UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

EXPLORING SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED RURAL CONTEXTS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF FOUR SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

SITHEMBISO GOODWILL MTHEMBU

2020

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BY

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A thesis submitted in the fulfilment of the academic requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Supervisor: Dr S. E. Mthiyane

Date of submission: May 2020

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu, declare that, **"Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal"** is my own original work and that:

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S. G. Mthembu

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I, Dr S. E. Mthiyane,

As the candidate's Supervisor I agree/do not agree to the submission of this thesis.

_____ _____

Supervisor's signature Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere and warm gratitude and special appreciation to:

The omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for his continuing support, grace and blessings which, in turn, invested the intellectual capability and strength in me to complete this Doctor of Philosophy study timeously.

Dr S. E. Mthiyane, my supervisor – for his patience, wise counsel, continued and valuable professional and academic support, motivation and mentorship acumen which served as an inspiration for me to endure the long and arduous journey to the completion of this study. My incredible success in education is deeply indebted to you.

The University of the Witwatersrand for affording me this treasure trove opportunity to pursue my PhD study. Wits administration staff, Ms Hale Modau and Ms Matsie Mabeta for their priceless support in times of need.

The Provincial Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, for allowing me access to their schools to conduct this research.

Dr Roy Naicker, my mentor and Dr Saths Govender my language editor.

My church leaders and members especially Ndulinde branch and the entire North Coast Region and the KwaZulu-Natal PEC for providing me with adequate time to focus on my study.

My SMT members and other colleagues, Miss P. N. Manzi, Mr S. L. Ntshangase, Mr N. P. Nyawo, Mr N. E. Magwaza and Mrs A. N. Mnyandu for sharing their computer expertise and skills with me when I reached a cul-de-sac in terms of my knowledge of Information Communication Technology (ICT). Miss P. N. Manzi went an extra mile by doing transcriptions of my study participants' interview data. Dr Thulebona G. Shawe, you were an inspiration to me.

All the four schools and study participants, for having allowed me into their school spaces to make it possible to obtain the data used in this study. For obvious ethical reasons, I cannot mention their names but their contributions are profoundly appreciated.

DEDICATION

This thesis is especially dedicated to:

My parents, Mr Mzothule David Mthembu, Mrs Hlekisile Doris Masuku (MaNgema) who brought me to this earth and made me an integral part of humanity. Secondly, my uncle and mentor, Archbishop Dr Bhekizitha Bethuel Ngema and my aunt, Mrs Simangele Daphney Ngema who gave me inspiration and taught me the importance of education and used their scarce material and financial resources to provide for my physical and educational needs. My uncle will always remain an inspiration in my entire teaching career and life in general.

My wonderful and beloved children, Sinenhlanhla, Sinethemba, Sinekhaya and Sinenjabulo who have always been patient and understanding when I failed to have sufficient time to spend with them. I spent 95% of my free time on my studies. I hope this research will teach and convince you that nothing is impossible if you willingly demonstrate commitment and dedication and also strive for excellence in the educational realm. "It always seems impossible until it is done" (Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, former President of South Africa).

"An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge" (Proverbs 18:15).

"For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money, and the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who has it" (Ecclesiastes 7:12).

God bless my children and South Africa.

ABSTRACT

This thesis presents the findings of a qualitative case study on participants' conceptualisations, practices and challenges when enacting servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts in KwaZulu-Natal. The study further sought to ascertain what we could learn from this leadership theory to enhance leadership and management in the researched schools. The study was actuated by the noticeable lack of servant leadership in many multiple-deprived rural schools which often manifests itself in a myriad of professional malpractices, a clear decline in ethical and moral fibre and educational values leading to poor learner performance. Four schools were identified within which twelve participants were conveniently selected to share their conceptualisations, practices and challenges of servant leadership with the researcher. Further, interpretivism was used to foreground the study. Content analysis was utilised to meticulously analyse the data which were generated through semi-structured interviews and documents reviews.

The findings seem to suggest that some educators had very limited knowledge of servant leadership principles despite the Batho Pele policy which has existed in the public service since 1996. This policy promotes servant leadership behaviour by 'putting people first' and improving service delivery in the public service and schools in particular. Consequently, despite the anticipated servant leadership practices such as school vision, centrality of teaching and learning, educator professional development, implementation of educational laws and policies and rewarding excellence, there was still evidence of a multiplicity of professional malpractices such as educator-learner sexual relationships, late-coming and absenteeism by educators and rampant fraud, corruption, educator union militancy and dominance in a number of schools. In addressing some of the above ills, this paper concludes that the school stands and falls on its vision adopted by the leadership. Notwithstanding the challenges faced by participants, school principals should learn to be agile, be adaptable and transformational leaders, be excellent communicators, and promote the culture of selfless service and Ubuntu-based values and these skills are likely to assist them to implement the servant leadership practices (Batho Pele policy and other policies) meant to transform their schools into effective educational institutions.

Keywords:

Ethics, multiple deprivations, rurality, servant leadership, transformational leadership, *Ubuntu* leadership.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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20 November 2017

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Protocol Number: 2017ECE021D

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Application for Ethics Clearance: Doctor of Philosophy

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate, has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A case of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal

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Yours sincerely,

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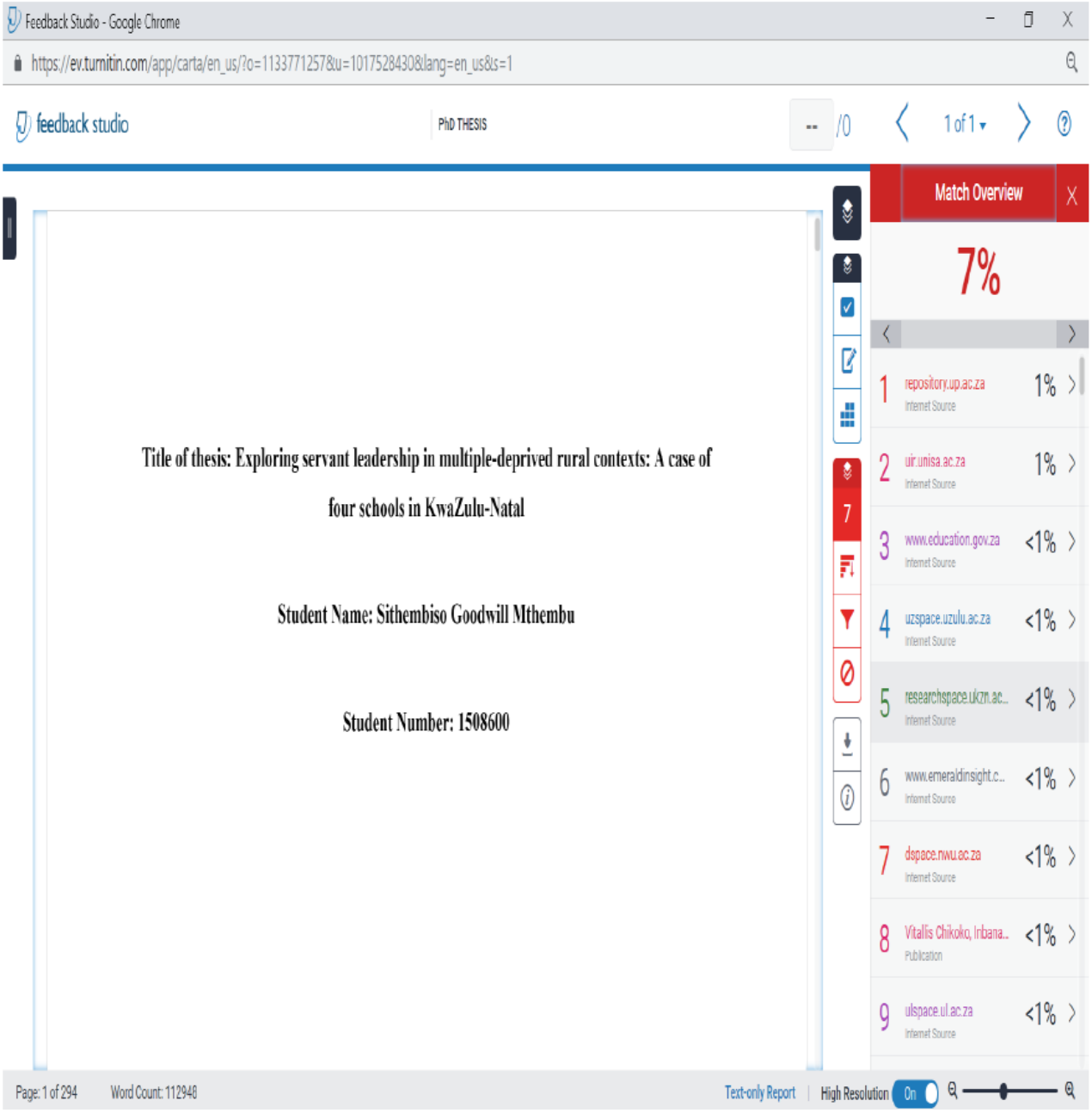

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS USED IN THE STUDY

Acronyms	Description
AFS	Audited Financial Statement
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANA	Annual National Assessment
ANC	African National Congress
AIKS	African Indigenous Knowledge Systems
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CMC	Circuit Management Centre
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DH	Departmental Head
EQ	Emotional intelligence
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
IQ	Rational (cognitive) intelligence
SQ	Spiritual intelligence
GET	General Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
HoD	Head of Department (at the Head Office)
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LSEN	Learners with special educational needs
MBO	Management-by-Objectives
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme

NDP	National Development Plan
NSLA	National Strategy for Learner Attainment
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PPM	Post Provisioning Model
PPN	Post Provisioning Norm
REQV	Relative Education Qualification Value
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SAIMD	South African Index Multiple Deprivations
SA-SAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
WPTPS	White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

> I stand here before you not as a prophet but *a humble servant of you the people*. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I hoped then, that life might offer me the opportunity ***t****o serve my people and make my own humble contribution* to the freedom struggle. *I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands.*
>
> (Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, 11th February 1990)
>
> When people lead at *a* higher level, they make the world a better place, because their goals are focused on the greater good. This requires a special kind of leader: *a servant leader*.
>
> (Blanchard, Blanchard & Zigarmi, 2010, p.261)

Notably, the above quotations by the late President Nelson Mandela (1990) and Blanchard, Blanchard and Zigarmi (2010) demonstrate the significance, the appropriateness and necessity for servant leadership approach in public administration in South Africa including schools especially, more so, those in challenging multiple-deprived rural contexts. Further, the notion of servant leadership implicitly places a huge responsibility on the shoulders of school principals, Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 educators to emulate and run with Nelson Mandela's vision of true and selfless service to the nation and a better life for all the citizens of South Africa. Most of the calls that are often made in educational transformation in the Republic of South Africa revolve around the urgent necessity to transform the management styles of schools (Msila, 2008). Mandela worked tirelessly and selflessly as a servant of his people to bring hope and dignity in the lives of all the citizens of the Republic South Africa (Makgoba, 2013). In addition, the above theory was fittingly selected as a declaration to guide the discourse in this study on servant leadership in multiple deprived rural contexts and the

role played by school principals, Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 educators in ensuring that they improve and enhance the educational leadership landscape in rural schools in the Ilembe Education District in KwaZulu-Natal.

Leadership is one of the most significant and indispensable school environmental factors which determine the success or failure of schools as learning organisations. Despite a plethora of the already generated leadership literature, there is still a multiplicity of views around this phenomenon (Boateng, 2002). In spite of the recognition of the prominence of leadership, there is also still no unanimity as to what leadership actually means or how to define it (Bolden, 2004; De Ver, 2009). Bertocci (2009) contends that it is difficult to detach leadership from leaders (school principals, Departmental Heads and educators). As a consequence, it is important for any discussion of leadership and leader to link it with a discussion of the attributes of leaders (Bertocci, 2009). Boateng (2002) posits that the concept of leadership comprises of a multiplicity of connotations and is invariably synonymous with other equally complex terms, namely, management, administration, supervision, authority and power. According to Masango (2002), leadership involve a person who possesses commanding authority or influence within a group of his or her colleagues. Likewise, Bass (1990) adds that leadership has to do with the interaction between two or more colleagues in a group that normally involves a structuring or restructuring of the institutional environment and perceptions and expectations of colleagues in a school.

According to Masango (2002), good leadership has to do with a person who has a strong commanding authority or influence within his or her group of followers. Likewise, Makgoba (2013) emphasises that Nelson Mandela's ideal of a free, non-racial, non-sexiest and democratic South Africa encompassed a deep commitment to transform the lives of the historically marginalised, disadvantaged and the vulnerable poorest of the poor. This is further noted by Msila (2008) who adds that collective solidarity has inbuilt values which allow people like educators to take informed decisions in the leadership and management of their schools. In resonance with Masango's (2002) assertion, former President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela strategically set the tone for servant leadership through the above famous Rubicon speech he delivered upon his release from Victor Verster prison on the 11th of February 1990- in Cape Town.

Nelson Mandela set the tone for a kind of leadership that seeks to serve the people first before leading them. This was clearly demonstrated by several pieces of legislation that sought to respect and restore human dignity which had been trampled upon for decades by the previous colonial and apartheid governments. The following are examples of laws and policies passed during the Mandela Administration.

I have observed, as also noted by Cook, Rutt and Sims (2014) and Badat (2016), that there is a correlation between deprivation and education or academic performance in rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Multiple deprivations are rife in this province of KwaZulu-Natal. This works against South Africa's aspirations of the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) of 2011 which envisages a kind of education that is an essential service and responsive to the country's social and economic challenges. Wong and Davey (2007) assert that the financial and human costs of poor and unethical leadership are beginning to escalate beyond our imagination, thus creating leadership crisis which is likely to deepen if no fundamental leadership transformation is put in place. Learners and educators are often subjected to inhospitable and inhuman social factors which hamper their academic progress both in terms of General Education and Training (GET) band Annual National Assessments and Further Education and Training band National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results, when comparing urban, township and rural schools learner outcomes. Even Mckinney, Hall, Lowden, McClung and Cameron (2012) echo the same view that the noticeable impact of and deprivation on learners and their educational success is a tremendous source of concern for the province of KwaZulu-Natal. As a result, Ibrahim and Don (2014) argue that school principals must possess credibility and a great reputation in order to be able to inspire and motivate his or her colleagues.

A further discussion of the true character of a servant leader as a school principal, Departmental Head and educator will feature more prominently in the ensuing sections such as the Review of Literature in Chapter Two and data presentation and discussion of findings in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

1.2 Background to the study

Before 1994, the white minority government chose to serve the Whites only at the expense of the black majority through an educational machinery of Hendrik Verwoerd's Bantu education (Davenport, 1991, Dubow & Mary, 2015). Even today, the legacies of colonialism and apartheid continue to manifest themselves ostensibly in rural education (Mbokazi, 2013). Before 1994,

black learners received inferior education so that they could not compete with their white counterparts in the world market. Black female educators were not allowed to fall pregnant out of wedlock. Those who happened to fall pregnant were forced to enter into a marriage of convenience for them not to be dismissed from work and also in order to enjoy maternity leave benefits. According to Pillay (2014) the lack of servant leadership landed the South African education system in a state of turmoil. Further, this was evidenced by inequitable access to education, resources and opportunities for learners and educators along axes of race, gender, class and geographic discrimination (Pillay, 2014). A black person was always regarded as a servant of his or her rich employer (Agrawal, 2014).

Likewise, Winston (2008) argues that servant leadership has always been consistently rejected because it was a Western construct, developed in the West for the West and therefore, servant leadership may not be easily understood and accepted in the African context. The South African educational leadership landscape has evolved in the last few decades. Coupled with this assertion, the school leadership and management are confronted with mediocrity and a myriad of professional malpractices. Apparently, these have become the opium of school leadership. For that reason, there is clear call, not for any kind of leadership, but servant leadership. Patterson (2003) hails servant leadership as an approach that has the ability to provide a whole new conceptualisation of leadership, by defining the core of leadership as a focus on the well-being of colleagues. According Fullan (1998), school principals need a new mind set for them to break the bonds of dependency if they want to transform their school.

According to Wright, Noble, Barnes and Noble (2009), there are five multiple deprivation domains in South Africa, namely, income and material, employment, education, living environment and biological parents deprivations. Lupton (2004, p.38) argues that there are more than five, and mentions "education, income, wealth, housing, water, sanitation, energy, employment, transport, financial services, nutrition, health care, safety and perceived well-being". The KwaZulu-Natal province's school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are faced with this Herculean challenge daily and are expected to serve their communities and turn their schools into successful organisations despite the challenges listed above. Vilakazi (2015) agrees that leadership is everything and means providing guidance to colleagues and learners. This guidance, as he adds, should be of a good principal that has characteristics of a good shepherd. This view is shared by Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2013) by stating that

leadership has to do with changing the status quo. In contrast, there is a loud call that all learners should have access to the similar quality of teaching and learning, even though their outcomes appear to be unequal (Lupton, 2005). The reality is that most rural schools have a huge challenge with regard to accessing computers, laboratories and libraries but the Department of Education places a greater demand for them to perform in a manner that is compared to well resourced urban schools (Statistics South Africa, 2015).

Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) and Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) report that multiple deprived rural schools have cases of alcohol and drug abuse, theft, poor parental involvement, overcrowding, lack of resources, single-parents and child headed families, high level of politics or unionism which render these schools dysfunctional and cause some of them to provide poor (education) teaching and learning. This view is shared by Lupton (2004) when he asserts that some schools in disadvantaged contexts (areas) have academic outcomes that are far below the national acceptable level which is a minimum of 60%. In addition, Barnes, Wright, Noble and Dawes (2001) define a learner as living in absolute poverty if he or she suffers from two or more of the above named severe deprivations.

The KwaZulu-Natal province is largely rural and 54% of the total population of which, blacks are the majority, live in rural areas (KwaZulu-Natal Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development, 2004). This geographic condition puts this province at a disadvantage because ruralness (rurality) is often associated with poverty, poor learner outcomes and poor school leadership. South Africa's settlement patterns were engineered by the colonial and apartheid policies which relocated black people to 'homelands or Bantustans' and the resultant inequality and disadvantage continue to impact negatively on the quality of life and opportunities for people residing in these ex-homeland areas (KwaZulu-Natal Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development, 2004). Studies on rural education conducted internationally and locally reveal a clear correlation between learner outcomes and educator unethical behaviours and lethargy to serve, citing more prominently the issue of educator absenteeism (Alcazar, Rogers, Chaundhury, Hammer & Kremer, 2006; Dorward, 2006; World Bank, 2006; Rogers & Vegas, 2009; Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan & van Rensburg, 2010; Brown & Arnell, 2012). In addition, this is evidenced by the quality of National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination and Annual National Assessment (ANA) results. Myende (2014) agrees that rural

education in South Africa is faced with a myriad of challenges which make it difficult to maintain the quality standards in rural schools.

To exacerbate the situation, the majority of learners from the poorest of the poor and most disadvantaged communities are most likely to attend the poor performing schools and to achieve the poorest academic results (Ainscow, Chapman, Dyson, Gunter, Hall, Kerr, McNamara, Muijs, Raffo & West (2011). However, this does not suggest that all rural schools perform poorly, as Hull (2003) reports that multiple-deprived rural schools and communities are different from those in suburban and urban areas, but also from one another hence, Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) refer to this schooling system as a continuum, where there are first class schools, dysfunctional schools and disadvantaged schools with economic challenges but which strive to perform very well. As a consequence, learners from this poverty-stricken environment and low quality of education are prone to become drop-outs and join gangs and thus adding to the increasing rate of various forms of crime including violence (Mthiyane, 2013). Against this background, to salvage the situation, basic education in most rural communities has been identified as priority number one by various stakeholders (Kilpatrick, Johns, Mulford, Falk & Prescott, 2002).

1.3 Statement of the problem

The South African Government allocates vast sums of money to education with a hope that such expenditure will enable all schools to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all its citizens (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2014). On the contrary (Pillay, 2013) reports that the standard of education in South Africa is still not on par with other developing countries. In addition, this country has a goal to improve the quality of education and one of the strategies utilised is that educators should be at school, punctual, prepared and in the classroom teaching and learners learning (Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan & van Rensburg, 2010). However, there are a host of negative factors which make this unattainable, such as: a high rate of educator absenteeism which leads to learner truancy, fighting among un-supervised learners, defiance by both learners and educators, late-coming among educators, negative attitudes towards school managements, failure to control learners' work and general indifference (Mkhwanazi, 1997). The problem of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who do not embrace the culture

of servant leadership results in school dysfunctionality, instability and strikes by either learners or educators themselves.

