that the leader has to sacrifice his personality to fit into servant leadership model. This might erode the leader`s ability to make decisions, which is the main of the leader in the first instance. If the leader`s capacity to make decisions is fragile and weakened, it can be challenging for him to drive the organizations and also ensure that organisation to achieve its outcomes (Dube, Zikhali and Dube, 2017):

Mrs Ncube, senior teacher Bhekhuzulu Senior Secondary School noted the following:

*I don't think the ideals and principles of servant leadership allows the leader to make decisions without being undermined, in some instance leaders need to make firm and final decisions. However, from my perspective servant leadership does not allow that, the servant leader might fail to impose his voice*

(Mrs Ncube, senior teacher Bhekhuzulu Senior Secondary School).

Similarly, Mr Sithole junior teacher Bhekhuzulu Senior Secondary School said:

*Servant leadership contradicts what leadership should be about, which is having significant say on how the organization should be managed. Developing plans, vision for the organisation. In servant leadership the leader is not trust in making decisions. He also runs the risk of being undermined by his subordinates*

(Mr Sithole junior teacher Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School)

The expression and perspective from the participants were that though servant leadership has specific benefits it does limit the capacity of the leader or school principal. Though in some instances, there is a need for the leader to negotiate and provide a platform for the followers to express their perspective and contribution. The fact that the leader should make a strong and final decision should not be underrated, in fact it is one of the hallmarks of leadership. This was supported by Mrs Ncube a senior teacher who noted from Bhekuzulu Senior Secondary School, who noted that the principles and practice of servant leadership is opposite to what should be regarded as effective leadership decision-making, in particular she was concerned that servant leadership especially in the school, might not allow principals the capacity to make decisions. In addition, Mr Sithole a junior teacher from the same school, was also concerned that the capacity of the leader to make decisions might be vulnerable due to servant leadership.

Latham (2014) states that in specific situations, servant leadership might be applicable to leadership. However, the reality in organisations is that the role of the leader in making decisions is essential. This implies that this might not be possible with the ideals and principles of servant leadership. In most instances, the leader should make firm decisions without being undermined. Palumbo (2016) also adds that the leader in servant style is not trusted with making decisions. This could lead to chaos in the organizations, and most important undermining of his role leader in making decisions. Fields and Thompson (2015) understand that in the education context, the principal must be able to make firm decisions on how to improve learner performance, if the leader has to constantly consult his followers and collective make decisions they might lose confidence and respect for him. This then to relaxing and taking his decisions for granted.

### **4.5.3 Finding the suitable candidate**

Finding the suitable candidate for this leadership style is difficult, most individuals who are motivated to be leaders are driven by the need to make firm decisions, develop their plans,

visions for the organization. They need an environment in which there are trusted with making decisions, which might not be possible in servant form of leadership. Hence it is difficult if not possible to find the suitable candidate that fits into the ideals described.

Mr Xaba also noted the following:

*Servant leadership describe characteristics and principles that needs humble leaders. However, in reality being humble and leader are contradictory, in most instances' leaders have to make decisions that might not favourable to their followers and subordinates*

(Mr, Xaba, Senior Teacher from Victor Poto High School).

One of the concerns from the participants was the applicability of servant leadership in specific organizations. This was noted by Mr Xaba a senior teacher from Victor Poto High School, who argued that the ideals and principles described in servant leadership contradicts to what is expected of the leader. This was supported by Hodges and Howieson (2018) one of the main challenges of servant leadership is beyond applying it in different organisations. However, it is finding the suitable personality that fits into the features of servant leaders. Johnson (2020) The ideals and principles described in servant leadership needs the suitable candidate with the expected candidate. It might take time and in other instances the organisation might fail to recruit the candidate that fits into the ideals of servant leadership. Most individuals assume that leadership is about authority and making firm decisions.