Consequently, the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province's poor performance in the National Senior Certificate examinations (Grade 12) and Annual National Assessments (ANA) is a matter of great concern. The KZN province obtained 60.07% in the NSC and declined by 9% which caused dissatisfaction in this province and nationally (DoE, 2016). Only two schools out of 125 obtained 100%, six schools obtained below 10% and one school obtained 0,00% in 2014 and 2015 (DoE, 2016). It is an undisputed fact that the core-business of the school is teaching and learning and that the core-task of principals is to make it a point that their school ethos is conducive to national priorities such as improved learner outcomes and bachelor passes (NDP, 2011). Servant leadership through Batho Pele policy requires schools to decide on their agreed upon service standards to be communicated to parents. Hunter (2004) argues that a servant leader needs to be very committed to the people he or she serves and to the profession he or she has chosen. The majority of the affected schools are situated in challenging and multiple-deprived contexts. Msila (2013) contends that many dysfunctional public schools are failing, possibly, because educators have lost commitment to their teaching profession. Some are pay cheque collectors and no longer have willingness to serve the nation, namely, learners, parents and communities. In this study, I argue that in some rural schools, poor learner outcomes are as a result of educators' deviant behaviours or unprofessional practices, as my observations seem to suggest, like late coming, physical and functional absenteeism, failure to honour teaching periods and under-teaching. Consequently, servant leadership can make a difference, reviving the work ethics, commitment, trust, vision, competence, honesty and integrity (Bhengu, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2014).

More importantly, this study's assumption is that some school principals, Departmental Heads (DHs) and educators are not serving the KwaZulu-Natal community properly. Some of their noticeable behaviours are not befitting teaching as a noble profession. Mart (2013) shares the same vein that better working conditions will increase educators' commitment and assist them to perform their duties more properly. According to Christie (2010), in schools that are not well led and managed, the real primary task (core-business) and central purpose of the school as an organisation which is teaching and learning is most likely to suffer. Consequently, the management must perform their duties and similarly educators must also perform their teaching

tasks. Mart (2013) adds that learner performance is largely dependent on educator commitment. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) hold the view that effective education makes a difference in improving teaching and learning and there is nothing that can be construed as new or especially controversial about that fact. To echo that sentiment, Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall and Strauss (2006) further argue that it is not entirely true that there is indirect relationship between school leadership and improved learner outcomes. In addition, to underscore this argument, Leithwood (2010) reports that on the contrary to the general view (assumption) that the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' effects on learners are indirect; his study identified various variables which suggest that leadership does have a direct influence on what learners learn at school. Unsurprisingly, Clark (2011) believes that the era of accountability in schools requires effective school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to establish and maintain good organisational environments that promote high level of learner performance.

Legally, according to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No. 75 of 1997, Section 22 (1) an educator is entitled to 36 days of normal sick leave in a three year cycle, but this is never followed in some schools, especially, challenging and multiple-deprived rural schools. Research records that in the first world countries educator absenteeism stands at between 3 and 6% while in the third world or low income countries it is averaged at 19% ranging between 11 and 28% (Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan and van Rensburg, 2010). Rogers and Vegas (2009) agree and submit that expanding and improving basic education in developing countries requires, at a minimum, educators who are always present in the classroom and motivated to engage in curriculum delivery, but, surprisingly, this important input is often missing. Mkhwanazi (1997) further emphasises that educator absenteeism has negative effects such as truancy, violence, fighting, defiance by learners, negative attitudes towards educators, educators' failure to mark class attendance registers, indifference or ignorance of learner achievements, progress and learner names. Alcazar, Rogers, Chaundhury, Hammer and Kremer (2006) argue that in terms of the geographical location, rife educator absenteeism is concentrated in poor and remote rural schools. The empirical literature reveals that in South Africa educators absent themselves more regularly on Mondays and Fridays and consequently this leads to underperformance of learners in international and national assessments (Reddy, *et al.,* 2010).

Furthermore, Manala (2014) argues that South Africa needs servant leaders who are not prepared to compromise on service delivery. He adds that servant leadership is an appropriate model for efficient and effective service delivery in schools. Letizia (2014) shares the same view by asserting that a servant leader may be an answer because of its characteristic of altruism for educators, learners and community. For this reason, I want to explore servant leadership and what we can draw from this leadership theory to enhance school leadership and management.

1.4 Purpose and rationale for the study

The rationale or interest for conducting this research which explores servant leadership in challenging and multiple-deprived rural contexts in four KwaZulu-Natal schools emanated from my real personal experiences. I was born in a rural area at Ndulinde and obtained my primary and secondary school education in the same rural locality of Mandeni in KwaZulu-Natal. Thus, I concur with Bouck (2004) that rural schools are different from suburban and urban schools in many aspects and that the location of any schooling institution is often associated with the socioeconomic status level of the school, especially, poverty.

In addition, I was a member of the Representative Council of Learners (formerly known as school prefect) in most of the grades during my secondary school education. I also served my school as a Head Prefect in Grade 12. I served my teacher union, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) as a Branch Deputy Secretary and Branch Education Convenor in two consecutive years. Further, I served my community as the African National Congress (ANC) Branch Executive Committee member and Branch General Secretary, respectively. Consequently, I developed passion for leadership in general.

In line with my opening statement, I did my university or tertiary education at various institutions but never lost touch with rurality. As a professional educator and a school principal I have also taught in many challenging and multiple-deprived rural schools. Therefore, I have witnessed Mulford, Falk and Prescott's (2002) feeling when they state that many rural schools are in crisis. In addition, I agree with Harmon and Schafft (2009) that school principals may develop personal identities associated to a rural place, personally treasure the quality of rural life, and develop individual leadership attributes commensurate with the mind-set of a small

rural community. Further, I have observed a decline in learner performance and various types of malpractices such as physical and functional absenteeism, persistent late-coming by educators, failure to honour teaching periods, selling of promotional posts, inappropriate relationships with female learners, professional incapacity, financial mismanagement, fraudulent qualifications, drunkenness on duty, faked long illnesses, abscondment, to name but a few. Other pertinent questions which triggered my interest in servant leadership were that, firstly, I facilitated a dismissal of an educator that had absconded for more than one month in 2003, and secondly, in 2016, I visited one educator at home who had faked illness for almost six months, to request her to submit her leave forms to school, and to my surprise, she decided to literally hide in her house and asked her sister to tell me that she was not at home and had gone to an unknown funeral.

My process of engaging with the literature on servant leadership was an eye opener for me and a reflection on my own leadership as a school principal. This triggered a sense of a true self-introspection and a subsequent arrival at a conclusion that I was not doing enough to emulate Nelson Mandela's servant leadership ideals of being a servant of the whole nation. To accentuate this notion, Maanga (2013) avers that Nelson Mandela had rare attributes like love, serenity, goodwill, faithfulness, calmness and self-control. In addition, Bruno and Lay (2006) state that the effectiveness of the school principal depends on how appropriate his or her leadership approach is to the situation in which he or she operates. Furthermore, the general observation on some of my colleague principals, DHs and educators, especially in challenging and multiple-deprived rural contexts, of which I know and understand better, and have experienced my entire teaching career, reveals that servant leadership is either not popular, or has not been embraced by some of my colleagues in the teaching profession, hence, this study on exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A case of four schools KwaZulu-Natal.

In practical terms, this lowers the quality of life in schools as centres for learning. I personally, feel that, now is the time for school principals, DHs and educators with sharp educational acumen to embrace servant leadership principles. Failure to do that may multiply a myriad of leadership weaknesses that are crippling education in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. My observation is that these schools do not have service commitment charter and service

delivery improvement plan which respond to the expectations of the school community in relation to standards of services provided by the institution.

1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of this study stems from the reality that a plethora of literature examines servant leadership in general terms. It does not come closer home and relate it to my interest, which is educational leadership (school leadership). Spears' (2010) observation is that there is a noticeable explosion of interest in, practice of, servant leadership as an approach to leadership. This argument is further supported by Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson and Jinks (2007) who opine that there is a growing popularity of this servant leadership approach which made them find it imperative to take measures not only to examine its meaning but explore the effectiveness that this leadership model provides in educational management. Similarly, there is a growing belief that effective school principals are the foundation of good schools and that without their leadership; efforts to improve learner performance cannot succeed (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). This study seeks to explore educational leadership in relation to school principals' and classroom based educators' attitudes and behaviours through the lens or tenets of servant leadership principles and transformational leadership. It has been observed that Post Level 1 (PL1) educators are often neglected in matters that have to do with leadership. The classroom is where the tyre hits the tar, therefore to comprehend what, what does not and how it takes place in a school situation, I find it crucial to involve these often-shunned participants. Even Greenleaf's' (1977) major conviction rests on the greater preparation of learners and educators for servant leadership in schools.

According to Spears (2010) servant leadership is most frequently viewed as an ideal leadership style to which a huge number of leaders and organisations aspire. Similarly, this viewpoint is best expressed by Hunter (2004) when stating that servant leadership is emerging on a grand scale in most places of the world. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of challenges besetting education, I am convinced that even though servant leadership cannot serve as panacea to all social and educational ills, but it may be a mitigating factor in the current education system, which, according to Greenleaf (1977) appears to be counter-productive. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) aver that there are many disadvantaged schools, which, in spite of the socio-economic challenges they are confronted with, show a high level of resilience and perform at

levels comparable to first class schools. In line with the above assertion, this study does not attempt to assume that all poor and historically disadvantaged rural schools are underperforming and have deficient leadership and management practices (Christie, 2010). Clearly, I am moving from a premise, as Christie (2010) underscores that the notion that if schools are not effectively managed, the primary task and principal purpose of the school which is quality teaching and learning, is very likely to suffer.

Based on empirical studies, this research argues that there is a direct link and causal effect between the lack of servant leadership practices and the decline in learner performance in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. According to Noland and Richards (2015) and Arrington (2015) servant leadership, when enacted in the classroom teaching serves as an excellent opportunity to improve the quality of education by positively impacting on pupil learning and learner performance. Bowman (2005) shares Noland and Richards (2015) and Arrington's (2015) findings and opines that when servant leadership is applied in the classroom practice it speaks to the educator's longing to be known, to care and be cared for in pursuit of the common good. In addition, Norman (2018) asserts that the literature demonstrates that there is a positive link between servant leadership and effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Likewise, the study by Gedifew and Bitew (2017) found that school principals, departmental heads and educators who depict servant leadership behaviours normally set high standards for pupils' learning, create harmonious interactions and motivate academic excellence among the learners they serve. In concurring with Gedifew and Bitew (2017), Olsen (2018) avers that servant classroom teaching has to do with putting a comfortable method of teaching aside and learning from the learners which teaching pedagogies work best for them.

My observations and professional experiences seem to suggest that although the multiple-deprived rural school principals are willing to enact servant leadership, some educators drop the ball or score many own goals, thus causing a hindrance to the keenness to successfully apply servant leadership in teaching in the classroom, school leadership and management. Some colleagues opined that their enactment of servant teaching and servant leadership yielded positive results in terms of learner attainment. Similarly, Soehner and Ryan (2011) partake in this discourse and argue that without a doubt, the school principal has an impact on learner achievement. They further add that, despite the fact that some studies examined identified

school principal effect on learner performance as indirect, it remains vital (Soehner & Ryan, 2011).

As a consequence, this study contends that there is now adequate literature which affirms this study's assumption that there is a direct link or relationship and causal effect between the lack of servant leadership practices and the decline in learner academic outcomes. This view is further supported by Rautiola (2009) who underscores the perception that the principals, departmental heads and Post Level 1 educators who properly identify the correct focus for school and classroom improvement efforts are most likely to have a positive impact on learner performance in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This assertion is consistent the empirical research which show that self-serving and dysfunctional leadership in rural schools may be a significant reason for low academic performance of the South African learners (Hompashe, 2018). I agree with Soehner and Ryan (2011, p.276) when they argue that "leadership and how it is understood, defined and enacted make it a very personal undertaking". This means that servant school leaders differ in terms of their strengths and weaknesses (areas for development). As a result, they cannot be painted with one brush in relation to whether they can or cannot positively impact on learner academic results in multiple-deprived rural school contexts.

Having said the above, this research seeks to explore the participants' conceptualisations, practices of servant leadership in their schools and how the theory of servant leadership can be utilised as one of the turnaround strategies to transform schools and improve learner outcomes through leadership and teaching in multiple-deprived rural schools.

1.6 Objectives of the study

- To explore how servant leadership is conceptualised by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in school management and administration in multiple-deprived rural contexts.
- To examine how servant leadership is enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators when managing teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural school contexts.

- To explore the challenges encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators when managing teaching and learning in multiple deprived rural school contexts.
- To explore the perspectives of participants regarding how servant leadership practices can be enhanced in schools to improve leadership, management and teaching in multiple deprived communities.

1.7 Key research questions

Therefore, this study seeks to find answers to the following main critical questions:

(a) How is servant leadership conceptualised by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in school leadership and management in multiple-deprived rural contexts?

(b) How is servant leadership enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in leading and managing teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural school contexts?

(c) What challenges are encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in the implementation of servant leadership (Batho Pele) principles and what strategies do they employ in resolving them in multiple-deprived rural school contexts?

(d) What do participants believe should be done to enhance servant leadership practices of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators as they lead, manage and teach in multiple-deprived rural communities?

1.8 Clarification of key concepts used in the study

This section provides clarification of the key concepts used to guide the research project within the relevant context of the study (Maree, 2012). It attempts to offer the reader the perspectives of the researcher about his or her understandings of the terminology utilised in the study.

1.8.1 Servant leadership

Any leadership requires a leader to have a variety of necessary competencies, personal qualities and good attitudes in order to be able to influence educators to perform their duties and

responsibilities (Thabethe, 2011). According to Anderson (2008), the views around what it means to be a servant principal, Departmental Head or educator are many and they deal with a plethora of leadership related topics. In defining servant leadership, Greenleaf (1977) states that the servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator is servant first. It starts with the natural feeling that *one desires to serve, to serve first*. Then conscious choice brings him or her to aspire to lead. Central to his or her willingness to serve first and then lead, is the principal's zeal to satisfy the personal, academic and professional needs of educators and learners. More importantly, the cardinal questions that arise are: Do those served grow as professional persons? Do they, in the process of 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 they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived or harmed?

Similarly, Spears (1996) conceives servant leadership as a new leadership model that puts serving colleagues as a top priority in an organisation. Servant leadership emphasises improved and accelerated service to educators, learners and parents, a holistic approach to work performance; promotion of a sense of a school community and the sharing of power and authority in decision-making processes (Spears, 1996). In agreeing with Spears (1996) Smith (2005) asserts that servant leadership is appreciated for emphasising 'holistic' approach to the individual educator, one that addresses the spiritual and economic needs of colleague educators. Further, Claar, Jackson and TenHaken's (2014) observation is that servant leadership presents a leader style which appeals to colleague educators and schools as organisations. More importantly, servant leadership endeavours to democratise and also distribute power and influence to colleagues rather than placing them in fewer hands (Valeri, 2007). This is a characteristic which makes it stands out among other leadership styles dominated by hierarchical, top down, centralised organisational leadership models.

On the basis of the above definitions and discussion, for me servant leadership is a value-based leadership style which places service at the core of school management and quality teaching and learning. According to my conceptualisation, a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator should be more inclined about serving as opposed to leading the school. Equally, he or she should be concerned about learner outcomes in all the grades in the school. Moreover, the enactment of servant can eliminate the professional malpractices which are mentioned in this

study, such fraud and corruption, late-coming and absenteeism, under-teaching, educator-learner sexual relationships, to mention but a few.

1.8.2 Ubuntu leadership

Conceptually, *Ubuntu* relates to the traditional South African core value that promotes the establishment and maintenance of dyadic (pair, eg. Principal and colleague educators) sociologically important trust relationships as essence or indispensable quality of effective school leadership (Handley, Louw, 2016). According to Msila (2008), the concept of *ubuntu* is very significant for various educational organisations in the South African society and this includes schools. Khoza (1994) defines the concept of *ubuntu* as 'humanness' or a sense of 'being human' and comprises of values such as 'universal brotherhood for African educators, sharing, treating and respecting colleague educators, learners and parents as human beings. Similarly, Nussbaum (2003) conceptualises *ubuntu* as the capacity in our culture to display reciprocity, compassion, dignity, harmony and humanity in an endeavour to build and maintain community with true justice and infinite and unconditional mutual caring.

Idoniboye-Obu and Whetho (2013) contend that *ubuntu* should be viewed as a value system which seeks to inform human behaviour in relation to the treatment of colleague educators, School Management Team (SMT), learners and parents, more importantly, the treatment of those led or managed by the school principal, Departmental Heads and educators. Msila (2008) shares a similar understanding of this concept of *ubuntu* and adds that these *ubuntu* values are very important for school leadership, especially, those that are dysfunctional and performing poorly in learner outcomes. Further, the organisations which desire to strive for success can enact *ubuntu* philosophy in order to strengthen effective and efficient leadership and contribute to a collective solidarity among School Management Teams (SMTs) and educators (Msila, 2008).

Every educator or leader that accepts that *ubuntu* has a cardinal role to play in transforming multiple-deprived rural schools, agrees and has internalised the general notion or proverb that '*ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu'* which is often translated as 'a person is a person through other people' or 'I am because we are / you are' or 'you are because I am' (Khoza, 1994, 2012; Msila, 2008, 2014; Metz, 2011; 2018; Oppenheim, 2012; Idoniboye-Obu & Whetho,

2013; Nussbaum; 2003). For the purpose of this study, *ubuntu* philosophy refers to the crucial value system which promotes humaneness, honesty, integrity, ethics, morality and trust which should be demonstrated in school leadership and management including effective teaching and learning. This finds resonance with Nussbaum's (2003) perspective that *ubuntu* is an African philosophy which is a way of being and a code of ethics deeply embedded in the true African culture. It is theoretically undergirded by an African philosophy of individualism and collectivism which emphasises that '*a person is a person through other people and that it takes a village to raise a child'.*

1.8.3 Ethics

According to Mihelic, Lipicnik and Tekavcic (2010), ethics is a philosophical concept which originates from a Greek term 'ethos' denoting a person's custom or character. Freeman and Stewart (2006) believe that various executives and business thinkers view ethical leadership simply as a question of school principals, HoDs and educators displaying good character in their institutions. In actual fact every school as an organisation requires leadership environment that supports effective teaching and learning or quality education as a public service. As a consequence, ethics forms the heart of this human endeavour. To justify this assertion, Mihelic, Lipicnik and Tekavcic (2010) define ethics as a code of values and moral fundamental truths that guide a school principal, Departmental Head or educator's personal and professional behaviours in relation to what is deemed right or wrong. Rich (2011) conceptualises ethics as a systematic approach to comprehending, analysing and differentiating between matters of good and bad, right and wrong, admirable and deplorable pertaining to the well-being of and the relationships between leaders and their colleagues.

In this study, the definition of ethics draws from Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2001) fourth paradigm of the ethic of profession. The ethic of profession is the ethical paradigm which demands the school leaders to develop personal code of ethics and professional code of ethics as their day-to-day 'ethical toolkit' in order to selflessly serve the interests of parents, learners and colleagues.

1.8.4 Multiple-deprivations

According to Maringe and Moletsane (2015), the concept of multiple-deprivation is new in educational contexts and has not yet been adequately conceptualised and theorised. Townsend (1987) defines multiple deprivations as an accumulation of individual domains or dimensions of deprivation in society. Further, he views deprivation as a shortage of material gains, social and human capital, including proper housing and other essential services. There is no agreement in terms of the total number of dimensions of multiple deprivations. Various scholars identify a plethora of multiple deprivation domains, namely: employment deprivation, living environment deprivation, income deprivation, material deprivation (barriers to housing and services), health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training deprivation, biological parents' deprivation, adequate care deprivation, and crime (Barnes, 2007; Barnes, Wright, Noble & Dawes, 2007; McLennan, 2009; Wright, Noble & Barnes, 2009; Noble, Zembe, Wright & Avenell, 2013; Noble, Zembe & Wright, 2014; Burke & Jones, 2019). Garner and Raudenbush (1991) found that there is a correlation between local deprivation and learner outcomes and urge the school leadership to take this into account during decision making processes. Therefore, in this study, multiple-deprived schools are those schools located in communities with high rate of unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation, unreliable transport, poor or sub-standard education and poor and inadequate health facilities.