In addition, Amah (2019) states that what motivate those who are inherently leaders is making decisions at the right time, developing visions and plans for the organisation. A servant leadership principle does not motivate individuals to be effective leaders, which makes it difficult to find the suitable candidate for this leadership style. In this context a research participant noted the following:

#### **4.6 Chapter summary**

The main aim of this chapter was to provide a detailed analysis of the findings of the study. In this context, the findings of the study have been presented in both qualitative forms, in which findings were arranged and categorized into themes. The following chapter provides a detailed summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations for the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided a detailed discussion of the research findings. The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a study summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. Ultimately the last section provides a discussion on the recommendations for future research that might be conducted on the similar issues, especially on aspects that could be researched by future studies.

#### **5.2 Study summary**

The main aim of this study was to focus on servant leadership in multiple deprived schools. in this context, chapter one of the study introduced the phenomenon being investigated, the problem statement, research questions and objectives were also present in this chapter. The subsequent chapter focused on providing the literature for the study. In this context, the chapter provided a background of educational leadership, types of leadership in education. The servant form of leadership was also discussed. in addition, later sections of the chapter discussed the challenges of servant leader in organisations. Chapter three of the study focused on discussing the research methodology, methods and techniques adopted in the study. In addition, the chapter also focused on population and sample selected for data collection. Whilst chapter three focused on discussing the research methodology, chapter four emphasized on providing and presenting the findings. The thematic form of data examination was used to analyse the data. Lastly, this chapter will provide a summary of the research findings, recommendations and implications for further research.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

##### **5.3.1 Prioritising wellbeing of the community**

This section will provide a conclusion of the study that were discussed in the previous chapter. One of the major findings of the study was that research participant conceptualised servant leadership as prioritising the well-being of the community being served (Johanson, 2016). The

servant leader is consistently concerned with how his actions, behaviour, decisions and ideas will impact the community being served (Sendjaya, 2016). Not only does the servant leader feel the need to serve the community and give back, but they also need to cultivate this form of action and help followers understand the value of giving back and what that means for the company and the community and the people they support. Through creating value for the society, the servant leader makes it possible for the well-being of the community to be prioritized (Vinson & Parker, 2019).

This could also be applicable to the school environment, the community alludes to different stakeholders, for instance parents, pupils, school governing bodies, senior teachers, junior teachers and general school employees. The servant principal in this context understands that the needs of the community should be valued, contrary to power and authority. The servant principal values the well-being of the community through providing them the platform to express their perspective on the school should be managed. The servant principal understands the impact of decisions and ideas on the well-being of the community should be a priority. This aspect different servant leadership from others of leadership, in which power and authority was the main focus.

Traditional leadership did not prioritise the needs and well-being of the community being served and servant leadership is different in this regard. Servant Leader Behaviours promote a sense of encouragement and outreach to the community. The behaviours commence with conceptualization (Laub, 2018a). Such action helps the leader to look at the broader picture and take the situation into consideration, whilst having the capacity to address the problem or coming with an effective solution to that fits within the values and principles of the organisation. It is clear to see how this could potentially spill over into support for the community (Shim, Park and Aom, 2016). It will ensure that the servant leader is able to comprehend the well-being of the community concern and see how the conceptualisation of a problem for a few can have profound and over-arching impact on the whole society. The sense of community well-being would be understood by a servant leader and would be encouraged to provide the resources needed to solve this issue (Stein & Yin, 2019).

### **5.3.2 Maximising the potential**

In addition, one of the main research findings relates to how research participants regarded servant leadership as concerned with maximising the potential of others. At its heart, servant leaders are those individuals who cultivate and inspire others to achieve their maximum potential (Coetzer, 2018). Servant leadership believes that if the followers improve their ability, it will directly translate into the organisation's capacity and its actual performance. Maximising the potential of subordinates in the organisation will ensure that there is balance and equality in terms of talent in the organisation (Staats, 2016). For instance, some employees might lack sufficient skills and abilities in specific complex task. Servant leadership will enhance their potential through effective training meant to enhance their potential which will in turn will have a positive impact on the organisation.

In the school and education situation, the main purpose of the principal should divert from merely micro-managing the teachers, to ensuring that mechanism is put in place to improve their skills and abilities. In servant leadership, maximising the potential of teachers in this conducted through collective effort between the teachers and the principals. The main aim is to build and enhance the skills of the teachers rather than imposing through power and authority. Power in servant leadership is collectively distributed in a manner which fosters accountability and responsibility on both parties in the situation. In the school and education context, this implies the teacher and the principle.

For instance, inexperienced and new teachers might take time and struggle to stamp their authority in the classroom; they might fail to ensure classroom discipline. In this instance, the servant principal would attempt to maximise the potential of the junior teachers through workshop on how to stamp authority in the class situation. The main purpose is to ensure that the potential and ability of the teacher is enhanced. In addition, one of the main findings regarding conceptualisation of the servant leadership style in the education context, relates to its role in empowering those around the servant leader. Empowering in the servant leadership style implies that the leader makes an effort to include the subordinates with regards to essential decision-making process.

The literature has also identified ways and how servant leadership can empower their subordinates, it might be through delegating responsibility. The only way an individual can



develop or acquire new skills is when they have the ability to do so and are not always concerned with heavy workloads (Clemons, 2018). Servant Leaders help employees focus on and demonstrate their talents by assigning power to them, not by presenting them with a list of tasks to complete (Mitchell, 2019). Through delegating responsibility, servant leaders ensure that their subordinates are empowered. In addition, servant leaders are also aware that empowered can be done without some form of knowledge dissemination to their subordinates. The servant leader is aware that if employees are expected to perform in specific benchmarks, empowerment is key.

In the context of education, for instance the principal might delegate authority to experienced teachers as a way of empowering them. This is done in way that avoids undermining other teachers in the process. It is important to note that servant leaders avoid creating unnecessary competition. This implies that the servant principal will avoid creating negative conflict and competition among employees. Servant leadership empowers its followers to be effective in the organization. Rather than telling them what to do, and providing them a little training here and there, servant leadership is about mainly about improving staff, really sitting down with them and saying, what is it you need to do your job better? The servant leader will thus discuss and engage with the teacher to find ways to improve his performance (Kim, 2016).

### **5.3.3 Empower others**

The main aim is to empower the teacher. Furthermore, a conceptualisation of servant leadership among research participants was that servant leadership focus on mainly achieving the results and objectives of the organisation (Verdofer and Arendt, 2018). Servant leaders are mainly to serve the organisation, not imposing their authority and power on the organisation. This mean that they focus is primarily on achieving the main objectives of the organisation. Servant leaders prioritise the success of the organisation through constant engagement with subordinates and stakeholders on how to manage the organisation (Tuan, 2016). This is not to say they have no authority or have a say in decision-making. However, it implies that every decision related to the success of the organisation is achieved through collaboration and giving others a chance to contribute.

Servant leaders focus on leading rather than executing their decisions through rigid authority and power and they obtain the right to lead by their acts. The use of key aspects of servant

leadership allows the leader and his colleagues to participate more in the workplace and to perform at higher, longer-lasting levels (Luz and Sousa, 2018). The explanation reflects how servant leadership is concerned with attaining the main objectives and organisation. In the school and education context, these goals might include consistent learner outcome, teacher performance, recruiting capable teachers. This is gained through engaging with other teachers in the school. The servant principal and school leader understand that the main goal of the education and school context is learner outcome. Hence this should be prioritised through constant engagement with teachers on how to improve teaching instructions, curriculum and content.

Perhaps specific questions can be raised with regards the applicability of servant leadership in the context of the school, for instance the following questions can be raised. Will it lead to improved learner outcome, more importantly it generates an environment of consistent learner performance, will it lead to consistent teacher performance, does it create good working relationship between the teachers and the principal. However, the servant leader does understand errors and mistakes might happen in the course of implementing certain servant principles. This can be addressed through constant engagement between the servant principal and his teachers, for instance focusing on how to improve teacher performance, creating good and working relationship among the workmates (Trong-Tuan, 2017). Servant leadership does provide everyone with the opportunity to contribute which means that this engagement between the teachers and principal is likely to yield success for the school. One of the main concerns of the research study was on the applicability of servant leadership principles and values in the school context. In this context, the research findings revealed that servant leadership might lead to consistent and improved learner outcome. The main goal and objective of the education as a system is mainly on the performance of the learners which must be consistent. Servant leadership allow the school and the education system to achieve consistent learner performance through ensuring that the teacher is motivated and empowered to conduct his duties in the classroom.