1.8.5 Rurality (ruralness)

According to Gardiner (2008), the concepts of rural and urban have a complex history in the Republic of South and even today there is still no agreement as to what actually constitutes rural and urban settings. The Department of Basic Education (2015) defines rural education as the provision of quality education in schools in areas with tribal authorities, farming communities and densely populated settlements outside of urban areas. Nevertheless, Du Plessis, Beshiri and Bollman (2001); Goss (2013), in their definition of 'rural' state that it is a multifaceted concept which comprises of a myriad of factors such as population size, population density, distance from the urban areas or distance travelled to acquire essential basic services. Kapueja (2014) contends that South African rural areas have always included white-owned farms which are sparsely populated by Africans, especially, blacks. Gardner (2008) reports that urban settings include cities and towns

which, the apartheid government, before the 1994 new political dispensation, were gazetted as the domains of white people whereas, Africans were forced to live in homelands such as KwaZulu. As a result, rural school learners appear to be quite homogeneous as contrary to the urban school learners which seem to comprise of a greater mix of human races and cultures. Rural areas are normally located outside urban, suburban and township areas (Kapueja, (2014).

In addition, rural areas are beset with a multiplicity of challenges which hamper the provision of high quality education because of their geographic isolation (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy & Dean, 2005). The nature of the rural setting impacts negatively on the quality of leadership which is enacted in the multiple deprived rural school contexts. Some of the cardinal disadvantages of rural schools are that they often fail to attract suitably and highly qualified educators. In addition, rural school principals, departmental heads and educators do not access critical information on the possible interventions and strategies for improving learner performance in rural communities because there is not enough high-quality research conducted in rural areas (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy & Dean, 2005). Simelane (2014) states that some of the rural schools are referred to as non-viable schools because of low learner enrolment and in turn, affected by learner migration, shortage of resources, depletion of school buildings (facilities), withdrawal of human capital (re-deployment of educators) and poor parental involvement. Furthermore, Msila's (2015) observation is that rural school leaders in South Africa are faced with prevalent problems such as high rate of absenteeism, persistent late coming of learners, unsuitable and unsafe infrastructure. In addition, a huge majority of KwaZulu-Natal residents fall under the sub-system characterised as dysfunctional which exacerbates the systemic crisis where learners use unventilated pit latrine toilets and at times no toilets at all (Gwanya, 2010, Hlalele, 2012, du Plessis, 2014, Department of Education, 2015, Langa, 2015, Westaway, 2015, Myende, 2014).

In terms of this study, a rural school refers to schools located in rural areas under the jurisdiction of the tribal authority or traditional councils under Inkosi and Izinduna. Further, 'rural' is a geographic space or location called 'village' or which refers to the distance from urban or suburban areas which also includes distances to essential basic

services (Du Plessis, Beshiri & Bollman, 2001). Khattri, Riley and Kane (1997) share the same view that most places are normally classified and defined according their geographical location which includes salient characteristics such as rural, urban and suburban.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

Delimitations serve as a scope or boundary of the data within which the inquirer concludes the study findings (Maree, 2007). Consistent with the aforementioned view, the qualitative-derived delimiters of my study are spelt out here under:

This study was conducted at four multiple-deprived rural schools comprising of two primary schools and two secondary schools in Mandeni Education Circuit and Gingindlovu Education Circuit, under Stanger Circuit Management Centre (CMC), Ilembe Education District in KwaZulu-Natal. As a matter of principle, these four rural schools and twelve conveniently selected participants constituted a small-scale research; hence; Lincoln and Guba's (1985) assertion that the case study ensures a grounded appraisal of contexts. As a consequence, the findings of this study cannot be extrapolated or transferred to urban school contexts in the district. More importantly, this study was carried out in multiple-deprived rural contexts where most of the learners are faced with multiple-deprivations, ranging from hunger, lack of housing, lack of teaching and learning resources, insecurity, psychological, physical and emotional problems, declining or poor learner outcomes. It did not extend to other contexts like townships and urban areas for purposes of consistency and methodological coherence. Furthermore, it was clearly located in the case study design and underpinned by qualitative research methodology.

1.10 Organisation of the thesis

This thesis comprises of nine chapters which are as follows:

Chapter One outlines the research problem. It provides an insight into the introduction and background, statement of the problem, rationale and motivation for the study, significance of the study, objectives, critical questions, clarification of the key concepts, delimitations of the study, organisation or outline of the study and the chapter summary.

Chapter Two reviews relevant or related literature. It explores the concept of servant leadership and school ruralness, school multiple-deprivations and educator malpractices for the enhancement of study coherence. This chapter is structured in such a manner that it comprises of the South African (national) literature, African literature and international literature.

Chapter Three explains the two theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, namely: servant leadership and attuned (ubuntu) leadership theories. This chapter further discuss the phenomenon of servant leadership as espoused by Russell and Stone's (2002) Servant Leadership Model. In addition, the attuned or ubuntu leadership theory is based on Khoza's (1994, 2012 and 2013) Ubuntu Leadership Model. Through the discussion, I further provide a distinction between functional and accompanying attributes of servant leadership. More importantly, this study endeavoured to develop or extend servant leadership theory as one of the frameworks underpinning the study.

Chapter Four presents the research design and methodology employed in this study. This chapter further explains convenience sampling procedures; details of the data generation methods together with the type of data analysis to be utilised, namely, content analysis as well as matters pertaining to issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues, delimitation and limitations of the study.

Chapter Five, Six and Seven are based on the presentation and discussion of the research findings. Due to the voluminous data that was generated, I decided to split the data analysis and presentation section into three chapters. Firstly, Chapter Five presents a descriptive analysis of data generated on conceptualisations of servant leadership in the context of multiple deprivations. Secondly, Chapter Six presents a descriptive analysis of data generated on enactment and promotion of servant leadership practices in the context of multiple deprivations. Thirdly, Chapter Seven presents a descriptive analysis of data generated on the challenges to the implementation of servant leadership practices and attempts employed to overcome them. Chapter Eight presents an evaluative analysis of the key themes emerging from the findings presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

In Chapter Nine, I conclude the study by providing a summary of the salient findings of the study in line with the critical questions stated in Chapter One. The findings are examined through the lens of the literature and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study. This chapter further evaluatively or theoretically presents the study summary, conclusions, recommendations and

implications for further research arrived at in the study. More importantly, it extends the servant leadership theory by adding new attributes or dimensions.

1.11 Chapter summary

This introductory chapter gave a bird's eye view of the entire thesis on exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts and this theory can used to enhance leadership, management and teaching in schools. This chapter also presented the introduction and background to the study, problem statement, purpose and rationale (motivation) for the study, significance of the study, study objectives and critical questions, delimitations / demarcation of the study, outline of the thesis structure and concluded with a chapter summary.

The next chapter presents and reviews literature on servant leadership and its related salient discourses on the phenomenon under the microscope.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: EXPLORING THE NOTION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

2.1 Introduction

> Poor service delivery in South Africa is caused, among other things, by various factors such as lack of teaching and learning resources, inadequate and unsafe infrastructure, poorly trained School Management Teams (SMTs) and educators, union or political infighting, corruption and *self-serving school leadership*.
>
> (Manala, 2014).

> We are facing a leadership crisis which will only deepen unless some fundamental change is made. There is an urgent need to do some soul searching and hard thinking regarding how to best train leadership for the next generation…….. *Servant leadership seems to offer an answer* to recent concerns about corporate scandals….. The spirit of the *leader as a servant* may be just what is needed to implement a strengths-based paradigm.
>
> (Wong & Davey, 2007, pp.1-10).

The previous introductory chapter presented a bird's eye view of what my study on servant leadership entails and seeks to achieve in its entirety. The above quotations demonstrate educational system leadership weaknesses and perpetual decay of the public service professional ethics and ethos (Kowalski, 1993; Wong & Davey, 2007; Joubert & Van Rooyen, 2007; Frank, 2014). Chapter Two begins; right from the inception with policy landscape of servant leadership followed by the international and African Continental literature and concludes with the South African (national) literature on servant leadership in the public sector, especially multiple deprived rural schools.

In line with the identified facets of servant leadership in schools, this chapter reviews, presents and discusses Russell and Stone's (2002) theory of servant leadership and Batho Pele principles, the theory which has been selected to frame this study titled: 'Servant leadership in multiple-

deprived rural contexts: A case of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal.' For the purpose of this study the literature review themes and sub-themes have been grouped in an endeavour to mirror the overall picture of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. Furthermore, my study accentuates the fact that in the South African context, Batho Pele (putting people first) forms the anatomy of the servant leadership approach. More importantly, this study will further corroborate or dismiss the dominant public narrative that the public service has become rotten to the core. Actually, the introduction of servant leadership (*Batho Pele, Putting People First*) in the public service including schools was supposed to be a game changer. On the contrary, the public service continues to lose its credibility, ethics and values, hence, the rapidly growing public dissatisfaction which manifests itself through rife public service delivery protests. This dichotomy is caused by the calibre of public servants including educators who perpetually disregard the notion of willing to serve first before being eager to lead schools.

2.2 International literature on servant leadership

For the readers to comprehend servant leadership also known as Batho Pele principles in the African context, it is imperative that they first master Greenleaf's (1977) definitional framework of this leadership approach. At the heart of Greenleaf's (1977) conceptualisation, is that the servant leader school principal, Departmental Head or educator is servant first as opposed to the popular and contemporary notion of becoming a leader first. I also share Greenleaf's (1977) theoretical perspective that servant leadership is not merely a school leadership and management approach but a way of life that is being intrinsically driven and starts with the natural feeling that an educator wants to selflessly serve, to serve first. Then the conscious choice causes an educator to aspire to lead. That educator who experiences that natural feeling is totally different from the one who is leader first (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 2010; Parris & Peachey, 2013).

In his understanding, the school principal, Departmental Head or educator who is servant first is characteristically caring and ensures that he or she makes it a point that learners, parents and colleagues' highest priority professional needs are being genuinely and honestly served. In addition, Rodriguez-Rubio and Kiser (2013) conducted a quantitative study in the United States of America and Mexico and as a consequence, report that servant leadership comprises of both practical and theoretical core principles such as healing, empathy, persuasion, foresight,

awareness, listening, conceptualisation, stewardship, building school community and commitment to the growth and development learners and colleagues.

According to Claar, Jackson and TenHaken (2014), servant leadership theory is re-gaining greater attention in the international arena more than other leadership theories such as charismatic, transactional, transformational, distributed/shared leadership and others since its introduction in 1970s. The leadership literature reveals that there are various views that serve to justify why servant leadership continues to attract increased recognition (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson & Jinks, 2007). According to Hannay (2009), one of the qualities of servant leadership that continues to give it prominence in the leadership literature is its tenet of empowerment. The educators who are led must grow as persons. The literature suggests that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators act in the best interest of their colleagues and prioritise their individual professional growth and development (Jaramillo, Bande & Valera, 2015). Interestingly, the learners and colleagues should in the process of being served become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants and as a result, the least privileged should benefit and not be further deprived (Greenleaf, 1977). Van Dierendonck (2011) shares the same line of thinking by accentuating that empowerment's main purpose is to foster a proactive and self-confident work related attitude among colleague educators and School Management Teams (SMT's) and to provide them with a sense of personal power and authority.

Conversely, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators often gain power by exercising their servant leadership attributes such as empowerment and quality service, rather than obvious traditional perspective that delegation or power sharing has a possible ability to diminish the principal's or Departmental Head's ability to influence educators (Hannay, 2009). Hence, servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators bring about a service-oriented approach to school leadership that manifests itself by enabling colleague educators to grow and develop both personally and professionally (Barbuto & Gifford, 2010). Interestingly, the empowerment of SMT's and educators through delegation of duties and involvement in decision-making about their school operations or activities brings in a new and different dimension which was previously the domain of the school principal (Hannay, 2009). Further, scholars like Claar, Jackson and TenHaken (2014) hold a view that for any school principal, Departmental Head or educator that wants to serve first before ascending to a leadership

position, he or she must demonstrate core-characteristics such as agape or unconditional love, empathy and humility.

Notwithstanding the various studies that have been conducted on servant leadership (Spears, 2010; Sendjaya & Cooper, 2011; Rodriguez-Rubio & Kiser, 2013; Claar, Jackson & TenHaken, 2014; Jaramillo, Bande & Varela, 2015; Khan, Khan & Chaudhry, 2015), none of these studies were conducted in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Servant leadership has been promoted and elevated to a significantly high level of appropriateness and demand in organisations. Various empirical studies characterise it as a team approach (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson & Junks, 2007), involving colleague educators and learners in decision-making and improving the caring and quality of schools as organisations' life (Spears, 2010), as a philosophy and practice to serve colleague educators to achieve school objectives (Serrat, 2009), and achieve organisational and personal growth of educators (Van Dierendonck, 2011), educator well-being is afforded high priority and is rooted in ethical and caring behaviour of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators (Van Dierendonck, 2011), encompasses virtues (values) and ethics (morality) (Wallace, 2007). In the process of serving others, school principals and departmental heads lead educators and learners to a point of self actualization (Hannay, 2009).

It is also worth noting that Claar, Jackson and TenHaken (2014) assert that the nine dimensions or domains of servant leadership style such as emotional healing, creating value for the school community, conceptual skills, helping colleagues to develop (grow) and succeed, putting colleagues first, behaving in an ethical way, relationships and servanthood are considered as important factors that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators can utilise in order to improve their servant leadership abilities.

Cerit (2010) conducted a quantitative study on 'the effects of servant leadership on teachers' organizational commitment in primary schools in Turkey' and Pekerti and Sendjaya (2010) conducted a quantitative research titled, 'Exploring servant leadership across cultures: comparative study in Australia and Indonesian.' These studies reveal that the creation of good and conducive educational climate and organisational culture help educators to adopt and support a scarce notion of willingness to serve rather than being obsessed with personal satisfaction and self-aggrandisement. Educators working in schools where organisational commitment is strong are well-developed and prepared to serve the institution's common purpose (Cert, 2010). The establishment of an environment in which educators volunteer to give, rather than a situation in

which egoism is deeply entrenched and where good efforts of excelling in curriculum delivery are encouraged, help the educator to spend their school day focusing of the core business thus avoiding unnecessary petty issues that divide the staff (Cert, 2010).

In the case of Australia, it has become evident that cross-cultural leadership does impact on the principals' leadership styles and conceptions about school leadership and management. Undoubtedly, this does not augur well for good quality servant leadership as envisaged by the father of servant leadership, Prof. Robert K. Greenleaf and other recent proponents (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). The culture of Indonesians does not permit them to challenge their leaders, even if they are given that opportunity but they do it with care. In Australia it is common to challenge the leadership for accountability purposes (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). The inability of educators to question some of the actions of the Indonesian leaders speaks volume about the extent to which servant leadership have been weakened and crippled. Any leader that is prepared to be of good service to educators will always have an open door policy and be open to constructive criticism or accountability measures. These international countries were chosen to demonstrate that what is perceived as good in one country may not be good for another country. These are developed counties but the servant leadership practices are totally different in the what and how part of their enactment.

2.3 Continental (African) literature on servant leadership

According to Masango (2002), Africa has a rich and diverse organisational leadership heritage which at times differs from one country and culture to another, as influenced by religions including Islam, Christianity and African religion. Notwithstanding this richness and diversity of leadership, on the contrary, Heskett (2013) contends that servant leadership is rarely practised in the African continent because of the trends in the contemporary leadership environment, the paucity of human qualities needed, demands that the practice firmly places on multiple-deprived rural school leaders and the very nature of servant leadership practices themselves. Mutia and Muthamia (2016) are in agreement with Heskett (2013) and that is why they believe that the African continent is always projected as a continent which is led by incompetent, inefficient, arrogant and economically ineffective and politically questionable leaders who have a tendency to suppress their own democracies. In the current era, there are more negatives as compared to positives in African leadership landscape. Against that background, African leadership is

normally depicted as bureaucratic, authoritarian, conservative and ineffective in nature (Handley & Louw, 2016). Secondly, African school principals are always categorised as paternalistic in their characterisation and project themselves as directive and status orientated and supportive and participative at times (Handley & Louw, 2016).

Furthermore, as they put it, this situation leaves educators wondering whether there is going to be any opportunity for the emergence of a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator who truly believes and commit himself or herself to the welfare of his or her colleagues, learners and parents (Mutia & Muthamia, 2016). The research literature in Africa reveals that there is a myriad of factors which militate against the radical promotion and flourishing of servant leadership approach. These are violence, poverty, tribalism, corruption and resistance to change (Anglaaere, 2017). To underscore that assertion, Folarin (2013) argues that Africa, especially Nigeria is dominated by high levels of politicisation of discussion issues of national significance, economic, political and educational corruption, manipulations of electoral procedures, political assassinations, leaders compromised to western dictates, maladministration, sharp ideological differences, disunity, failed government policies and failed trade unions. All multiple-deprived rural schools in the African continent need to have principals, departmental heads and Post Level 1 (PL1) educators who can harness requisite capacity and skills in order to be relevant to the 21st century educational landscape and further successfully champion the transformational agenda, and in turn, implement servant leadership for the benefit of the organisation.

Some scholars (Issa & David, 2012; Ogbeidi, 2012) believe that the concept of 'the leader as a servant' is still not easy to accept in many African countries including Nigeria. Issa and David (2012) note that there is a challenge with regards to the definition or characterisation of leadership in the African context. The conflicting views are that on one hand, leadership is determined by personality and physical traits while on the other, leadership is demonstrated by a set of prescribed behaviours (Issa & David, 2012). This noticeable tug-of-war is what renders public institutions directionless and dysfunctional. The leader is supposed to be a carrier of vision that steers the organisation or school towards a particular shared and envisaged future. The political instability that is widely reported in many African countries filters down and affects schools and particularly a learner in the classroom. Similarly, these were chosen because they are developing countries like South Africa and they have faced similar colonial challenges.

> For that reason, I wanted to compare fruits with fruits for the purposes of study coherence. Further, what is noted is that the literature reports that there is a well documented suppression of servant leadership practices in some of them. Servant leadership and more importantly, these characteristics may contribute to the creation of a positive team climate (Mahembe, *et al*., 2013).

According to Ngunjiri (2009), servant leadership cannot always be appropriate in every culture because cross-cultural researches on school leadership reveal that leadership is culture-bound. As culture seems to be a dominant factor in the enactment of servant leadership, Anglaaere (2017) further asserts that in terms of the African culture, power plays a significant role, and creates a distance between the leader and the led, the elders and the youth, the traditional Inkosi (chief) and the subjects, traditional Induna and the subjects, the father as the head of the family and wife and children. Relationships and trust in many schools are affected by the dominant culture where the school is situated. Brubaker (2013) maintains that there is a huge distance between school principals, departmental heads and educators in Ghana and this is caused by cultural diversity. Understandably, the notion of servant leadership denotes that a school principal, departmental head and educator must serve his or her colleagues, learners and parents, and at the same time be a servant leader that has a duty and responsibility to lead and manage the school as an organisation (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Moreover, the paucity of research literature on servant leader school principals can be attributed to the fact that the concept of servant school principal as leader is, as Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) correctly put it, an oxymoron (figure of speech) characterised by contradictions. Secondly, these scholars believe that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators find it very difficult to play a dual role of being a leader and servant at the same time (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). In essence, servant leadership approach can be one of the leadership strategies that have an ability to solve the world's leadership challenges if educators' attitude towards transformation can change and demonstrate willingness to make a positive contribution towards organisational change and development (Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora, 2008; Meylahn & Musiyambiri, 2017). The most common of these problems are power abuse, corruption and poor human relations (Sendjaya, *et al.*, 2008). This view resonates well with Brubaker, Bocamea, Patterson and Winston's (2016) argument that servant leadership appeared to be accepted as a universally endorsed leadership strategy which is associated with good leadership and organisational behaviours in schools. Similarly, these authors present one of their findings which suggest that empirical research emphasises interconnectedness between

servant leadership and positive school outcomes in cultures worldwide. This notion is further supported by Brubaker (2013) who underscores the assumption that those cultural conceptions of good principal, departmental head and educator's professional behaviours are usually strongly related to leader effectiveness among educators, learners and parents of that culture.