To ensure consistent learner performance, the teachers who interact closely with the learners in the classroom, their needs are prioritised by providing them with a dialogue to communicate and engage with the principal how the school and classroom context can be enhanced. The way servant leadership prioritises the teacher's needs in the context of education should foster encouragement within the teachers. It will in turn create a conducive environment for learner

success. Servant leadership is different from traditional leadership in which the teachers have no constant platform to discuss with the principal on what is happening in the classroom. What differentiate engagement in servant leadership and other leadership styles are the principles of allowing equal contribution from every individual in the organisation.

#### **5.3.4 Constructive feedback**

Another essential principle of servant leadership applicable to the school context is the issue of constructive feedback. Feedback in servant leadership is mainly to motivate and improve the employees, rather than ranking employees according to their performance. Hence creating competition in the process. Servant leaders provide their employees and followers with essential feedback which lead to maximizing the potential of the employee. Employees want a workplace where they feel safe not only to improve but also to trust the service, they offer their managers. Communication between leaders and subordinates at any place of work is obviously important, but servant leaders thrive on providing essential feedback to the employees they supervise. This will lead to a relationship of trust between the servant leader and the follower. In the context of the school, feedback might relate to teacher performance obviously and in particular how it impacts learner performance in general.

Nonetheless, in spite of its specific benefits, the research findings also illustrate that there are specific limitations linked with servant leadership. It is important to note that implementation of servant leadership is scarce in both organization and educational context (Whittington, 2018). This entails that there is precedence on how to implement servant leadership in the education system. As a result, there is no sufficient training on how a servant leader or principal should make decisions in the organization or school. It is then complicated to implement a leadership without precedent on how to implement it (Bavik, 2019). The common conceptualization of a leader refers to an individual who make decisions with little consultation. For them servant leadership is a utopia that is difficult to attain (Morgan, 2018).

#### **5.3.5 Limit the capacity of the leader**

One of the criticisms and challenges noted in the findings with regards to servant leadership is that it limits vision; Leaders are distinguished by their role in the development a strategy and providing guidance from regular employees (Russell & Russell, 2018). A manager needs a

degree of distance from his staff so that he can explore new possibilities, brainstorm ideas, solve problems and imagine where his department, store or the organisation is going (Shaw & Firestone, 2018). It is only through this separation from the employees that managers can have the capacity and autonomy to make decisions and plans that benefit the organisation. This can be reflected in the school context, where the principal might lack the capacity to plan and visualise what plans, strategies and objectives should be adopted for the school.

Another downside to servant leadership is that putting in place takes time. The theory is based on establishing trustworthy relationships, creating partnerships, and providing an overall sense of each person in the workplace. It can't happen in a short time. For instance, it might take time for the new teachers to establish trust with senior teachers, the principal. The assumption that this will immediately fall into place, the moment the new teacher joins the school is erroneous. It might take some time for the kind of trust explained in servant leadership to be established. In addition, one of the features of leadership is that the leader must have the capacity to make decisions in the organization (Yigit & Bokzurt, 2017). One challenge noted in servant leadership, is that its ideals and principles describe a leader without the capacity to make strong decisions in the organisation.

Regardless of the fact that some form consultative relationship should exist between the leader and the subordinates, the manner in which servant leadership is described does not refer to a leader who will be able to make decisions (Lo, Allard & Wang, 2020). In addition, the applicability of servant leadership in the education context and other form of organisation has been questioned. The school as an institution and organisation focuses primarily on one outcome which is the students' performance (Allen, et al., 2017). Such a situation requires competent staff, particularly the teachers who communicate with the students on a daily basis. Most significantly, the situation in this instance is needs hand on approach and which entails making strong decisions and tracking teachers' everyday results.

Perhaps one of the challenges relating to servant leadership is not applying it in different organisations. Rather it is finding an individual fit in the ideals and values described by servant leadership. Leadership means making decisions and imposing authority and power. However, servant leadership describes a utopian list of principles that are complicated and difficult to implement.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Recommendation One**

There should be workshops on explaining what servant leadership entails and how it can be applied in educational leadership. The district officials must work closely with schools and make sure that teachers are trained in servant leadership so that they can serve the communities in that they teach in.

### **5.4.2 Recommendation Two**

The school managing team should be trained in servant leadership. It can be really helpful if district officials can integrate servant leadership with Ubuntu principles and training school leaders to always prioritise those they serve. District officials must make it their responsibility to ensure that they equip school leaders with servant leadership skills.

### **5.4.3 Recommendation Three**

Schools, district office should make an effort to find candidates that fits the personality of servant leadership. District officials must ensure that they appoint people that are willing to serve in schools. They must ensure that school leaders are people that are principled, and they have the interests of teachers and learners at heart and also of the community.

### **5.4.4 Recommendation Four**

Principals should ensure that implementation of servant leadership principles does not lead to undermining of their authority. They must be strict yet very kind to those they serve. They must treat teachers with respect, yet they must also make sure that they account for everything that happens in school. They must not let them do as they please.

### **5.4.5 Recommendation Five**

Both teachers and principals should undertake some training to ensure that there is no confusion when implementing servant leadership in the school. School leaders must understand their role and teachers must also understand what is expected of them.

#### **5.4.6 Recommendation Six**

School leaders must make sure that they look after the wellbeing of teachers and learners. They must support them with all their personal and professional. They must always make sure that they prioritise them in every decision they make as a school managing team.

#### **5.4.7 Recommendation Seven**

Schools should not operate in isolation; they should collaborate with other stake holders like Non-Governmental Organisations and nearby Universities. Schools should ensure that they involve the parents in school activities. Schools must also involve local businesses and religious organisations.

#### **5.4.8 Recommendation Eight**

When appointing a school principal, a post graduate qualification in Education Management should be made a requirement. All principals should be equipped with financial management skills, communication skills, human resource management skills and public relationship skills.

#### **5.4.9 Recommendation Nine**

The Department of Education officials must establish community of learning for schools so that they can work together, and teachers learn from each other. They must adapt a culture of district, provincial and national conferences where all schools can meet and share their challenges and success so that they can learn from each other.

### **5.5 Implications for further research**

It is important that future research explores further on servant leadership in the context of education. Especially in higher education offices like district offices, provincial and also national level. The findings derived from such studies might prove to be essential for generating novel and new ideas.

## **5.6 Chapter summary**

The overall aim of the research study was to investigate the implementation of servant leadership and how it can be applied in managing multiple deprived schools. The study found that though, servant leadership can be applied in the school context especially in relation motivating teachers, providing them with constructive feedback, however there are specific challenges that can manifest, among them include undermining authority of the leader, failing to get the suitable candidate and general applicability in the school context. The study also found that teachers go beyond the call of duty and sometimes they even use their own resource to assist learners achieve the desired results

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Approval Letter



**STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES**  
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape  
Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4691/4773 • Fax: +27 (0)86 742 4942 • Website: [www.ecdoe.gov.za](http://www.ecdoe.gov.za)

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: [babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za](mailto:babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za)

Date: 30 September 2019

Mr. Mawande Tshozi

30 Kent Street

Woodstock

**Cape Town**

**800**

Dear Mr. M Tshozi

**PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTERS STUDY: EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED SCHOOLS IN LIBODE DISTRICT APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

1. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research involving 10 educators, 2 principals and 2 secondary school in the jurisdiction of Libode District in the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
  - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
  - b. you will make all necessary arrangement concerning your research;
  - c. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
  - d. all ethical considerations are adhered to;
  - e. you seek parents' consent for minors;
  - f. it is not going to interrupt educators' time and task;
  - g. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, including school breaks, but an arrangement to do research at the school after school hours may be arranged and agreed upon in writing with the Principal and the affected teacher/s;
  - h. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;



- i. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
  - j. your research will be limited to those institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
  - k. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.
  - l. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.
  - m. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.
  - n. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.
  - o. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form)
  - p. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation
2. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE.
  3. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
  4. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email [nelisa.kanjana@ecdod.gov.za](mailto:nelisa.kanjana@ecdod.gov.za) should you need any assistance.