Furthermore, there are commonalities and differences in terms of characteristics and leadership qualities of servant leadership and traditional leadership approaches in Ghana (Anglaaere, 2017). This line of thought corresponds with Handley and Louw's (2016) assertion that African Leadership has interconnectedness with leadership approaches such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership and ubuntu leadership. Further, as they remark, it is totally different from laissez-faire leadership because it is invariably equated with absence of leadership or unavailability of support, guidance and mentoring. Brubaker (2013) explored servant leadership in Rwanda utilising mixed research methods and thus reports that servant leadership theory of service comprises of six dimensions, namely: respect and humility, involving colleagues in decision-making, primary task of service, recognition and rewarding educators and learners, meeting educator colleagues' professional needs and empowering them, making sacrifices for colleagues and role modelling. Also, Mutia and Muthamia (2016) explain that servant leadership comprises of various tenets, such as conceptualising, emotional hearing, putting others first, helping colleagues grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering and creating value for the school community. According to Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2014), in the African context, servant leadership comprises of behaviours or traits of a school principal, Department Head and educator who is a servant leader, namely, humility, service orientation, visioning, empowering and developing educators in multiple deprived rural schools. Unsurprisingly, Mwenje (2016) chooses to characterise school principal, Departmental Head and educator who is a servant leader as the one with a good spirit, behaviour and task (service).

Understandably, the democratic leadership principles are crucial but normally trampled upon by some school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who want to preserve their unchecked and immeasurable powers and authority. Servant leadership is a type of leadership style that is related to democratic leadership style (Olesia, Namusonge & Iravo, 2013; 2014). If utilised carefully, servant leadership can minimise conflicts in schools. Educators and learners in such multiple deprived rural schools are consulted and their inputs add value to the decision-making processes in an organisation. The issues of consultation and the spirit of stakeholderism

are demonstrated in all the institutional structures and systems used in leadership and management of the rural school. Actually, the ideal leadership situation as advocated by Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013; 2014) is that the school principal, Departmental Head and educator have an obligation to place the interests of their colleague educators, learners and parents who are led above their own interests. Further, the indicative outcome is often that colleague educators are freer, healthier, more prosperous, more humane and more developed professionally and in terms of the enactment of servant leadership democratic principles. As a consequence, Mutia and Muthamia (2016) emphasise that servant leadership is a single leadership style that encompasses the principles of caring for educators and learners.

2.4 National (South African) literature on servant leadership practices

> *If you like, you have come to **enter into a formal contract with the people of South Africa.** This oath of office or affirmation is going to judge you before the public even dares to do so. ..... The assumption is only people who have a measure of **credibility and integrity and some character to write about** are going to be presented here before the nation… as those who are going to serve them as dictated by the Constitution. ..... It's not about assuming power so that you can look important. It's not about having resources distributed to your department or section so that we can now begin to look like we owe you something; **it is to become a servant of South Africa.***
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> (Chief Justice of the South African Constitutional Court: Mogoeng Mogoeng, 2018)

South Africa has a good history of servant leadership demonstrated by Chief Albert Luthuli, Oliver Reginald Tambo and Nelson Mandela. However, this has not been maintained in government and, similarly, it has not permeated through down to multiple-deprived rural schools. The profundity and relevance of the above statement by Chief Justice: Mogoeng Mogoeng when he was swearing in Deputy President David Dabede Mabuza and other ministers compelled me to provide the message in this thesis. We do not need a rocket scientist to educate South Africans about the fact that there is something terribly wrong with the South African leadership. School leadership in South Africa has become to be synonymous with driving fancy private cars, purchasing very expensive clothes, living in state of the art apartments and sleeping

in most exclusive hotels while school community members, like educators and learners that they purport to be serving remain without basic services or needs like textbooks and stationery (SA Catholic Bishops' Conference, Parliament Liaison Officer, 2013). The authors further add that some of our educational leaders appear to see school governance as a business venture and such blatant self-serving and transactional school leadership tends to promote despotism, nepotism and a multiplicity of forms of corruption.

History has taught us that the notion of servanthood is either a pipe dream or happens to be pushed to the periphery of leadership domain so as to make way for egocentric leadership tendencies which are obviously contrary to the political, social, economic and educational interests and aspirations of the public masses especially in multiple deprived rural schools. Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) observe that South African education system comprises of many complexities due to the fact that it is a combination of the features of both developed and developing economies at the same time. These challenges are further noted by Bhengu and Myende (2016) who, when drawing from the work of Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) emphasise that continuous educational transformation presents educational institutions in multiple-deprived rural contexts with enormity of challenges, and a strong necessity for leadership that is capable of coping with and adapting to a multiplicity of changes.

This watershed moment as presented by Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng resonates well with President Thabo Mbeki's (1999) assertion that the history of society that South Africa seeks to replace deeply entrenched corruption in all spheres of human activity with the skewed belief that the concepts of right and wrong are dead, and as a consequence, everything that serves individuals' personal interests is permissible. As expected, the literature reveals that principals, Departmental Heads and educators are central in driving success of multiple-deprived rural schools (Bhengu & Myende, 2016).

As noted above, this statement calls on all South African leaders and those who aspire to become leaders to do self introspection and realise that any public office is a calling to serve the people as opposed to being an advantage or opportunity to amass wealth and squander resources of the Republic of South Africa. The honourable thing is for all school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to aspire to serve their colleagues, parents, learners and community before they consider leading them. Cheteni and Shindika (2017) report that the regard of servant leadership, ethical leadership and ubuntu leadership as sunset leadership approaches give rise to high levels

of corruption and maladministration in public institutions, including schools and cause immeasurable hindrance to good and clean governance. President Nelson Mandela (1994), in his State of the Nation Address commits himself to clean the public service in an endeavour to ensure that public institutions have the democratic, non-sexist, non-racial, honest, responsible and accountable corps of public servants which civil servants themselves desire. Similarly, President Thabo Mbeki (1999), in his state of the Nation Address recounts by making the undertaking to ensure that the state machinery is geared towards serving all South Africans in line with the vision as dictated by Batho Pele principles of '*putting people first*'.

Servant leadership is viewed as a contemporary leadership approach which may be a remedy or solution to most of the dysfunctional schools if it is nurtured, watered and widely supported within an organisation (Chatbury, *et al*., 2011; Chinomona, Mashiloane & Pooe, 2013). In spite of the fact that Chinomona, Mashiloane and Pooe (2013) register some scepticism with regards to the definition of trust, they further argue that the principal's transparency can make educators come to a full realisation of what the leader's values stand for and his or her understanding of educators. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2013) recorded one of their findings which suggest that servant leadership together with team commitment play a crucial role in team performance in schools. They further assert that institutions have a need to adopt leadership styles that establish favourable conditions for teams to function effectively. The literature also suggests that the development of teams requires inspirational and moral attributes of servant leadership and more importantly, these characteristics may contribute to the creation of a positive team climate (Mahembe, *et al.,* 2013). Further, Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2014) clearly spell out that public schools still face a huge challenge in pursuit of developing an effective leadership strategy for enabling team effectiveness. They further add that successful School Management Teams need educators who are passionate about their work and who are willing to go beyond their call of duty or job duties and produce academic performance that supersedes expectations. The lack of staff collaboration creates a sense of disunity which exacerbates the notion of school dysfunctionality. According to Mahembe, *et al.,* 2014), servant leadership is one of the leadership styles that can successfully affect organisational team effectiveness, hence, Manala (2014) avers that servant leadership attaches great value to educators collaboration and empowers School Management Teams (SMT's) in order to share power and status for the common good of teamwork.

Further to the above, servant leadership is conducive to effective service delivery including teaching and learning in multiple deprived rural contexts which can serve as a drive to the fulfilment of South Africa's international obligation (Manala, 2014). As a result, Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2013) shed light on the fact that school servant leaders have no difficulty in employing other value-based leadership strategies, which, in turn, shape the school's organisational climate and culture and promote positive educator professional behaviours in schools. It is interesting to note that Coetzer, Bassin and Geldenhuys (2017) in their study on "*Functions of a servant leader"* illuminate that servant leadership entails a plethora of practices that are trusted to sustain high performing schools, namely, (a) having and retaining quality educators, (b) consistently sharing power and authority and valuable information, (c) promoting customer / clients (learners and parents) orientation, (d) crafting a higher purpose vision statement and strategy, (e) ensuring professional growth and development of educators and (f) putting in place standardised and simplified procedures or systems. In addition, Pillay (2014) opines that when schools engage in decision making by consulting a particular faction or group of educators, without soliciting adequate input from other members of staff of educators, that move is contrary to the principles of Batho Pele and self managing. It negatively affects school culture and climate and also primary task or core business of the school which is teaching and learning. As a result, the outcome of bad leadership leads to parents' dissatisfaction, decline in enrolment and learner migration. Chinomona, Mashiloane and Pooe (2013) sum it up succinctly, when asserting that when the school principal, Departmental Head or educator is transparent, his or her colleague educators are placed in a position of trust to know and understand their values and what they stand for, the principal understands who his or her colleagues are and what they also stand for. The literature reveal that servant school principals should concern themselves more about their educator colleagues' interests and place them above their own because that will undoubtedly earn their colleagues' trust (Chatbury, Beaty & Kriek, 2011). Actually, schools are supposed to support educators and learners socially and emotionally and assist them to gain confidence and perform well in the academic domain (Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla & Sylvester, 2014).

According to Manala (2014), there are many contributory factors which cause poor service delivery in South Africa, namely: political infighting, inadequate infrastructure, lack of resources and unqualified and under-qualified (poorly trained) educators. He further adds that major contributory factors to poor teaching and learning including leadership and management are

corruption and self serving school leadership. Mthiyane (2013) conducted a study which examined 'School violence and other related problems' and established that despite the fact that South African schools have been ushered into a new democratic environment, through, among other things, the promulgation of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, some educators who teach in multiple deprived rural contexts graduated from teacher colleges and universities during the apartheid era, as a result, they have not psychologically migrated from the apartheid era into a democratic dispensation, hence, the perpetual reproduction and reinforcement of apartheid values and attitudes which are foreign to servant leadership approach. He further states that most educators do not enjoy and value engaging in a dialogue with learners; they tend to dominate discussions and cannot allow their views to be challenged by learners. My observation as a school principal has taught me that at times, educators use learners to fight their own political and personal battles with the school principal; something which does a hard blow to the education of a black child. It cannot be disputed that schools still have educators who are not honest when awarding school based continuous assessment marks to learners and recording them in the CASS grid. Some have a tendency instead of giving an examination scope to learners; they revise the entire question paper before the learners sit for the final examination. It stands to reason; therefore, that corrupt, fraudulent and self-serving school leaders and educators subvert the service delivery such as free quality public education. Further, corruption turns the notion of 'a better life for all' KwaZulu-Natal citizens, in a preserve of the rich and privileged few. It also frustrates the poorest of the poor and compels them to engage in service delivery protests (Manala, 2014).

Msila (2012) conducted a qualitative study on 'Fostering an effective school through moral leadership' and reports that morality and values are supposed to form the core of education in schools. Her research further demonstrates that educators and School Management Teams find it difficult to share the vision, mission and decision-making in a school where there is no moral high ground. This is corroborated by Manala's (2014) finding in the recent study on 'servant leadership as a required leadership model for effective and efficient service delivery in organisations,' by reporting that the conceptualisation of servant leadership should entail seven principles, namely: acting with humility, demonstration of agape love, be trusting, being altruistic, empowering colleagues, being visionary for colleague educators and willingness to serve first before leading. Consistent with the above relevant principles of servant leadership, Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2014) are of the view that servant leaders should also possess

servant leadership qualities such as wisdom, emotional healing, altruistic calling, organisational stewardship and pervasive mapping.

Notwithstanding the fact that some leaders think that a servant leader school principal, Departmental Head or educator has to be subservient, weak and display artificial humility and abdicated authority and power (Maharaj, 2015, p.91), the author further emphasises that the school principal should endeavour to consistently demonstrate leadership qualities such as "empathic listening, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, commitment to building and developing educators and interpersonal communication skills". According to Mhone and Morare (2013), despite a greater number of servant leadership (Batho Pele) principles, there is excuse for self-serving, mediocre, ineffective and corrupt leadership in South Africa, especially KwaZulu-Natal multiple deprived rural schools under study. Manala (2014) strongly argues that South Africa needs school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who are determined to be servant leaders and who refuse to compromise on service delivery in their multiple deprived educational institutions. The literature suggests that South African Government employees are perpetually subjected to allegations of poor and weak leadership in the public sector (Mhone & Morare (2013). In addition, the quality of the public service seems to deteriorating, simply because school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are often seen as putting their personal interests first, above those of their colleagues, learners and parents (Mhone & Morare, 2013). Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2014) and Manala (2014) shed light that the school principal, Departmental Head and educators' leadership style and behaviour are important factors in the achievement of efficient and effective service delivery which is teaching and learning in multiple deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

2.5 The policy landscape that promotes servant leadership

In the South African contexts, the government promulgated a number of laws and policies which were aimed at promoting servant leadership, namely: the South African Constitution, Act no. 108 of 1996, South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996, Public Service Act no. 103 of 1994, White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) or Batho Pele of 1997, South African Council for Educators' Code of Professional Ethics and Policy on the South African Standards of School Principals of 2016.

2.5.1 South African Constitution, Act No. 108 0f 1996

The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996 is the supreme law of the country (South Africa). It serves as a blueprint which seeks to protect the basic rights of all South African citizens, including educators and learners in schools. Many educational critics concur that the South African Constitution has laid a good and strong foundation for a democratic system of education (Msila, 2008). The South African Constitution (1996) states that public schools' administration should adhere to various democratic principles enshrined in the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2). The South African Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996 and various other policies brought about reforms in terms of the schooling system and among other things, its leadership, governance and management (Christie, 2010).

Servant leadership is encapsulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996, as its preamble states that South Africa belongs to all the people who live in it, united in their diversity. This sets the tone and gives direction as to how school leaders should view their role in society in relation to dealing with the entire population or citizenry of this country. In addition, the spirit of the constitution seeks to engender democratic values, social justice and fundamental or basic human rights. Further, in compliance with international statutory requirements, South Africa has become one of the signatories to the international Convention on the Rights of children (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). More importantly, to create strong and legally defensible foundations for a democratic and open society in which the will of the people, namely, educator colleagues, Departmental Heads and educators reigns. School principals, Departmental Heads and educators, in discharging their duties and responsibilities, should bear in mind that their educator colleagues enjoy their basic rights to inherent dignity (Section 10) and fair labour practices (Section 23(1). Equally, learners have their fundamental right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation (Section 28(1) (d). Understanding the landscapes or constructs of leadership in South Africa, Christie (2010) builds on the South African Constitutional framework. As a result, she believes that new policies are underpinned by an interwoven network of regulations on labour relations, performance management and governance which tend to complicate the task of leading and managing multiple deprived rural schools.

2.5.2 South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996

Before 1996 the South African education system was designed to marginalise the black majority. The black learners did not get a fair share in terms of the per capita expenditure (government spending per learner). For that reason, the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 was promulgated in an attempt to redress the past injustices in the education system, provide high quality education for all learners, advance the democratic transformation in schools by introducing school governing bodies in order to strengthen the voice of parents and communities, revise the funding model, eradicate poverty, uphold the fundamental rights of all learners and promote different cultures and languages (SASA, 1996).

Further, section 15 of SASA (1996) states that the school is a juristic person which means that it has the legal capacity to sue and to be sued. This gives parents an opportunity to be the vanguards of their children's education. They are empowered in terms of section 10; sub-section (1) and (2) to ensure that educators do not administer corporal punishment to learners because that is regarded as an offence and an educator can be charged and convicted of assault. The administration of corporal punishment to a learner is contrary to the *servant leadership* dimensions of *empathy, trust and honesty and integrity* (Russell and Stone, 2002). This act helped to put a stop to the negative comments or stereotype that a black child cannot pass without a stick. Secondly, they can sue the school if it produces poor results because that affects their children psychologically and emotionally. This was intended to put educators on their toes in ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning in their schools, and in turn, produce good academic results across all grades.

In pursuance of the ultimate goal to democratically transform schools, section 16, sub-section (1) emphasises that the governance of all schools is vested in the governing body that is also supposed to support the principal. SASA (1996) empowers the SGB to administer school funds, assets and property for purposes of *openness and transparency as the tenets of servant leadership* in terms of section 37 (1) to (6). The school governing body members also have a responsibility to ensure that they draft and adopt all the relevant policies for a disciplined and purposive organisational environment conducive to the smooth running of the school as stipulated in section 8 sub-sections (1) to (5). Equally, section 16 (2) of this act stipulates that the professional management of a public school must be performed by the principal who represents the Head of Department of Education in the province. In essence, the principal needs to be *the*

servant of the people and endeavour to turn the school into a centre of excellence. Contradictorily, in the past, instructional leadership was a responsibility of the departmental heads with the exclusion of principals as school administrators who managed leaves, finances and buildings. As a consequence, SASA (1996) promotes a culture of service on the part of principals, departmental heads, educators and parents as stipulated in section 20 (1), (h).

2.5.3 Public Service Act No. 103 of 1994

This act aims to transform the organisation and administration of the civil service of the Republic of South Africa. Equally, it seeks to strengthen accountability at various levels of government departments and other institutions. This is evidenced by the explicit assigning of functions to the Minister, Premier, training institutions (national department) and the heads of departments. Furthermore, it clarifies issues like appointments, qualifications, transfers and secondment, discipline, performance management, retirement, termination of services, remuneration, rights and privileges of public servants and grievance procedures of civil servants (Republic of South Africa, 1994).

The literature reveals that it is a common phenomenon for employees to be discovered to be having a low morale (Ngambi, 2011; Shaban, Al-Zubi, Ali & Alqotaish, 2017). In the South African context, it was as a result of the uncaring political environment of the pre-1994 era. The collapse of ethics and servant hood was witnessed by du Preez (2013) who argues that if there is certainly a ticking time bomb that is about to blast the Republic of South Africa into a new epoch of instability, it has been caused by the cataclysmic education system. The government through the Department of Public Service and Administration promulgated the Public Service Act, no. 103 of 1994 with the aim of transforming the government workers into public servants who would serve the needs of all South Africans regardless of race, colour, religion, creed, gender and ethnicity. Du Preez (2013) has noted this and remarks that public service delivery has become a new buzzword in the Republic of South Africa. This is also consistent with Tibane's (2014) argument that moral and ethical leadership can both sustain the schools as organisations and also keep the leader a leader. This assertion is in line with the tenets of servant leadership of service, honesty and integrity and stewardship in multiple-deprived rural contexts (Russell & Stone, 2002).

This act stipulates that the government departments need to have departmental heads that have to ensure that there is effective and efficient leadership and management including the effective utilisation of resources, protection school property, effective communication between various levels or offices of the Department of Education and giving strategic direction to schools as organisations. More importantly, Chapter 3, section 7B, subsection (6), paragraphs (a) and (b) empowers the Head of Department to delegate powers to the heads of units or sections. Likewise, the heads of units may also delegate powers to their colleagues for effective and efficient leadership and management of institutions. It is also worth mentioning that section 7 (3), (b) stipulates that the public servants, especially, leaders have to ensure that there is effective school management and administration so as to improve public service delivery like teaching and learning and, in turn, improve learner performance.

More importantly, section 30 (1) and (2) and section 31 seeks to put a halt to fraud and corruption by prohibiting public servants from performing other remunerative work outside the Department of Education and also not to receive unauthorised remuneration within the same department. In cannot be disputed that educators have been implicated in doing business with the Department of Education through National School Nutrition Programme contracts or tenders. Similarly, some school principals and department officials have been receiving monies through unlawful salaries of ghost educators and many of them got away with it.

In addition, this act, in section 11, sub-section (1), paragraphs (a) and (b) emphasises that all public servant appointed in various departments should be suitably qualified and have requisite training, skills, knowledge and competence. Secondly, they should endeavour to redress the imbalances of the past in order to have a public service that is broadly representative in terms of race, gender and disability which is consistent with the spirit of *servant leadership which is caring*.

2.5.4 White Paper on (Batho Pele) the transformation of the public service (WPTPS)

Batho Pele is a Sesotho language phrase which means ‘putting people first’ (Khoza, 2009; Mboweni, 2013; Pietersen, 2014). According to Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) Batho Pele philosophy is an initiative by Nelson Mandela, through former minister Zola Skweyiya launched in 1997; that seeks to transform the public service by promoting quality, effectiveness and

efficiency of all civil servants in all government departments. Batho Pele principles are South Africa's key foundational pillars or cornerstones of good governance, corporate culture, ethical leadership and democratic culture in multiple deprived rural school contexts. They serve as key drivers and social interests that determine whether servant leadership is implemented in multiple deprived rural school contexts or not. According to Kanyane (2010), public service delivery in schools is now underpinned by public administration theoretical framework and the twenty first century public management perspective, commonly known as new public management. The author further adds that the people who receive education as the public service delivery, in the domain of public administration, are normally referred to as citizenry or clientele, whereas, the terminology of 'customers' is related to the new public management discipline.

Further, Mle (2012) believes that school principals, Departmental Heads (DHs) and educators are not only the employees of government, but have an important constitutional role to play. The entire teaching profession is framed by the preamble of the South African constitution, Act, No. 108 of 1996, which states that public/civil servants have sacrosanct responsibility to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental rights. In addition, to improve the quality of life for all citizens and free the potential of each person; as a result, Molofo (2012) reports that there is a general view that performance management system and consequence management system will encourage school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to promote school culture in which they commit themselves to take the initiative for continuously improving learner performance (service delivery).

The contents of Batho Pele (*people first*) policy framework specifies primarily how education as a public service should be provided with an aim of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of service (Khoza, 2009). Pietersen (2014) asserts that in schools as organisations there are various groups of customers or clients such as principals, deputy principal, Departmental Heads, educators, learners (internal customers), parents and community (external customers) as purchasers of educational services for their children. Manala (2014) contends that the need to selflessly serve the school community efficiently was the compelling basis for the Batho Pele (people first), a White Paper introduced by the South African government under the stewardship of former president Nelson Mandela in 1995. "The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) sets out eleven transformation priorities,

amongst which Transforming Service Delivery is the key" (WPTPS, 1997). Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013) report that although there is a noticeable improvement in service delivery in public institutions, they still maintain that there is still a lot that needs to be done to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. This policy calls for a paradigm shift in term of public servants' mentality and seeks to radically transform the entire public service, more importantly, in the case of this study, education in multiple deprived rural contexts.

Khoza (2009); Mboweni (2013); Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013), Pietersen (2014) report that initially there were eight Batho Pele principles enshrined in the White Paper on Transforming the Public Service in 1997. This number was later increased to eleven. These Batho Pele principles are: consultation, service standards and targets, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress, best value for money, encouraging innovation and rewarding excellence, service delivery impact and leadership strategic direction (Khoza, 2009; Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). In a quantitative study conducted by Pietersen (2014) in a district of education, the author found that not all Batho Pele principles are implemented in educational institutions. The author further adds that there is an eight-step cycle that schools must enact in order to implement a service delivery improvement plan, such as identification of clients or customers, establishment of clients' needs and priorities, establishment of the existing service baseline, identification of improvement gaps, setting or determining service standards, gearing up for honest service delivery, announcement of service standards and targets, monitoring the quality of service delivery against agreed upon service standards and, lastly, publication of results (Pietersen, 2014).

2.5.4.1 Consultation of internal and external customers

Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public service they will receive and, whenever possible, should be given a choice about services that are offered (Republic of South Africa, 1997). Mwenje (2016) emphasises that it is advisable for the school leader, namely, principal, Departmental Head and educator to forget his or her ego and become a servant of colleague or team player who purposely seeks help and support from other educator colleagues. Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) have observed that Batho Pele principles have not enjoyed general acceptance and blessing from the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in schools as public institutions. The greatest significance of consultation in a school

environment cannot be underestimated. Any neglect of this important tenet of servant leadership breeds internal conflicts and leads to the souring and deterioration of human relations.

SASA (1996); PAM document (2016) stipulates that the professional management of the school is the prerogative of the school principal, hence, he or she is expected to allocate teaching subjects and teaching periods to all SMT and educators after consultation with them. All school community members, like SMT, educators, learners and parents should be consulted during formulation process of the school budget and introduction of new subjects which is termed as 'curriculum transformation' because it involved the addition of new subjects and the phasing out of some subjects. The school principal works with school internal committees, seeking advice on how certain decisions have to be taken. More importantly, consultation is normally seen during the declaration or identification of surplus educators in a formal staff meeting. Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) emphasise that consultation is significant in an endeavour to deepen democracy and good governance and also involving important role players in decision-making. They further state that the lack of consultation creates the 'us' and 'them' attitude which leads to divisions and challenging of the school principal and SMT decisions (Ngidi, *et al.,* 2013).

2.5.4.2 Setting service standards and targets

According to the Public Service Commission (2005), a standard of service refers to the criterion decided or agreed upon by a school in order to define the manner in which it is expected to behave with regard to both its internal and external client base. Similarly, a service standard can also be referred to as a type of indicator which is a measure of progress being made (achievement or success) in so far as the implementation is concerned. More importantly, citizens should be told what level and quality of the public service they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect (South Africa (Republic), 1997). Even though servant leadership in the form of Batho Pele policy was introduced in 1997, a myriad of challenges still exist in schools (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). The apartheid government legacy still persists, more especially in multiple-deprived rural schools, because quality education was reserved for white learners and the black majority of learners were subjected to inferior or substandard Bantu education (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013), which prepared them to be drawers of water and hewers of wood. According to Patterson (2003), the value of quality service forms the core of servant leadership technique. In this study I argue that the first vehicle to communicate the service standards in a school is through vision and mission statement. The quality of teaching and

learning as a public service will not improve unless educators as 'street level bureaucrats' who work with learners and parents as customers on day-to-day basis radically implement servant leadership (Batho Pele principles) (Pietersen, 2014). It is also worth noting the proposal by Molofo (2012) who contends that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should not be subjected to performance management system, linked to management-by-objectives (MBO) in order to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Public servants at school level are expected to document the school targets (pass %) and subject based targets and then be held accountable for achievement of those targets. If they are not met, Employment of Educators' Act (EEA), No. 76 of 1998, Sections 16, 22 and 25, kick in, namely: implementation of the incapacity code and procedures for poor work performance, withdrawal of the functions of the governing body and the appointment of persons to perform the functions or specified functions of the governing body.

The Public Service Commission (2005) service standards seek to answer questions such as: how often will the educational service be provided? how long will it take to get that public service? and what must the client/customer do if he or she is not satisfied with the service provided? Batho Pele policy stipulates that there are steps that must be followed in setting service standards. Firstly, consult educators, learners, parents and community as customers in order to be able to identify or determine their needs, secondly, formulate service standards based on identified school needs so that all clients can be in a better position to know what to expect from the school (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). In addition, this process leads to the development of a service commitment charter and service delivery improvement plan, which are not the one principal's document but collectively compiled document that indicates who is in charge, how to address complaints and explain response time (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). Public service delivery standards of the quality of service need to be published at the level of the National Department, province and departmental level and the consumers of the service (customers/clients) should be able to make an honest judgement whether the promised services were offered or not (Khoza, 2009). In addition, Kanyane (2010) attaches greater value on accountability, responsibility, efficiency and effectiveness and views them as the cornerstones in an endeavour to promote quality public service delivery in schools. Further, according Kanyane's (2010) perspective, the quality of public service delivery can only be achieved and maintained by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators if they demonstrate virtues of honesty, transparency and external and internal school accountability mechanisms. Further,

the literature demonstrates that, in essence, the standard of public service seeks to address at least five domains of education as a public service, namely: quality, quantity, time, cost and redress.

2.5.4.3 Increasing access to education in multiple-deprived rural schools

All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled (South Africa (Republic), 1997). The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 (1996) and the South African Schools Act, No. 84 (1996) and Gamede (2005) state that access to education should be viewed as a basic human right. The South African Constitution (1996) stipulates that no learner should be deprived of his or her basic right to education on the basis of the family background or socio-economic status of the parents. My observation is that the multiple-deprived rural school children are the most unequal and disadvantaged in terms of access to quality education in KwaZulu-Natal. The drop-out rate is too high and the number of school going age children who are not attending school is huge.

The African National Congress (ANC) drafted and adopted the Freedom Charter in 1956, in Kliptown, which served as a precursor to the Constitution of 1996 (Turok, 2011). This Charter states that "the doors of learning and culture shall be opened". Secondly, "education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children (Turok, 2011). Schools are not allowed to discriminate against learners on the basis of language of teaching and learning and culture. Hence, the South African Constitution (1996), sections 29 (2) and 30 guarantee that every learner has the right to utilise the official language and to participate in the cultural life of the choice. To underscore this statutory provision SASA (1996), section 5, subsection (1) declares that a public school must enrol learners and serve their educational needs without unfairly discriminating them in any manner.

Similarly, the United Nations, in the presence of leaders of 189 countries adopted eight Millennium Development Goals, in September 2000. In the Millennium Development Goal number two, the UN intended to ensure that all school going age boys and girls complete their primary school education, whereas, Millennium Development Goal number three seeks to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary school education by 2005, and tertiary level of education not later than 2015. The South African Millennium Development Goals Report of 2007 revealed that more girls than boys are registered at secondary school level, whereas, more boys than girls are enrolled at primary education level in South Africa. On the contrary, Lewin (2007), reports that a huge number of young children remain unregistered at primary school

level, some of those admitted to primary education level attend irregularly and do not learn much and many of them fail to get promoted to secondary education level. This report does not show an improvement in terms of access to education because the notion of access and education progress is measured through enrolment rates, grade completion rates, quantity of external assistance or support to rudimentary education and many other dimensions (Lewin, 2007). Stofile (2008) has observed that negative attitudes of some of the school managers and educators especially in secondary school level, have a more negative impact on the institution's attempts to enrol learners with special educational needs (ELSEN). In spite of all the insurmountable and persistent challenges, South Africa, seems to be making some strides in an endeavour to address the inequitable colonial and apartheid laws and policies which sought to exclude and marginalise most black learners, learners with disabilities and learners living in multiple-deprived rural school contexts from access, equitable and quality basic education (South African Human Rights Council – SAHRC, 2012).

According to Pareira (2016), educational access is incessantly a major challenge for multiple-deprived rural schools, however, there is a concurrence in the sense that access without genuine educational quality is not enough to sustain and improve customers' livelihoods or better life for all. Further, this author is of the opinion that, notwithstanding the greater importance of enrolment, in achieving the desired learner numbers, it is also equally imperative that learners stay in school until they successfully complete the schooling cycle (Pareira, 2016). Notably, the literature on access to education suggests that this notion is characterised by the trinity tenets, such as physical access (enrolment of the learner at school), equity in terms of resources and quality education or epistemological access (quality teaching and learning), which in turn, leads to improved learner outcomes (Gamede, 2005; du Ploy & Zilindile, 2014; Pareira, 2016). The epistemological access is hard to achieve at times because South African educators are normally criticised for not having adequate subject content knowledge and this leads to a situation where learners obtain poor academic outcomes, which on its own, serves as a lack of access to quality education and good learner academic outcomes (du Plooy & Zilindile, 2014). In addition, a learner may not be regarded as meeting the requirements of access to education if she or he is experiencing starvation and cannot concentrate in the classroom, and also if the subject educator is not present at school to teach him or her (Social Surveys Africa, 2009). Hence, meaningful access to education includes unhindered ability to actively participate in quality teaching and learning activities (epistemological access) (Social Surveys Africa, 2009).

More importantly, it has been noted in the literature review that even though learners enjoy physical access to institutions of learning, they are still faced with highly uneven and remarkably unequal access to quality knowledge (epistemological access) in multiple-deprived rural schools (Gamede, 2005). In addition, inclusive education attempts to challenge the exclusionary practices, advocates that all school pupils can learn, and that all pupils have a basic right to learn and that the provision of educational support should be based on the necessity rather than the nature of disability or applicable difficulty experienced (Stofile, 2008). Mutanga (2017) argues that before the new South African democratic dispensation, learners with disabilities were excluded from the schooling system. The literature also reveals that physical access to education is also hindered by architectural constraints or environment. Engelbrecht and de Beer (2014) conducted a quantitative study and some of their findings centred around the architectural constraints or environment, namely: heavy doors in entrance to buildings, water taps that are too high in the toilets, steepness of wheelchair ramps and hill-tops make learners with disabilities (mobile disabled learners) find it difficult to access classrooms and administration offices. On the other side, Clark (2007) also conducted a study in urban schools and found that there is an improvement in terms of physical accessibility, but further, concludes by stating that some building doors are still not wide enough for electric wheel chairs to pass through. In a study conducted by Mutanga (2017), twenty eight participants reported that physical constraints constituted a huge barrier to their learning, and some of them insisted that the physical constraints made them more vulnerable and unsafe.

2.5.4.4 Ensuring courtesy

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration (Republic of South Africa, 1997). This principle is of ensuring courtesy is enshrined in the South African Constitution, Chapter 2, normally called ‘Bill of Rights’, section 9, subsection (1) which asserts that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Secondly, section 10, states that everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. Cobb (2015) defines courtesy as a well-mannered behaviour indicative of respect for learners, colleagues and parents or simply as a polite, professional behaviour or decorous manners, while McVay (2012) further extends it by stating that professional courtesy refers to courtesy as special privilege extended or displayed by an educator engaged in a professional calling, to another colleague who shares the same calling or profession, as a gesture of support, respect or solidarity. There have always been complaints about the unprofessional behaviours of

some school managers, educators and school administration clerks pertaining to how they welcome and interact with different stakeholders as customers (clients) at the level of the school, including the manner in which they answer telephone calls. The school principals, SMT and educators of multiple-deprived rural schools are expected to ensure that learners, parents and community are treated as clients who are entitled to a good public education as a service (Khoza, 2009). In the same study that was conducted by Khoza (2009), the participants reported many violations of their basic right to be treated with human dignity and reverence (respect).

I share the same perspective with McVay (2012) that professional courtesy is part school culture. Whatever happens, whether good or bad, reflects on the culture and image of the school as an organisation. The South African government and schools have been mandated to focus on delivering quality services such as public education to all its citizens including multiple-deprived rural communities (Batho Pele, 1997)). The general observation is that the South African government is spending a lot of time and financial resources in combating rampant private and public sector corruption, through the creation of a new democratic school ethos, establishing a new work ethic and strengthening a shared vision (McVay, 2012).

Parents and community members must be made aware of who is providing public service to their children. All public servants like educators, SMTs and non-teaching staff must wear their name badges so that parents can feel comfortable working with them (Batho Pele White Paper, 1997). More importantly, educators, learners and parents should be addressed by their names in order to treat them with dignity. In addition, all the Batho Pele principles must be displayed on a chart at the reception area of all the offices (Khoza, 2009).

2.5.4.5 Providing adequate and accurate information

Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive (South Africa (Republic), 1997). The Bill of Rights, section 32 (1) (a) and (b) sacrosanctly states that everyone has the right of access to any information held by the state including schools. Secondly, everyone has the right of access to any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights (South Africa (Republic), 1996). More importantly, any information that is given to parents must be in the language of their choice and the language they can read and understand (South Africa (Republic), Bill of Rights) section 30, 1996). This Batho Pele principle of information seeks to educate all school principals, Departmental Heads, educators, learners and parents to have a clear

knowledge and understanding about the types of information and quality of education as a service they need to expect from schools (Khoza, 2009). In addition Khoza (2009) states that multiple-deprived rural schools should determine what learners, educators, and parents can consider to be an important information to them and ensure that such information is provided to them in a language of their choice and that they can understand better. When the indicative school budget is received by the school in September, it must be brought to the attention of the Finance Committee, SGB and educators. The school annual budget must also be done by the Finance Committee using inputs from SGB, educators and learners and ultimately voted for or against (adoption) by the majority of parents at their annual general meeting (SASA, NO. 84 of 1996).

Arlestig (2008) views communication in schools as social systems that normally expected to contribute to the creation of a professional and consistently responsive school community. Information dissemination and good communication serve as key levers of effective multiple-deprive rural school leadership. Mwenje (2016) reports that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should have listening skills and demonstrate a desire to comprehend the needs of their colleagues. She further adds that listening plays a significant role in building trust and strength in educator colleagues in multiple-deprived rural schools. Communication as leadership task works very well with information and listening skills. As a result, Lunenburg (2010) cautions school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to guard against destructive barriers to effective communication such as process barriers, physical barriers, semantic barriers and psychological barriers.

The life of any school cannot survive without the strengthening of the pedagogical triangle, namely, educator, learner and parent. It is very vital that the school principal, Departmental Head and educator consider communication as the organisational blood that flows and cements unity and cohesion with the schooling environment. According to Arlestig (2008), communication is closely associated with the school culture and leadership. Communication can either make or break the school, as a result, this aspect of leadership and management required meticulous attention. More importantly, Lunenburg (2010) states that successful communication by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators is the real essence of a productive learning institution.

According to Rezaei, Salehi, Shafiei and Sabet (2012), communication is viewed as a very important tool that school leaders must utilise. They further state that effective communication between the school management, educators, learners and parents through newsletters, weekly meetings, telephones, emails, WhatsApp messages and Short Message Service / text messages (SMSs) can remarkably reduce uncertainty, thus improving job satisfaction, commitment, honesty and reliability (Rezaei, *et. al.,* 2012). KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) circular number 41 of 2007 specifies the frequency and list of agenda items for SMT and educator staff meetings. These meeting are designed to take place once a week. Meeting agendas must be dominated by issues or items that deal directly with teaching and learning as the core business of the school. Arlestig (2008) reports that if SMT and educator staff meetings and agendas alienate teaching and learning, learner performance and school academic performance improvement, it becomes very difficult if not impossible for the school principal, Departmental Head and subject educator to perform pedagogical or instructional leadership.

The other important skill that goes together with information and communication is listening. Complementarily, servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators also have a primary responsibility of listening to their own internal or personal voices (Stewart, 2012).

2.5.4.6 Openness and transparency

Citizens should be told how national, provincial departments, local government (municipalities) and schools are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge (South Africa (Republic), 1997). According to Ssonko (2010), transparency (ability to see through) generally refers to openness, communication and accountability. The principle of transparency demands that all decision-making processes at school must be open and transparent in order to maintain public trust and leadership integrity (Sibanda, 2012). Before 1994 democratic dispensation, the South African apartheid government used access to information as a tool or as part of the machinery to oppress black majority and maintain their racial supremacy (Public Service Commission, 2008). The South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996, section 195, subsection (1), paragraph (g) demands that all public institutions must be managed through the implementation of the principles of openness and transparency. In essence, this implies that all decision-making processes and actions in multiple-deprived rural schools must be as open and transparent as humanly possible. School principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be conversant with the fact that sustainable growth and ethical school leadership are non-negotiables and must

always be on top of the business agenda (Bunt-Kokhuis & Peshawaria, 2014). Openness and transparency are also key drivers for good and successful schools. Further, they enhance some level dependability and integrity in the school principal, Departmental Head and educators.

Claar, Jackson and TenHaken (2014) are of the view that in an endeavour to build trust among SMTs and educators, an open, transparent and mutual relationship between the school principal and educators is important for continued support and success. There is a lot of criticism of school principals who do not demonstrate openness and transparency in matters related to financial management. Hence, Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) emphasise that availability and accessibility to important information is imperative for educators to perform their duties and responsibilities successfully. The public, parents, educators and learners have a right to have access to any information in possession by the state and any individual educator which is required for public interests (South Africa (Republic), 1996, section 32(1), (a) and (b). In addition, the Public Service Commission (2008) is of the view that it is vital to make information accessible to public so that they can be able to hold the school accountable and to capacitate them to play an active part in the school governance decisions. More importantly, for any school to be seen to be complying with servant leadership or Batho Pele principles, it must compile and provide annual report to the customers containing the following key information about the school:

- Who are we;
- What we do;
- Who is in charge;

  Our standards and how we met them; how we intend to improve services; our school and staffing; our budget; and contact details must also be made public, should more information be needed (Public Service Commission, 2008).

2.5.4.7 Redress

If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response (South Africa (Republic), 1997). According to the South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996, section 195, subsection (1) paragraph (i), Schools' educators must be representative of South African demographics in terms of race and gender but based on merit, and the need to redress the imbalances of the previous apartheid dispensation in order to achieve broad representation. Batho Pele policy encourages all customers like learners,

educators and parents to exercise their democratic basic right of access to information and to voice out their genuine complaints about poor quality or substandard public service received and so as to be assured that their complaints will be investigated and addressed properly (Public Service Commission, 2005). The Bill of Rights, section 34, asserts that everyone has a right to have any dispute resolved by the application of law decided in a fair public hearing before a court. In the previous dispensation learners did not have a fair and just administration of law. All educators, learners and parents must have access to the school's complaint mechanisms, procedures and policies (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). The suggestion box should be available and placed at an easily accessible point, e.g. reception area.