  
 NY KANJANA  
 DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY AND RESEARCH  
 FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION



## APPENDIX 2: Interview Schedule 1

### Interview Schedule for School Principals

#### Section A: Biographical Information

1. Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

2. Experience (in years):

As a Post Level 1 teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

As an HoD (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

As a Dep. Principal (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

As a School Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Teaching qualifications:

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#### Section B: Interview questions

1. When you hear people talking about Servant Leadership (EL) in schools or in education, what comes to your mind? In other words: What is your **understandings** of servant leadership in schools? Please elaborate.
2. As a school principal and an educational leader, what servant leadership **practices (if any) do you try to promote** as you do your work? Please elaborate.
3. Why do you think those servant leadership practices (you mentioned in 2 above) are important? Please elaborate.
4. Without giving names (of people), would you please share with me the **experiences** that you have regarding the application of servant leadership in the school where you are stationed? Please elaborate.

5. As a school principal serving a particular community (explain the community of your study in terms of location (rural, urban, township, etc.) (wealth, i.e. rich, poor, middle class, etc.), what do you do to promote a servant leadership culture within the school, yourself and among teachers that you lead and manage? Please elaborate on your views.
6. In the SA context, the notion of servant leadership has been promoted through the Batho Pele Principles (consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money). How do you promote these values in your school (if you do)?
7. In your view, what are the challenges regarding the implementation of servant leadership principles in your school? Please elaborate.
8. As a school principal, have you ever been invited to a workshop where, as part of in-service training and development, you were inducted by the Department of Education (as your employer) on the Batho Pele principles? Please elaborate your answer.
9. How would you rate the quality of training (if any), that you receive from the Department of Education or its service providers to promote servant leadership/Batho Pele principles among school principals? Please elaborate.
10. Do you think it is necessary (or important) for school principals, as part of continuous leadership development, to be exposed to servant leadership development? Please elaborate.
11. What are your views regarding what should be done to promote and deepen the notion of servanthood among school principals and teachers in schools? Please elaborate.
12. In conclusion, is there any other issue related to this interview that I have not asked but you feel strongly that you would like to share with me? Thank you very much for taking part in this Interview.

## APPENDIX 3: Interview Schedule 2

### Interview questions for other participants such as Level 1 Teachers & HoDs

#### Section A: Biographical Information

1. Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

2. Experience (in years):

As a Post Level 1 teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

As an HoD (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

3. Teaching qualifications:

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#### Section B: Interview

1. As a Post Level 1 teacher, when you hear people talking about Servant Leadership (EL) in schools or in education, what comes to your mind? In other words: What is your **understandings** of servant leadership in schools? Please elaborate.

2. As a teacher and an educational leader, what **servant leadership practices** (if any) do you try to promote as you do your work? Please elaborate.

3. Why do you think those servant leadership practices (you mentioned in 2 above) are important? Please elaborate.

4. Without giving names (of people), would you please share with me the **experiences** that you have regarding the application of servant leadership in the school where you are stationed? Please elaborate.

5. As a teacher serving a particular community (explain the community of your study in terms of location (rural, urban, township, etc.) (wealth, i.e. rich, poor, middle class, etc.), what do you do to promote a servant leadership culture within the school, yourself and among teachers, learners and parents that you work with? Please elaborate on your views.

6. In the SA context, the notion of servant leadership has been promoted through the Batho Pele Principles (consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money). How do you promote these values in your teaching and classroom management (if you do)?

7. In your view, what are the challenges regarding the implementation of servant leadership principles in your school? Please elaborate.