According to Khoza (2009), this service delivery principle is intended to address or correct shortcomings or failures (inefficiencies) of multiple-deprived rural schools. The implication here is that schools must be empathetic and caring organisations. Further, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators must be encouraged to accept complaints positively and regard them as an opportunity to establish the cause of the problem, address it and in turn, improve the delivery of quality public education (Khoza, 2009).

Sibanda (2012) reports that encroachment union politics into the administration and management of education tends to complicate the leadership problem. As a result, the complaints that are not dealt with as speedily as possible can create tensions between the school and the community. Further, these can also be deliberately escalated both to the print and electronic media. The perfect examples are the following:

In the *Isolezwe* Newspaper, Ntshangase (2018, p.3) reported that the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) marched to the KZN Provincial Education Department Head Office, submitting a memorandum demanding the salary increase for Grade R educators. Secondly, in *Ilanga* Newspaper, Sithole (2018, p.2) reported that the National Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga has appointed a Commission of Inquiry to probe the allegations of corruption raised by the National Teachers' Union (NATU) that the KZN Department of Education allocates R955-00 per learner instead of R1 242-00 which is to the contrary of the National Department of Basic Education policy. The reporter further added that all the learners without Identity Documents (ID's) and birth certificates were fraudulently excluded from the Norms and Standards allocations for school funding and also that female learners were given sub-standard (poor quality) sanitary towels which are not healthy for use

(Sithole, 2018, p.2). Thirdly, in *Isolezwe* Newspaper, Shangase (2018, p.5) reported that the business people in KZN raised concerns that the KZN Department of Education's decision to monopolise the procurement of textbooks, depriving section 21 schools with function C their right to invite 3 quotations from different suppliers in order to purchase their own textbooks and stationery. The concerned group, called LTSM Suppliers' Forum cited that the KZN Department of Education wanted to give that tender in 2018 to one supplier who supplies section 20 schools and whose contract expired in 2017.

The above newspaper reports illustrate the immeasurable significance of dealing with problems without any procrastination and that such complaints must be fully and impartially investigated (Khoza, 2009). Mthembu (2015) conducted a qualitative study based on the role of subject advisors in Ilembe Education District and one of his findings was that subject advisors were receiving inadequate financial support and human resources from the Department of Education in KZN, and the buzz words used were that: 'due to costs cutting measures' when the top level bureaucrats were stopping important educator development programmes designed to benefit educators and learners in the classroom. To underscore this assertion, Mboweni (2013) argues that the general assumption is that the number of complaints can decrease drastically if the officials of the Department of Education and schools rendering service to customers can discharge their duties in line with servant leadership (Batho Pele policy) principles. Further, the Public Service Commission (2008), states that educators, SMT, parents and community can only play an active and meaningful part in schools' programmes if they are well-informed.

2.5.4.8 Best value for money

Public service should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best value for money (Republic of South Africa, 1997). All goods and services (procurement processes) should be cost effective and purchased within the allocated budget for that particular financial year so as to avoid any wasteful expenditure and inefficiencies (Republic of South Africa, 1997). Principals should not allow themselves to defeat their morality and succumb to immorality and resultantly, become kleptocrats who are normally viewed as rulers who utilise their organisational powers to steal the school resources. School principals must employ or utilise school finances wisely and shun corruption. Clean or unqualified audited financial statements (AFS) are like the heart and soul of the school as an organisation. Further, prudent financial and physical resource management implies that public funds are utilised to benefit the

learner and educator in the classroom and in turn improves the quality of public education and community life in general. Further, Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) school principals, Departmental Heads and educators never or hardly consider why they receive monthly remuneration or why they are given appointment letters when they offered positions in schools (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). This means that they have a social contract with the Department of Education, colleague educators, learners and parents. As a result, they must always carry the interests of the learner and community at heart.

Mle (2012) contends that a school principal who is unable to manage his or her own personal finances and is deeply in financial debts cannot also be able to effectively and efficiently manage school resources and also be adequately productive and meet all the high expectations of the community and Batho Pele principles which endeavour to improve educational service delivery without unethical behaviours. This Batho Pele principle of best value for money is quite significantly cautioning school principals, SMTs and educators to ensure that they plan, organise, coordinate and control all the school physical and financial resources in such manner that they are cost effective (Khoza, 2009). It is of no use for the school procurement committee to select or award a tender to a supplier or company with the lowest quotation without checking whether the goods and services are of good quality and also the feasibility of such goods and services to be delivered on time. To underscore this assertion, Mle (2012) argues that quality determines the value for money and which requires that education as a service should be provided effectively, efficiently and economically.

Similarly, Kanyane (2010) argues that school financial, physical and human resources are prone to abuse by unscrupulous officials both inside and outside schools and need to be strictly monitored and controlled. In addition, corruption deprives learners of quality public education; tarnishes the image of the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal and in turn, deny learners and parents their basic right to a better life for all (Mle, 2012; Kanyane, 2010). Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) agree with Mle (2012, p.31) by stating that corruption and fraud that is entrenched in public institutions erode the ‘common good’ of the ‘people’s contract’. Parents lose confidence and trust in some schools and thus leading to learner migration. As a result, Sibanda (2012) writes that the quality of education is very vital and serves as a determining factor for competitiveness and critical measure for the value for money.

2.5.4.9 Service delivery impact

The Public Service Commission (2005) recommends that schools as public institution should communicate their actual service standards to citizens who are educators, learners and parents either quarterly or through annual reports. Further, multiple deprived rural schools should ensure that they have service delivery commitment charter and service delivery improvement plan and these must be communicated to the entire school community as customers or clientele base (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). A multiple-deprived rural school must have a suggestion box for comments and complaints about the quality of service or service standards educators, parents and learners are receiving and the public / citizens should be informed about it. More importantly, the school principal is the one who is more accountable for ensuring that best teaching and learning take place in the classroom (Wallace Foundation, 2012). On that basis, the school principal has a responsibility to change the educational landscape in order to be able to achieve excellence, equity and ultimately, greater accountability (Fook & Sidhu, 2009).

Servant leadership is an approach that focuses primarily on the growth and development of educators as part of the school clientele (Olesia, Namusonge & Iravo, 2015). Consequently, this study aims at trying to address that servant leadership deficiency. Even Farling, Stone & Wiston (1999) argue that in spite of the fact that servant leadership is being enacted in private and non-profit organisation, there is still a noticeable paucity of research in this area. Further, what is more striking to note is that the public education as a service is still characterised by factors such as lack of consultation on the needed quality or standard of service, lack of accurate and free flow of simple information on services and the level at which they are delivered, lack of quick and adequate responses and insensitive attitude towards clients' complaints and discourteous school principals, SMT, educators and administration clerks (South Africa (Republic), 1997).

2.5.4.10 Encouraging innovation and appreciating good colleagues' good performance (rewarding excellence)

Falch and Mang (2015) state that the role of public education is to ensure that the development of critical skills is realised in order to improve provisos for innovations in the country's economy. The 21st century education demands a great level of innovation. For a successful, efficient and effective multiple-deprived rural school, there must be leadership, administration and management innovation and also innovative classroom-based teaching and learning practices, such as methodology (pedagogy) (Looney, 2009). This must be demonstrated in

innovative learner assessment strategies which put into consideration various cognitive levels and critical skills (Looney, 2009). It is also imperative that school principals, Department Heads and educators integrate Information Communications Technology (ICT) in their lessons in the classrooms and the Administration of Learner Unit Record Information and Tracking System (Lurits) and South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS) for Human Resource Management (HRM), record keeping and reporting. According to Falch and Mang (2015), school leadership innovations are characterised by the creation of new and scientifically improved education and new production methodologies which enhance efficiency, and are the key driver for economic growth (Falch & Mang, 2015).

The African researcher, Mwenje (2016) believes that school leaders are expected to inspire their colleagues by acknowledging their professional needs, rewarding them for good performance or excellence so as to make them reach their full potential in the act of discharging their professional and contractual duties and responsibilities. Batho Pele policy dictates that School Management Teams and educators' performances in different categories such as school leadership, academic or teaching and learning, to name but a few should be measured and incentives offered as a motivational tool or drive.

Servant school principal, Departmental Head and educator promote the valuing and empowerment of educator colleagues, the building of professional learning communities (PLC's) or community of practice of genuineness, the provision of leadership for the benefit of those who are led and exercising power and status sharing for the common good of each educator, the entire school and all those who are served by the school (Mwenje, 2016). Further, schools need to copy best practices from best performing schools, hence, Sibanda (2012) asserts that benchmarking needs creativity and innovation in order for the best practices to be able to be modified and be suitable for that individual school's own situation.

2.5.4.11 Leadership and strategic direction

According to Dran (2014) leadership is conceptualised as an ability to influence colleague educators towards the achievement of desired and shared organisational goals. In an attempt to give a comprehensive definition, Silva (2016) refers to leadership as a process of interactive influence which happens when, in a particular context, educators accept the school principal, DH or a colleague educator as their school leader to achieve shared goals. The striking difference is that this definitional perspective emphasises the important role of the school principal or DH,

colleague educators and the context in the enactment of the leadership process, as Silva (2016) states. While Eacott (2007) conceptualises strategy in education as various activities or processes such as envisioning, engaging, articulating, implementing and monitoring, Quong and Walker (2010) add that when school principals, DHs and educators enact management activities by engaging in a responsibility to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the leadership situations, they are actually, considered to be strategic. Apparently, school principals, DHs and educators need to possess skills to address a multiplicity of complex educational situations and carry out an assortment of leadership tasks (Gulcan, 2012). In addition, Eacott (2008, p.354) contends that school leaders pay greater attention to "strategy formulation (the analysis of strategic content), while limited attention is given to the implementation of strategy (the analysis of strategic process)". Further illumination of the this phenomenon comes from Quong and Walker (2010) when positing that leadership strategic intent is when the school principal, SMT and educators know what the immensity of change they want to see being realised but they do not know how to achieve it. To underscore this contention, Tilahun (2014) school leadership provides direction and communicates the organisational vision, mission and goals, and have unique attributes setting them apart from the entire staff of educators.

2.5.4.10.1 Vision, mission and goals (insight)

Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013) conceptualise the school vision as a degree to which school governing bodies (SGBs), principals, SMTs and educators plan and anticipate the future of the organisation, develop achievable mission statements and keep situations and challenges in perspectives. The reviewed literature suggests that the school principal should be able to articulate the organisational vision, mission and goals, serve as a role model and pay great attention and consideration to his or her colleague educators (Fook & Sidhu, 2009). That creates shared vision, mission, goals and values and leads to binding norms of professional behaviour that all educators subscribe to or support (Mansour, 2011). My observation has taught me that some schools write and adopt vision and mission statements just for a malicious compliance purposes. They forget that a vision should be a living organism that propels the school towards a brighter future and better life for all community members. Winston and Ryan (2008) seem to be paying a huge interest in the significance of school vision. As a result, they argue that servant school principals and Departmental Heads and educators should empower and serve their colleagues in order to achieve the educators' vision in a school (Winston & Ryan, 2008). Patterson (2003), as cited by Winston and Ryan (2008) asserts that school principals,

Departmental Heads or educators' demonstration of humility and altruism assist them in understanding colleague educators' vision or calling, thus building a sense of trust in colleague educators.

In line with the 21st century demands for global competitive education, placed by the National Development Plan (Vision 2030), Mwenje (2016) asserts that a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator have an expectation to invest their energies and efforts in one leadership direction, through a well formulated and well communicated vision and mission, and more importantly, should not be easily distracted. Lear's (2012, p.25) findings are that "visionary leaders exert influence in a way that determines the direction an organisation will take by evoking images and expectations, altering moods and establishing specific desires and objectives." As a result, a school principal who is a servant leader is invariably mission driven and goal linked in whatever duty he or she performs (Mwenje, 2016). In addition, leaders who serve in structural positions in schools, such as principals, Departmental Heads are bound by organisational goals and authentic primary tasks of the school, and generally, their successes and failures are normally judged on the basis of these. They operate at the highest levels or echelons of leadership which demands responsibility and accountability in terms of the operations and results of the school (Christie, 2010).

Bunt-Kokhuis and Peshawaria (2014) conducted a study on vision and mission statement, titled: 'Servant Leadership Brains, Bones and Nerves' and asked an important question: How do servant school leaders manage to achieve their organisational vision and mission and subsequently realise the goals of their organisations? These scholars then contend that for any school to achieve sustainable and profitable growth, servant school principals should focus on three intertwined elements of their schools as living organisations. Firstly, principals should serve their schools by keeping their leadership strategy updated. This strategy or element forms part of the vision and mission statement of the multiple-deprived rural school, called 'brains'. Secondly, the other element involves SMT, educators, learners and parents (people), processes or systems and structures (internal committees) called the 'bones' and the third and last element refers to the school culture, the 'nerves' of the school as an organisation. Furthermore, what brings complexity into the notion of servant leadership is that the school principal, Departmental Head or educator's fundamental desire is, to first assist other colleague educators and servant leadership begins when that leadership aspiring educator assumes the position of servant in the

manner in which he or she interacts with other educators who are under his or her supervision (Olesia, Namusonge & Iravo, 2014).

2.5.4.10.2 Educator professional development

To meet the 21st century educational leadership and management and teaching and learning demands, the school principals, DHs and educators need to be sufficiently and professionally developed and also become life-long learners. In addition, professional development is about a culture change in any organisation where developing highly capable and skilled educators is considered to be the role of the SMT that ultimately benefit educators, learners, education system and the nation at large (The IOP Institute of Physics, 2015). To remind the reader, Greenleaf's (1977, pp. 13-14) expectations and litmus test is that, "do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?" As a result, the school principals and DHs must ensure that they satisfy this servant leadership principle. School leaders must accept the responsibility for professionally developing SMTs and educators to manage the curriculum and also teach the subjects that have been allocated to them (The IOP Institute of Physics (2015). According to Hassel (1999), continuing professional development is referred to as the process of improving educators' knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies required to produce excellence educational outcomes of learners. Understandably, continuing professional development strategies for educators vary from induction, mentoring, university study for senior degrees or diplomas and reflective studies based on facilitation of learning (Philips, 2008). Hence, greater focus has shifted from the role of principal in organisation management to the role of school principal and DH in teaching and learning (Vaillant, 2015).

Mahlangu (2014) argues that educators cannot be trained once and for all if they are to be expected to deliver quality public education in multiple-deprived rural contexts. The literature on leadership suggests that school managers are required to instil inspiration and motivation and appeal to SMTs and educators through a variety of skills, knowledge and demeanours which communicate their value to the organisation (Mahlangu, 2014). According to Molofo (2012), to achieve the improved service delivery, multiple-deprived rural school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be encouraged to register with universities so as to improve their qualifications and skills, and in turn, be able to perform effectively and efficiently. Mahlangu (2014) and Soman (2015) aver that school principals, DHs and educators develop educators by

being exemplary, coaching, and mentoring and motivation, School Management Teams and Departmental Heads' involvement, through professional workshops, Integrated Quality Management System and motivational speakers.

Moreover, a review of relevant leadership literature suggests that continuing professional learning communities (PLCs) demonstrates that building a community of practice promotes school learning and, in turn, school improvement (Flores, Rodriguez & Garcia, 2015). For that reason, Mansour (2011) agrees with this assertion and adds that leadership capacity needs to be developed in multiple-deprived rural schools in which the principal pays much attention to developing teams as opposed to working in isolation. To underscore this view, Walter and Briggs (2012) in their study found that educators who work individually-orientated continuing professional development do not achieve the desired outcomes. In addition, school principals, DHs and educators who participate in collaborative group learning are normally learn from one another, and in turn, establish momentum to drive continued school improvement (Mansour, 2011).

For the success of this programme, continuing professional development should aim beyond the bread-and-butter issues of knowledge and methodological skills in order to address educator identities that can influence professional efficiency (Gopinathan, 2016). There is a general belief that educators need time and opportunity to experience innovations and test new ideas and that is referred to as humanistic approach to continuing professional development (Phillips, 2008). Some schools use workshops to develop educators to master the use of new technological tools thus expanding their knowledge, and skills in teaching and learning activities while others use guest speakers to deliver information (Borthwick & Pierson, 2008). Workshops assist educators to learn new instructional methods, new assessment strategies and analysing data and also learning to utilise such data to make informed instructional decisions (Reed, 2005).

2.5.5 South African Council for Educators' Code of Professional Ethics

Consistent with various sections of the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the constitution, the South African Council for Educators (SACE) as mandated by the SACE Act, No. 31 of 2000 adopted the Code of Professional Ethics so as to regulate and guide educators' professional behaviours both within and outside the school. This was done in order to professionalise the public service especially the teaching fraternity. Generally, leadership is focused on achieving goals as a consequence; it is invariably associated with school vision and values (Christie, 2010).

Maphosa and Shumba (2010) state that the democratisation of schools in South Africa outlawed some disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment and initiation tendencies and placed much emphasis on the respect of learners' fundamental rights. In the wake of widely publicised educator unethical professional behaviours, such as corporal punishment, fraud, corruption, persistent absenteeism, late coming, rape of learners and chronic learner and educator underperformance (mediocrity), school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are always expected to act professionally and more importantly, to act ethically (SACE, 2002). The highest proportion of these negative media reports that tarnish the name of the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal and drag the entire teaching profession in muddy waters are a clear indication that all is not well in this Department, as a result, some educators do not subscribe to and live by the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. This is one of the reasons why Wong and Davey (2007) argue that there is a greater need to shift the focus of leadership from process and results to persons or educator colleagues and the future. School principals should be conscientised that leadership and teaching are services to the people including educator colleagues, learners and parents. For that reason, servant leadership is not an option but a need if multiple deprived rural schools are to improve in terms of leadership efficacy and corporate governance (culture). The worrying factors are that many of these schools are allocated huge amounts of valuable resources which are ultimately wasted through human error or poor leadership (Wong & Davey, 2007).

In an endeavour to address these challenges, the South African Council for Educators (SACE) developed the Code of Professional Ethics. A school principal, Departmental Head or educator cannot claim to be a servant leader if he or she does not conduct himself or herself in a proper and becoming manner which does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute and fails to promote fundamental human rights (SACE, 2002). The South African Council of Educators (SACE) Code of Professional Ethics serve as a code of conduct for educators, hence, it prescribes how educators are supposed to conduct themselves in relation to other educator colleagues, learners, parents, teaching profession and the South African Council for Educators. Additionally, it deals with educator disciplinary matters and outlines the procedures that need to be followed when an educator is alleged to have contravened this code of professional ethics (DoE, 2016).

2.5.6 Policy on the South African Standards of School Principals of 2016

The 21st century education has put more demands on the part the school principal in terms of leadership which includes spiritual intelligence (SQ), rational (cognitive) intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ) (*Quotient)* (Gage & Smith (2016). For that reason, Christie (2010) contends that various expectations of organisational leadership together with newly introduced policy framework have remarkably changed the work of the school principal. According to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) (2016); South African Schools Act, No. 84 of (1996), section 16A, the school principal is tasked to implement the policies and legislation. Arguably, it is this policy that tries to inculcate the culture of service amongst school principals, Departmental Heads and educators. Similarly, Hewison (2006) contends that school leadership should be viewed as both the source of, and the possible solution to most problems of the modern education economy. Surprisingly, some school principals are found wanting in matters relating to the clear understanding of their professional mandate or roles and responsibilities. In an attempt to bridge this leadership knowledge deficiency, the National Minister of Basic Education, Angelina Matsie Motshekga developed a framework which underpins the school principals' area of operation. The objective of this policy is to be able to enhance the quality of leadership, establish commonalities with regards to the well-functioning of all schools. This policy aims at improving school principals' professionalism and development in terms of understanding leadership roles. Further, it is believed that this has a potential to address the legacy of poor leadership and poor learner-outcomes.

2.6 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter was to place servant leadership under the scanner and establish the form or shape in which it is enacted in multiple deprived rural school contexts. The entire literature review section formed the significant basis for servant leadership (Batho Pele) in schools. This chapter examined the servant leadership landscape, international, continental and national perspectives of servant leadership, followed by the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service of 1997 or Batho Pele policy and lastly, the chapter summary.

The international, African and national (South African) literature together reveal that there is not enough servant leadership empirical evidence that directly relates to school leadership and learner outcomes. Mostly, it relates to business, non-governmental organisations and churches as

noted by Greenleaf (1977). As a result, this study aims at trying to address that servant leadership deficiency or gap in schools. Even Farling, Stone and Wiston (1999) argue that in spite of the fact that servant leadership is being enacted in private and non-profit organisations, there is still a noticeable paucity of research in this area, namely, multiple deprived rural school contexts.