8. As a teacher, how regularly have you been invited to workshops where, as part of in-service training and development, you were appraised by the Department of Education (as your employer) on the Batho Pele principles? Please elaborate your answer.

9. How would you rate the quality of training (if any), that you receive from the Department of Education or its service providers to promote servant leadership/Batho Pele principles among teachers? Please elaborate.

10. Do you think it is necessary (or important) for schoolteachers, as part of their continuous leadership development, to be exposed to servant leadership/Batho Pele principles? Please elaborate.

11. What are your views regarding what should be done to promote and deepen the notion of servanthood/Batho Pele principles among school principals and teachers? Please elaborate.

12. In conclusion, is there any other issue related to this interview that I have not asked but you feel strongly that you would like to share with me?

Thank you very much for taking part in this Interview.



## **APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET**

### **EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



### **EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED SCHOOLS IN LIBODE DISTRICT : A CASE STUDY**

Dear Sir / Madam:

#### **RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET**

**Description:** I am MR Mawande Tshozi, a M.Ed. student at the Wits School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As part of my degree requirements, I am undertaking a research project on the phenomenon of the servant leadership practices in contexts of South African rural schools in Libode District, specifically, in two secondary schools based in Libode.

I am interested in questions around implementation of servant leadership in managing these multiple deprived schools. I have selected two high schools in Libode who have principals that display servant leadership characteristics. This study aims to explore the implementation of servant leadership by principals of these two schools.

The research will be conducted in the third term of 2019. For the research to be effective, I am requesting a permission to conduct this research in the following secondary schools: St Patrick's High School and Chief Henry Bokleni Senior Secondary School. This research will use questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions; semi-structured interviews and documents analysis in assisting me with data generation. Interviews will be audio recorded to apply the principle of validity. The research participants for interview will be school principals, Heads of Department (HODs) as well as post level one teachers. Only HODs and post level

one teachers will participate in questionnaire. Participants will be contacted on time about the interview dates and times.

**Time involvement:** It will take approximately 40-60 minutes to complete for an individual participant at the time and place convenient to them, specifically after school.

**Risks:** There will be no predictable risks in participating in the study and there will be no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. Participants will be allowed to withdraw at any time.

**Privacy:** Individual privacy and that of the school will be preserved in all written data from this study. Names of schools and research participants will not be used. In addition, information that will be gathered from different participants in a school will not under any circumstances be shared amongst those participants. For example, responses from teachers or HODs will not be made available to school principals and vice versa. All data from the study will be stored securely at the faculty for a period of at least five years.

**Payments:** There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project. For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me:

I have attached research proposal and research instruments for your scrutiny.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Mawande Tshozi

## APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

### PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY



### EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED SCHOOLS IN LIBODE DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY

Dear Sir / Madam:

#### **RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET**

**Description:** I am Mr. Mawande Tshozi, a M.Ed. student in the Wits School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As part of my degree requirements, I am undertaking a research project on the phenomenon of the servant leadership implementation in contexts of South African rural schools in Libode District, specifically, in Gxulu and Nltaza location.

This study aims to investigate the implementation of servant leadership by principals of these two schools. I have selected two secondary schools that seemed to have good principals in the area.

The research will be conducted in the third term of 2019. For the investigation to be successful, I am requesting permission to conduct this research in your school. I have already approached and received permission from the Eastern Cape Department of Education to conduct the study (See permission letter attached).

I plan to use questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions (HoDs and teachers); semi-structured interviews (Principal, 2 HoDs and 2 teachers). If approved, I seek permission to audio-record the interviews to apply the principle of validity. Secondly, recording will allow me to focus on the actual interview rather than writing voluminous notes. Only HODs and post level one teachers will participate in a questionnaire. Participants will be contacted on time about the interview dates and times.

**Time involvement:** It will take approximately 40-60 minutes to complete for an individual participant at the time after school.

**Risks:** There will be no predictable risks in participating in the study and there will be no disadvantages or penalties for not participating.