Furthermore, I wish to conclude this section on literature review by quoting Robert Greenleaf's (1977, p.10) words of optimism, "I am mindful of the long road ahead before these trends, which I see so clearly, become a major society-shaping force. We are not there yet. But I see encouraging movement on the horizon." In the same vein, Kanyane (2010) reiterates that if all the Batho Pele or servant leadership dimensions were truly implemented, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators would not be involved in a plethora of fraud and corruption scandals. Based on these assertions, I believe that if the Department of Education can monitor the implementation of servant leadership/Batho Pele principles in multiple-deprived rural school contexts, they can become centres of excellence where quality leadership, management and teaching and learning can tremendously improve.

More importantly, I agree with the literature that the truly viable schools in multiple-deprived rural contexts are those which are consistently and predominantly servant-led. It is also worth noting that there has been emphasis in the literature, that servant leadership style is quite significant owing to the fact that it is the duty and social obligation of all research scholars in this field to help school principals, Departmental Heads and educators at various levels of the Department of Education in their journey on the road to "*Batho Pele*" (Pietersen, 2013). Further, the literature demonstrates that the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are the backbone and function as a heartbeat of schools, but if it happens that this heartbeat is unprofessional and unethical, schools will suffer from anaemia because there will be no blood circulation in the school as body and the public service delivery will eventually die (Mle, 2012). Finally, the next chapter presents and discusses the theoretical frameworks of the study, namely: Russell and Stone's (2002) Model of servant leadership and Khoza's (2012) Model of *ubuntu* leadership (Attuned leadership or African Humanism).

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two I examined and reviewed the existing body of related literature on servant leadership in challenging and multiple-deprived school contexts. The aim of Chapter Three is to explore the two theoretical frameworks or models that characterise the behaviours and practices of servant leaders and servant leadership itself. This study is underpinned by two structurally and semantically interconnected leadership theories which shape and channel the study's discourses on the phenomenon of servant leadership. These two theoretical frameworks are, firstly, Greenleaf's servant leadership based on Russell and Stone's (2002) Model with nineteen philosophical leadership attributes comprising of both functional and accompanying attributes, secondly, Khoza's (2012) Model of *ubuntu* leadership (Attuned leadership or African Humanism).

3.2 Russell and Stone's (2002) Model of Servant Leadership

According to Russell and Stone (2002) servant leadership is characterised by various philosophical attributes, namely: credibility, trust, vision (conceptualisation and foresight), communication, honesty and integrity, competence, service, stewardship, modelling, visibility, pioneering, influence, persuasion, appreciation of others, listening, encouragement, empowerment, teaching and delegation. For the purpose of this study I am not utilising all the nineteen attributes, I am only utilising a few of the above stated attributes in order to understand servant leadership, namely, vision, honesty and integrity, communication, listening, teaching, modelling, service and empowerment. To put it plainly, I am utilising an adapted version of Russell and Stone (2002) servant leadership Model. Below is the discussion of that adapted Russell and Stone's (2002) Model of Servant Leadership.

Functional attributes are the operative qualities, characteristics and distinctive features belonging to leaders and observed through specific leader behaviours in the workplace. Functional attributes determine the nature and effectiveness of servant leadership while accompanying attributes affect the level and intensity of functional attributes (Russell & Stone, 2002). The educational system of the 21st century needs these hard to find characteristics of

school principals, Heads of Department and educators in order to shape the leadership and management of teaching and learning in rural schools. Furthermore, the frequently reported deviant behaviours by school principals, DHs and educators can be eliminated.

3.2.1.1 Vision

This is essentially what Russell and Stone (2002) perceive as an ideal picture or image the principal as a servant leader has about the future of the school. Greenleaf (1977) in his essay, likens it with a foresight or conceptualising of the organisational future. Similarly, Brown and Mitchell (2010) echo similar perspective in their research findings that within the school environment, the principal must set the tone for organisational goals and professional behaviour. Munroe (2014) holds a view that educational leaders stand for something very crucial which is the vision and also stand on another very crucial thing which is values. A vision is a statement which spells out what the school wants to become and where it wishes to be in future (Brevis & Vrba, 2014). Furthermore, vision is often regarded as the school vision or vision which paints the future destination of the school (Patterson, 2003). Similarly, Martoo (2006) contends that one recipe for the success of any school's collaborative venture is a clear demonstration of a shared vision or goals of the organisation. In my experience as an educator, I have in the past few years seen some rural schools with concretely well documented vision and mission statements. All that happened successfully happened by chance. In relation to servant leadership in schools, the vision denotes an idea that the school principal, Departmental Head and educator look forward and see their colleagues as viable and worthy team members and seek to assist each other in reaching that state (Patterson, 2003). Understandably, the school leaders should be the real drivers of the school vision. Even the Wallace Foundation (2005) registers the acquiescence by asserting that the school leaders, like principals, HoDs and educators should be seen living and breathing what they preach in everything they do in their schools.

Agreeably, Russell and Stone (2002) note the significance of the school vision and the benefits such as good image, inspiration, empowerment, unity (collaboration) and achievement of a learning organisation that accrue through its implementation. Each and every community has its own demands and expectations about the performance of its school. The ability and willingness of the school principal to meet such expectations is normally practically demonstrated by attempts to provide a strategy which maps out the steps to be followed in improving the standard of service delivery, namely teaching and learning and learner outcomes. Usually, the school

leadership needs to put in place a strategy in terms of a vision which will serve as a dream that the school works towards its realisation. This, in principle, and not tradition, should be a collaborative effort among all stakeholders when the vision and mission statement are crafted (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2014). Brevis and Vrba (2014) add that for any school to be led to success in the future, an inspiring vision is necessary.

Consequently, an organisation without a leadership vision is directionless and lacks foresight hence; Archbald (2013) asserts that vision is the main component of school leadership. Understandably, Msila (2014) asserts that school principal, Departmental Heads and educators need to energise and excite the school and educators in it by demonstrating what it can become. It is imperative, therefore, for all school principals and educators to define the future that they want to create for their organisation (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2014). The school vision should be a product of collaborative effort by the school principal, educators, school governing body, parents, learners, non-educators and other stakeholders who have an interest of the school at heart (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2014).

I fully agree with Greenleaf (1977) that the requirements of school leadership call for some intellectual demands (abilities) which cannot be measured by academic intelligence ratings. These abilities, to know the unknowable and to foresee the unforeseeable distinguish the school principal from other educators and place the educational leader far ahead of his or her colleagues and in turn qualify him or her to show the way (Greenleaf, 1977). The school vision is one of those powerful tools that enable the principal to see the possible future of the organisation. Greenleaf (p.23, 1977) adds that the "art of leadership rests, in part, on the ability to bridge the gap between the unknowable and the knowable by intuition, that is, a judgment from the unconscious process." So as to provide a good service to the learners and community the school principal should display a highest level of creativity as compared to other educators. The creativity that Greenleaf (1977) is citing assists the visionary servant educational leader to create a vision (idea), proceed to communication (word) and end with empowerment (action) (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989). Coincidentally, Douglas (2001) concurs with this assertion and posits that a leader must demonstrate an ability to communicate the vision to all stakeholders or school community. Furthermore, Patterson (2003) believes that this visionary process involves seeing each leader's unique gifts and influences the decisions of the principal and helps him shape a plan for a successful future, all while asking if colleagues are being served. Lutsilili, Daniel and

Benson (2012) argue that high performing schools have principals, Departmental Heads and educators who articulate a vision, assist educators to grow professionally and also play a leading role in determining the school's climate.

3.2.1.2 Honesty and integrity

Russell and Stone (2002) are of the opinion that the question of character is very important in terms of the school leader's behaviour. It cannot be disputed that the principle of integrity leads to a multiplicity of practices that demonstrates a virtue of honesty in various leadership situations (Kolzow, 2014). Sipe and Frick (2015) add that educators, learners and parents want to have a principal, HoD and educator that are ethical and credible. Further, according to Chandler (2009), the demonstration of a good character and ethical values of school principals, DHs and educators form a cornerstone of decision making and conduct in a workplace. Consistent with this line of argument, Kolzow (2014) posits that school principals, HoDs or educators cannot generate trust unless they are consistently viewed as having integrity and that it is demonstrated to their colleagues, learners and parents. In addition, Mihelic, Lipicnik and Tekavcic (2010) and Kolzow (2014) report that integrity essentially involves trust, honesty, values, traits, and consistency of behaviours. For the purposes of clarity, he further opines that honesty has to do with telling the truth whereas integrity relies heavily on the school leader's ability of keeping his or her leadership promises and fulfilling colleagues and public's expectations about the delivery of quality public education and improved learner attainment. This resonates with Sipe and Frick's (2015) line of thinking and also emphasises the issue of integrity through an educated advice that consistency of behaviour refers to the situation whereby the school principal, DH and educators' willingness to treat their colleagues, learners and parents by the same set of ethical principles. The determining factor whether educators 'buy into' a leader's vision or plan largely depends on his or her character. Honesty and integrity are elements of leadership which increase the level of trust in the educational leader by Departmental Heads, educators, learners, school governing body and parents. Servant leaders demonstrate true love, healing, appreciation and care for their colleagues and furthermore, seek to esteem and honour their colleague educators, learners and the entire school community (Patterson, 2003; Mihelic, Lipicnik & Tekavcic (2010).

Most rural schools need to be transformed and for that to happen successfully, the principal, Departmental heads and educators should be honest and trustworthy to each other. Rurality is a challenge on its own, therefore there is a great demand for administrative and management

creativity so that there can be collaboration, teamwork and effectiveness. My experience and observations as a rural school principal have taught me that rural communities are sometimes taken for a ride because of their geographical location, namely: rurality (ruralness) coupled with the level of education. To name a few instances, parents are not given sufficient information about the role they are expected to play in the education of their children. Secondly, there is no consultation that takes place when major and binding decisions are taken. As a result, the so-called parental involvement in decision making is done as a malicious compliance. This is in contradiction with the notion that the people shall govern (Turok, 2011; South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996). Legally, the Code of professional practice (ethics) dictates that schools must develop and maintain constructive professional relationships with all stakeholders including parents (Department of Education and Training, 2006). Furthermore, school principals, DHs and educators have an obligation to respect the dignity, rights and opinions of their colleagues, learners and parents (Department of Education and Training, 2006).

To put it plainly as Sipe and Frick (2015) accentuate, a servant principal lives, loves and leads by clean conscience—the inward ethical and moral sense of what is right and what is wrong. In support of this view, Brown and Michelle (2010) posit that ethical school principals, HoDs and educators 'teach' ethical professional conduct to their colleagues and learners through their own behaviours in the school. Furthermore, they are expected to treat colleagues and learners fairly, honestly and considerately, and in contexts, such leaders become worthy of emulation (Brown, *et al.,* (2010). The conscience teaches the principal and DHs to lead and manage the school in a manner that makes the school community to appreciate their service. The educators should teach learners with a conscience so that they achieve better outcomes and become good and responsible citizen of KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa. Issues such as late coming, absenteeism, drunkenness, poor and under teaching are direct opposite of the servant leadership traits such as honesty, humility, integrity, trust, ethics, forthrightness, uprightness, trustworthiness, credibility, etc, (Sipe & Frick, 2015). This is blatantly in direct contrast with Brown and Michelle's (2010) understandings of ethical leadership that strong moral school leaders are supposed to see themselves as role models in multiple-deprived rural schools. Hence, Mihelic, Lipicnik and Tekavcic (2010) hold a view that school principals, DHs and educators who demonstrate integrity are really honest with themselves and other educators, learn from their own and others' mistakes and are constantly engaged in an endeavour of self-improvement and self-correction and lead by example and expect the same from their colleagues. In response to the type of

leadership that does not demonstrate servant-hood, the Code of professional practice (ethics) identifies five principles or obligations that should underpin servant leadership in schools, namely: service to the public, responsiveness, accountability, fairness and integrity and lastly, efficiency and effectiveness (Department of Education and Training, 2006).

3.2.1.3 Communication and listening

Russell and Stone (2002) paint a broad picture which convinces any one that communication is indispensable in the effective leadership and management of the school. Keyton (2011) defines communication as a two way process whereby organisational information and common understanding is transmitted from one educator member of staff to another. According Lunenburg (2010), Stockwell and Westveld (2012), servant leaders can choose from various channels of communication, firstly, written media such as memorandum, letters, reports, newsletters, etc, secondly, verbal media such as meetings, emails, telephone, etc, and thirdly, non-verbal media such as gestures, facial expression, body position, and even clothing does transmit messages. Russell and Stone (2002) further argue that communication is an appropriate mechanism of articulating the school vision, mission and goals to all stakeholders, such as School Management Teams (SMTs), educators, non-educators, learners, School Governing Body (SGBs), parents and the community. Lunenburg (2010) stresses that as school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are able to build a shared vision, mission, values and realistic goals, the school will become more effective. According to them, even the leader's demonstrated values are non-verbally communicated through his or her behaviour thus, giving life and meaning to the vision. Hence, Stockwell and Westveld (2012) caution school principals, DHs and educators against leadership blind spots, such as poorly communicating organisational expectations (service standards) and under-communicating school's strategic direction and priorities. These, according to them should happen on one-on-one basis and at all the staff meetings, SGB meetings, parents' meetings and Representative Council of Learners' (RCL) meetings.

Most activities can virtually come to a halt if there is no communication. There is no other way of making Education Department's policies, resolutions (collective agreements), school policies, SGB and SMT decision known by the school community without communication. Thus, communication is a flowing river or stream that gives life to the institution. It is therefore, true that intercommunication problems normally cause communication defects and adversely affect

the school culture and leaner performance (Cekuls, 2015). Even Arlestig (2008) concurs with the notion of the importance of communication and adds that communication is closely related to the school culture. As a result, school leadership, organisational culture, proper communication and school outcomes have always been strongly connected (Arlestig, 2008).

Jones-Burbridge (2012, p.45) shares the same view and posits that "the power of the servant leadership model lies in the ability of its ideas to inspire others to be more than the sum of their individual parts". According to Lunenburg (2010), the key being successful in the 21st century schooling system is the ability of the school principal to work with other stakeholders both in decision making processes and the communication of those decisions to the school community. Furthermore, Jones-Burbridge (2012) believes that the good communication should go together with good listening skills. Sipe and Frick (2015) believe that we often 'aid' best by talking but 'serve' best by empathetic listening; 'aid' by actions and also 'serve' by actions and simple presence. As consequence, the servant leaders should be willing to listen actively to their colleagues and other stakeholders and also involve and support them (Jones-Burbridge (2012). Most of the times, if the school leader refuses to demonstrate deep commitment to listen to his or her colleagues, (Crippen (2005); that breeds unnecessary tensions and can lead to either a go slow or strike action. Crippen (2005) suggests that the school principal needs to show deep commitment to listening to his her colleagues and learners. Apart from the strike actions that are manufactured or concocted by educators, most of the disagreements, strike actions and marches are as a result of lack of communication and inability to listen to educators and learners. A servant leader that communicates with and listens to his or her colleagues and a broader school community will be sufficiently prepared and capable of solving school challenges amicably (Cekuls, 2015). The other added advantage is that good communication among school principals, Departmental Heads, educators, learners and other stakeholders helps to foster and strengthen good human and working relations in the school; hence, servant leaders should have appropriate social skills and values (Cekuls, 2015). Further, I am convinced that good communication can lead to educator job satisfaction and in turn influence job performance and learner performance (Shann, 1998). The research shows that the lack of communication with parents (parental involvement) in the education of their children has disastrous effects such as poor learner academic performance (Shann, 1998). According to Sipe and Frick (2015) the school principals has a responsibility to always listen earnestly and also speak effectively. Furthermore, they should often try to seek first to understand before they can expect to be understood.

3.2.1.4 Teaching and modelling

It is an undisputed fact that teaching and learning is the core-business of the school. For that purpose, that is what schools are expected to do best in order to produce good learner outcomes and contribute to the social and economic development of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and the world because we are now living in a global village. According to Russell and Stone (2002), servant leader principals, Department Heads and educators who want to empower others must teach. That is why Horng, Klasik and Loeb (2009) and DuFour and Mattos (2013) assert that the school principal's leadership role is a more complex one because of the multiplicity of leadership tasks that are demanded by the 21st century. Coe Aloisi, Higgins and Major (2014) add that servant school principals are expected to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning in schools so as to ensure that there is an improved learner performance which also matters to the learner future success endevours. In their belief, a servant leader is the one who is capable of nurturing and developing the talent of his or colleagues and learners. Russell and Stone (2002) argue that principals cannot successfully maintain schools as effective learning organisations if they do not serve as educators and teach in the classroom. It is imperative that principals, Departmental Heads and educators acknowledge the greater responsibility to create 'learning and teaching schools (Southworth, 2002). According to their conceptualisation of teaching, the active involvement of principals as educators will have the capacity to shape and instil values and communicate goals to both the educators and learners through servant leadership role. Barrett and Breyer (2014) challenge the current school leadership and place a re-enforcement that the 21st century educator must teach with passion, be knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject content knowledge and find ways to make topics more fun and appealing for all learners to ensure academic success. This is one of the reasons why servant leadership may, according to this study's assumptions, be viewed as a possible solution to some of the challenges and problems that rural schools are currently facing.

Furthermore, modelling has numerous potential effects upon the school (Russell & Stone, 2002). Crippen (2005) adds that the most difficult task for school leaders is to teach their colleagues that actually, it is a privilege and also an honour to serve as a leader in a school. This has become very crucial on the basis that school principals are faced with a myriad of unique difficulties and sacrifices which pose a threat to the organisational morale, culture and practice (Kurth, 2016). In addition, Kouzes and Posner (2010) are of the opinion that school principals should demonstrate to their colleagues how they are expected to feel, think and also act. In that vein, through

modelling good behaviour, the servant leader demonstrates and communicates some form of ethics that he or she would like to be emulated by his or her colleagues (Russell & Stone, 2002). It is true that actions speak louder than words therefore; modelling is another way of instilling values so as to shape the school culture, climate and goals (Russell & Stone, 2002). The other principal purpose of teaching is that in the process the educators must be equipped, developed and empowered to be able to become leaders themselves (Russell & Stone, 2002). The authors also add that principals, Departmental Heads and educators must teach their colleagues trust through being exemplary. Thus exemplary leadership is compatible with servant leadership.

3.2.1.5 Service

Russell and Stone (2002) explicitly articulate their position that if power continues to dominate leaders' thinking, rural schools will not move to a highest standard of leadership. These authors further, implore school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to place 'service' at the core of school leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002). Sipe and Frick (2015) hold a view that a calling to serve is invariably deep rooted, values-based impulse and willingness to change other educators and learners' lives for the better. I agree with Ward's (2012) argument that the primary purpose of leadership is not solely to lead but also to serve. Most literature acknowledges that a servant school principal, Departmental Head and educator is the one who becomes a servant first, then a school leader (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002; Crippen, 2005; Jones-Burbridge, 2012; Sipe & Frick, 2015). The most important motivation for school leadership should be the school servant leaders' deliberate choice to serve the school learners, SGB, parents and the community at large (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Crippen, 2005). Education is regarded as a basic right in terms of the Bill of Rights enshrined in the South African Constitution of 1996. In addition, it is the responsibility of the South African Government, through its school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to provide quality public education as a service to all learners including rural schools. As a consequence, Patterson (2003) puts it succinctly that serving forms a realistic desire to assist others and searching for ways to serve colleagues by staying in touch with clients. Some of the contradictions which continue to confront our education system especially in KwaZulu-Natal are persisting inequalities in different schooling contexts such as urban, township and rural settings. Servant leadership, as this study assumes, has greater role to play as one of the mitigating leadership factors. Kurth (2016) argues that servant leadership or 'leading by serving' is increasing

becoming an effective strategy to lead and is proving to be successful in terms of its resilient positive influence.

Service is the principal pillar of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002, Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Ward (2012) avers that leadership comprises of leadership duties in which to serve and leadership functions to be performed. According to Sendjaya and Sarros (2002, p.62), "servant leaders portray a resolute conviction and strong character by taking on, not only the role of a servant, but also the nature of a servant." In that vein, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be imbued with Nelson Mandela's spirit of altruism for them to be effective and successful in their duties and responsibilities of serving and leading rural school. This notion of altruism, as Patterson (2003) puts it, is imperative to the school principal, Departmental Head and educators' mentality in respect of their perspectives around the phenomenon of servant leadership and their calling as educators. The internalization of the desire to serve can remarkably improve the scientific relationship between educators and learners and between educators and parents as their clients or customers. This may, in my opinion, contribute to the changing of the face or outlook of challenging and multiple-deprived rural schools in many respects, such as resources, academic results, educator commitment and eliminate the widely reported malpractices. Patterson (2003) and Jones-Burbridge (2012) add that servant school leaders achieve good results for their schools by not focusing on their personal accomplishments, but giving priority attention to the needs and aspirations of their colleagues and learners. Even Russell and Stone (2002) aver that servant leadership is a term that can transform schools and societies because it stimulates both personal and institutional metamorphoses.