**Privacy:** Individual privacy and that of the school will be preserved in all written data from this study. Names of schools and research participants will not be used. In addition, information that will be gathered from different participants in a school will not under any circumstances be shared amongst those participants. For example, responses from teachers or HODs will not be made available to school principals and vice versa. All data from the study will be stored securely at Wits School of Education for a period of at least five years.

**Payments:** There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project. For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me:

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Mawande Tshozi

## APPENDIX 6: PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



### EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED SCHOOLS IN LIBODE DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY

Dear Sir / Madam

#### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Description:** My name is Mawande Tshozi, I am currently a master's student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Wits School of Education. As part of my studies, I am undertaking a research project in order to **explore servant leadership implementation in two schools at Libode District, specifically in Ntlaza and Gxulu Location**. The questions of this research project will be based on how you implement servant leadership in managing the school. As part of this research project, I would like to invite you to take part in an individual interview discussion. Interviews will be audio recorded to apply the principle of validity. This study will be written up as a research report.

**Participant's rights:** There will be no disadvantages or penalties for not participating.

**Privacy:** Your individual privacy and that of your school will be preserved in all written data from this research. The interview will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not be asking for your name, even any identifying information. The information you will give to me will be held securely and not disclosed to anyone else.

**Time involvement:** The duration of your participation will be approximately be forty to sixty minutes in total; the research will be taking place after school.

**Payments:** You will receive no payment for participation in this research.

Should any additional information be required, kindly contact me.

## APPENDIX 7: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR HODs AND POST LEVEL ONE TEACHERS



### RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear sir / Madam

**Description:** My name is Mawande Tshozi, I am currently a master's student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Wits School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I am undertaking a research project in order to **investigate the implementation of servant leadership in two schools at Libode District, specifically in Ntlaza and Gxulu location**. The questions of this research project will be based on the implementation of servant leadership by the school principal. I am asking for your participation in the completion of questionnaire and an individual interview discussion. Interviews will be audio recorded to apply the principle of validity. This study will be written up as a research report.

**Participant's rights:** There will be no disadvantages or penalties for not participating.

**Privacy:** Your individual privacy and that of your school will be preserved in all written data from this research. The interview will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not be asking for your name, even any identifying information. The information you will give to me will be held securely and not disclosed to anyone else.

**Time involvement:** The duration of your participation will be approximately forty to sixty minutes in total for each data collection (questionnaire and interview), the research will be taking place after school.

**Payments:** You will receive no payment for participation in this research.

Should any additional information be required, kindly contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**APPENDIX 8: APPROVAL BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH**

I \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson of the School Governing Body hereby grant you permission to conduct research at our school. I am informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode district: a case study**

Signature of the chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:            /            /  
2019.

**APPENDIX 9: RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER BY THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

I \_\_\_\_\_ School principal, hereby grant you permission to conduct research at my school. I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode district: a case study**

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:            /            / 2019.

**APPENDIX 10: PRINCIPALS' DECLARATION / INFORMED CONSENT FORM TO BE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

I \_\_\_\_\_ the principal of the School, agree to participate in this research project in Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode district: a case study . I understand the contents of my participation. I agree that my participation will remain anonymous and that the researcher may use anonymous quotations in her research report. I also agree that the interviews may be audio recorded.

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:        /        / 2019.

**APPENDIX 11: HODs’ DECLARATION / INFORMED CONSENT FORM TO BE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

I \_\_\_\_\_ the HOD of the School, agree to participate in this research project in Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode district: a case study. I understand my duties as a participant. I agree that my participation will remain anonymous and that the researcher may use anonymous quotations in her research report. I also agree that the interviews may be audio recorded.

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:        /        / 2019.

**APPENDIX 12: TEACHERS' DECLARATION / INFORMED CONSENT FORM TO BE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

**Exploring the implementation of servant leadership in managing multiple-deprived schools in Libode district: a case study**

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand my role as a participant.

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous: (Please tick where appropriate)

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I agree and understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study:

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:                    /                    /