3.2.1.6 Empowerment

Educational empowerment is critical in pursuit of the provision of quality teaching and learning in schools and educator and learner leadership development. Consequently, Tuckey, Bakker and Dollard (2012) define empowerment as a motivational construct which involves intrinsic and extrinsic motivational role to enhance educational professional efficacy. Smith and Greyling (2006) add that educator development is a process that enables deep fundamental transformation at the core of schooling system. Even though Sparks (2013) believes that any world-class education system requires to develop its educators by endeavouring to nurture a culture of professional development in schools, however, schools, especially, those in rural areas, do not

have concrete or documented plan to coordinate educators' professional development programmes. Further, Hawkins (2004) opines that empowerment has become a buzzword in the corporate world and educational institutions and is essential for principals, DHs, educators and learners. Understandably, due to a multiplicity of rural school challenges, educators cannot only rely on the knowledge and pedagogy acquired when they were doing their three year and four year teaching qualifications. Russell and Stone (2002) believe that empowerment forms a central element of excellent servant leadership. That is how a school leader invests with skills, confidence, power and authority in his or her colleagues. Greenleaf (1977) and Waddell (2006) sum it up wisely that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should ask themselves fundamental questions like: do colleague educators and even learners around the servant school leader become wiser, freer, more autonomous, healthier and better able themselves to become servant leaders? Will the least privileged school community members be benefited or not get further deprived? School principals, Departmental Heads and educators can be able to replicate their servant leadership style by selflessly serving their educator colleagues, parents and learners (Russell & Stone, 2002; Murray, 2010). They further add that "empowerment emphasises teamwork and reflects the values of love and equality" (Russell & Stone, 2002, p.152). Sipe and Frick (2015) emphasise that the knowledge and skills that school principals, DHs and educators have should be transferred to their colleagues and learners.

Russell and Stone's (2002) model of servant leadership accentuates that the goal of empowerment is to create many servant leaders in different echelons of the school as an organisation. In that vein, the nature of empowering servant school leadership builds and creates and opportunity for Departmental Heads and educators to lead and manage themselves (Tuckey, Bakker & Dollard (2012). Both educators and learners need to play a major role in the leadership of the school as subject educators, class managers and Representative Council of Learners (RCLs). Mhlongo (2001) reveals that some school principals have a tendency of withholding information because they fear that their power and authority may be usurped by educators or learners especially RCLs. Further, the principal has a responsibility to create conducive conditions in which all stakeholders who partake in education as a service share a vision of the direction that the school intends taking (Mhlongo, 2001). I agree with Bogler and Somech (2014) that school principals should recognise that the feelings and perceptions of educators about their institution and their willingness to attain professional growth opportunities are beneficial to the school. In addition, when school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are perceived as

participative and democratic, their colleagues tend to feel more committed and dedicated to the school, express higher level of work satisfaction and their performance in terms of quality curriculum delivery improves remarkably (Stacy, 2013; Bogler & Somech, 2014).

Furthermore, Stacy (2013) asserts that educator-led professional development creates opportunities to strengthen professional autonomy, stimulates professional judgment and provides spaces to validate educator-voices, all important components of educator empowerment. Hence, Maxfield and Flumerfelt (2009) have observed that most of the times, educators are frustrated when their development as leaders is not acknowledged by school principals and they are offered opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills and capabilities. The whole idea or narrative is shared by Smith and Greyling (2006) when they aver that real empowerment should filter through the whole schooling system, from KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education down to principals, to educators and finally, learners. This is because Martoo's (2006) research report reveals that the significant keys to organisational capacity building appears to be educator leadership, educator learning and a professional learning culture.

3.3 Attuned (African Humanism or *Ubuntu*) leadership theory

> *Leaders are not just born to the role. They are born, then made—and sometimes unmade—by their own actions. A leader who is not in tune with the followership soon becomes a leader in limbo and sooner rather than later withers.*
>
> (Khoza, 2013).

> *In an era of impoverished morality and self-centred leadership, it is well to be reminded that leaders have a primary responsibility to care about people and should make every effort to serve them. This is not a high-handed impracticality. It is good advice for those who want to be effective and respected as leaders.*

(Nelson Mandela's foreword in Dr Reuel J. Khoza's (2013) book titled: 'Let Africa lead').

The above statements or quotations provide a lucid vista of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela's factual observations about leadership that is found wanting on the question of ubuntu values, morals, ethics and servanthood both in the private and public sectors. This view is shared by Msila (2012, p.80) who argues that "in a society that has been made complex by a number of social

issues, the philosophy of ubuntu encounters many social currents that flow in various directions." Even Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) see a greater need for ubuntu leadership as they report that the new South African government inherited a civil service which was not people-friendly and lacked the requisite skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to meet the developmental weaknesses facing the country. However, ubuntu has been accorded prominence in the democratic dispensation of the Republic of South Africa (Msila, 2008). We are in an era of leadership transformation; as a result, this requires African solutions to African problems, hence, African Humanism (attuned) ubuntu leadership is one of the theories which undergirds or frames my study. Understandably, ubuntu is an Afrocentric or Afro-based philosophy which necessitates communal approach in discharging leadership responsibilities (Meylahn & Musiyambiri, 2017). It cannot be disputed that South Africa needs ubuntu leadership more than before. Interestingly, Khoza (2012; 2013) assures us that the leadership to which he refers, is not mythical, it does exist in South Africa and in Africa and is epitomized by the founding father of our democracy, the statesman, revolutionary, internationalist and icon, the living embodiment of African leadership: Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela who is a perfect example of what Warren Bennis, the noted and esteemed leadership expert, might refer to as servant leadership, where the true leader is the servant of all. Similarly, in their study on 'School leadership that works in areas of multiple deprivation in South Africa', Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015, p.2) cite Chiome (2011) when they argue that "leadership is the, or at least one of the, major missing links among the dysfunctional schools and similarly, leadership is the answer, or at least one of the key answers to why some schools of multiple deprivation perform well".

There is a leadership crisis in all fronts in South Africa. Similarly, there is also a general feeling that African culture is often at best shunned or at worst viewed as negative obstacle to 'good' school leadership (Msila, 2014). This is demonstrated by the prevalent public service delivery strikes, state capture by some affluent families, rampant corruption in government departments, such as Education, Police, Home Affairs, Social Development, including the private sector. Schools are not immune from these professional malpractices (educational negligence) as alluded to earlier in the 'Introductory Chapter', which manifest themselves in moral deviations such as corruption like embezzlement of funds, bribery, fraud, examination irregularities, racism, absenteeism, late coming, forged medical certificates, underperformance, under-teaching, under and poor quality assessment, improper (unethical) dressing by some educators, educator-learner sexual relationships, prejudice, unfairness, theft, corporal punishment, abusive verbal language,

unethical use of academic resources (plagiarism), selling of fake report cards, bribes from learners, fabrication (falsification) of learner results and / School Based Continuous Assessment (SBA) marks, etc, (Ankers, 1986; Thornicroft, 1989; Jackson, 2007; Teh, 2008; Adeyemi, 2010; Betweli, 2013; Etica, 2017; Mfaume & Bilinga, 2017) . Further, "the reality, to some extent, is a picture of corruption, unsatisfactory performance and productivity; a need for managers in the civil service to inculcate ubuntu and embrace the principles of Batho Pele" (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2009, p.2). This situation is un-African and contrary to the values of ubuntu and servant leadership. Hence, the community expects the school leaders' behaviours exemplify ethical and moral integrity. I perfectly concur with Boin and Hart (2003) when they posit that owing to the prevalent nature of modern leadership crises and the ensuing widely reported educational disruptions, it is best to re-examine our knowledge and understanding of leadership in modern crises. More importantly, in the face of all these professional malpractices, the most affected schools are in rural areas because they are still neglected and some still depict the image of the past apartheid era. Msila (2008) notes that as South African school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are assuming leadership roles, they require the best leadership models, trusted philosophies and strategies to assist them in their new areas of operation. Further, I agree with Nwagbara (2011) when reporting that a postmodernist reframing of Africa's school practice has to usher in a new era of institutional leadership that resonates well with ubuntu, a schematisation of collectivist, distributed leadership model that takes the cultural identity of all African schools into account. Hence, this study argues that a paradigm shift is necessary for the African and South African school's development in terms of leadership.

For that reason, this thesis is also theoretically framed or located in the good work of Khoza's (1994 & 2013) attuned or ubuntu (African humanism) leadership theory in an endeavour to demonstrate the perspective that school principal, Departmental Heads and educators should be public servants of impeccable leadership credentials. Let me hasten to point out that I do not intend in this study to repudiate Western leadership models, but I attempt to unequivocally demonstrate that African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS) can either stand alone or perfectly complement and add value to existing models (Nwagbara, 2011). Hence, Msila (2014) reports that there are other leadership approaches that can be utilised in the preparation of school leaders like principals, DHs and educators such as appreciative leadership, moral leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership and social justice leadership. Consequently, Khoza

(2012) emphasises that if ubuntu philosophy can be introduced and enacted in abundance, multiple-deprived rural schools can be better places and function effectively. According to Khoza (1994), ubuntu leadership dictates that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should understand that they are a community of professionals and they work within the community, therefore, they need to understand ubuntu as the worldview of other colleagues, learners and parents, and more importantly, share the feelings of being human along with them. For me it is logical that any school leadership can only succeed in a suitable context, namely political, religious, cultural or societal environment.

My observation is that some multiple-deprived rural schools fall short of quality leadership that displays ubuntu values and wishes to go beyond the call of duty to serve the entire school community. Hence, Mbhele (2015) reports that many educators leave multiple-deprived rural schools because of untransformed organisational leadership which is devoid of ubuntu. In addition, Msengana (2006) argues that there is a greater perception that South Africans wish to have effective and efficient leadership and management, more especially in rural schools. According to Mbhele (2015), ubuntu values such as servant leadership principles of accountability were conceptualised in order to improve service delivery. This ubuntu philosophy may bring about the restoration of the dignity of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who are currently perceived to be involved in a plethora of professional irregularities like sexual abuse of learners, poor performance, misappropriation of funds, nepotism, etc, and further, help to improve learner performance in poor performing rural schools (Mbhele, 2015). With ubuntu leadership, everything is possible, as Mandela believes ubuntu to be an innate duty to support and empower colleague educators to be agents of change and drivers of excellence (Oppenheim, 2012). This is further aptly articulated by Oppenheim (2012) when she opines that in Mandela's own personal perspective the true power of ubuntu, the inner core of every educator's humanity, could undoubtedly move mountains. The truth of this assertion resonates well with Mbhele's (2015) contention that ubuntu does enhance commitment and dedication by instilling the culture of responsibility and accountability in school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' hearts which manifests itself in willingness to go beyond the call of duty.

The elevation of education to be apex priority by the South African government and the persistent leadership crisis in education has drastically changed the leadership landscape in South Africa in general and KwaZulu Natal rural schools in particular. This current situation that rural

schools are confronted with necessitates the advent of school leadership of principals, Departmental Heads and educators with the ability to manage the multiple-deprived rural schools as all-weather-leaders with diverse skills and characteristics (Povah & Sobczah, 2010), in order to turn water into wine (John 2:1-11) whatever the circumstances they may be confronted with. Rural schools require great leaders who have the capacity to adapt to the ever changing contexts and who can also make a remarkable difference to the success of the organisation (Povah & Sobczah, 2010). Hannah, Uhl-Bien, Alvolio and Cavarretta (2009) argue that substantial research in extreme school contexts is required to advance leader's knowledge in this critically significant arena of leadership research – probably the area where leadership is needed most. Unavoidably, on the issue of contexts, I wish to postulate that ubuntu and servant leadership by their very nature are more appropriate for the multiple – deprived rural schools. I addition, I agree with Povah and Sobczah (2010) that there is a noticeable myriad of school leadership theories and models which identify various critically important competences and behaviours required by principals, Departmental Heads and educators to excel in their areas of responsibility. Similarly, Bruno and Lay (2006) echo the same view that a school principal, Departmental Heads and educators' leadership styles entail some combination of task behaviour and relationship behaviour which are central to the idea of leadership style. As a consequence, Povah and Sobczah (2010) believe that there is need for a paradigm shift from the traditional leader-centred (individual leader characteristics) in order to embrace the rural context in which the school principal, Departmental Head and educator has to operate, namely, a context-centred leadership approach like ubuntu philosophy of leadership.

The South African broader society, including rural schools are calling for humane, ethical and value-based leadership which has the capacity to transform the public service, especially, education. The reality is that an efficient, effective and accountability-linked education, leadership and management system has the capacity to comply with the Public Service Act's No. 103 of 1994 as amended, pillars or principles of improved public service to all the citizens of South Africa, regardless of colour, race, religion, gender and the contexts in which such service is provided. There is a strong belief, as Khoza (2013) correctly puts it, that Nelson Mandela never in his life time fell into limbo. He further adds that Nelson Mandela demonstrated "practical wisdom, concentrating on the common good and putting his leadership skills at the service of his followers" (Khoza, 2013, p.1). Nkomo (2006) believes that the traditional leadership has always treated educator colleagues and learners as passive objects that have no

opinion on the leadership and management of schools. According to Broodryk (2006), the ideal school principal, Departmental Head and educator whose leadership is undergird by ubuntu worldview have virtues or qualities such as kindness, generosity, harmony, friendliness, modesty, humility, helpfulness and happiness. The chronic underperformance, highly reported malpractices, lack of shared leadership and the failure by principals, Departmental Heads and educators to enact ubuntu leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools pose a danger whereby these leaders may fall into limbo in relation to the public opinion. Even Etica (2017) points out that ethical school leaders take care and also motivate learners to study harder in an event when they have performed poorly, further, they make learners accountable, honest and only allocate test and examination score that they deserve. This is an opportune moment for rural primary and secondary schools to consider and value indigenous knowledge of ubuntu philosophy, thus desisting from blindly importing foreign leadership theories. The notion of African solutions to African problems finds resonance in this quest for attuned leadership. Malunga (2006) agrees that a plethora of leadership strategies are normally imported from America and tend to depict only limited application to specific South African rural school contexts and cultures in which they are supposed to operate. It is my belief that ubuntu philosophy of leadership is viewed as a significant value of African culture which forms the real basis of a management that is truly congruent with the South African multiple-deprived rural schools and their societies (Nkomo, 2006).

According to Khoza (1994; Nkomo, 2006; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013; Letseka, 2014), ubuntu is a concept that serves as a foundation of good, ethical and sound human relations in all African communities and some international countries such as England and West Indies. This philosophy has its roots in the Pan-Africanism which was champinioned by among others, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and this consequently, led to the formation of what was called Organisation of African Unity on 25 May 1963, and later renamed as African Union on 26 May 2001 (Khoza, 1994). Surprisingly, in Khoza's (1994, p.2) point of contention, ubuntu philosophy continues to be abused by some bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie with the aim of legitimising their own hegemony in enacting pseudo-leadership. In contrast, Brown and Michelle (2010) and Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (2012) aver that in essence, the school principals, DHs and educators who are moral persons and moral managers 'walk the talk' and 'talk the walk' in relation to their professional conduct and organisational processes to meet high moral standards of conduct and responsibility in multiple-

deprived rural schools. Some of the tenets of ubuntu leadership are hard work and respect for colleagues, learners and parents (Khoza, 1994). Msila (2014) adds that ubuntu leadership is envisaged as a philosophy that has a capacity to enhance a high level of diligence and culture of achievement in schools. Further, considering the South African negative educational history, there appears to be a greater necessity for a transformational leadership that embraces the spirit of ubuntu in different aspects of society including education in rural schools (Msila, 2014).

Further, I agree with Khoza (1994) that the school principal's success at managing the organisation largely depends on the cooperation of educators (the managed). For that reason, the school principal, Departmental Heads and educators need to take cognisance of the fact that their colleagues and learners are very important in the school situation. Khoza (1994, P.8) adds and emphasises that ubuntu leadership teaches all educators a philosophy which says, "I am because they are; and they are because I am". The core of ubuntu (African Humanism) is that it places 'man' at the centre of everything (Khoza, 1994; 2013; Broodryk, 2006; Malunga, 2006; Nkomo, 2006; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013; Letseka, 2014). They further clarify that in ubuntu philosophy of life, '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*', which comes from the Nguni languages and is translated to mean that 'a person is a person through other people.

Khoza's (1994) attuned leadership (African Humanism or Ubuntu) comprises of a variety of values, namely: an African personality that lends itself to collective existence and inter-subjectivity, a concept that conjures up images of supportiveness, cooperation, collaboration and solidarity—(communalism), a value system that emphasises the desirability of sharing and a philosophy that regards humankind as an integral part of nature and history. This is shared by Letseka (2014) who believes that ubuntu leadership also encompasses significant values, morals and notions of traditional African community justice. This normally manifests itself in the collegial and cosy professional relationships that exist between school principals, DHs, educators, parents, learners and community. In turn this minimises some school malpractices or negative behaviours which are witnessed by South Africans and often reported on the media. The good aspect about attuned (ubuntu) leadership is that it does not condone unsatisfactory performance but accords respect to the person or educator who perform that work (Jolly, 2010). Msila (2014, p.1739) stresses that "*ubuntu* thrives when there is consensus, democracy and the dependence on one another." As consequence, through this communalism, collectivism and professional ethics, the school achieves its vision, mission and goals. In addition, the leadership

capacitates their colleagues. Understandably, any deviation from the aforesaid principles forces the leader to go into limbo and eventually wither (Khoza, 2003).

The centrality to the understanding of my research is that *ubuntu* leadership finds expression or credence in the African philosophy that 'it takes a village to raise a child' and the one that says 'a person is a person through other people' (Khoza, 1994; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). As a result, ubuntu is about colleagues and their actions. Khoza (1994) claims that *ubuntu* provides a foundation of true and sound human relation in African societies. This should, in my belief be emulated by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in the manner in which they lead and manage schools particularly, in multiple-deprived rural contexts. A qualitative study conducted by Brubaker (2013) found that both ubuntu and servant leadership are strongly and positively related to school leader or principal effectiveness. This empirical compatibility provides a fertile ground for rural schools to benefit immensely in terms of its learner performance and educators' spirit of togetherness (teamwork) and the rooting out of various forms of corruption and other malpractices. Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) concur with my above assertion and emphasise that a school principal, Departmental Head or educator who subscribe to and enacts *ubuntu* leadership practices will not take part in illicit behaviours such as prostitution, delinquency, bribery and corruption. In addition, Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) opine that *ubuntu* philosophy underscores the true African thought of acceptable ideas and deeds (action) in school leadership. To put it more plainly, *ubuntu* has the ability to talk to school principals, Departmental Heads, educators, non-educators (support staff) and even learners' academic and professional consciences to be punctual, have good and regular attendance (to be always present), be prepared for lessons, to have incessant endeavour to provide quality teaching and learning, to be always in class (honour their teaching and learning periods), always maintain good human relationships with colleagues, respect one another and school management, no fraudulent tests and examination marks, no inappropriate educator-learner relationships, and many more. I totally disagree with some critics who believe that due to its cultural homogeneity, *ubuntu* leadership philosophy may not be easily universally applied (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013).

Inarguably, there is an increasing number of literatures that seeks to clarify the roles that principals, Departmental Heads and educators are supposed to play in the leadership of the school (Nosike & Oguzor, 2011). According to Khoza (1994 & 2013), ubuntu (attuned)

leadership as it is characterised by Nelson Mandela's life and presidency, embodies qualities such as individualism, collectivism, insight, inspiration, commitment and probity. These, according to my observation, have gradually been eroded in many rural schools. This is evidenced by a plethora of incidents of unprofessional conduct and defiance by educators in schools.

3.3.1 Collectivism (communalism)

Given the complex terrain of the multiple-deprived rural schools, the principal alone cannot be expected to lead and manage the school effectively and efficiently (Pillay, 2014). For that reason, Hughes, Berryman and Sheen (2014) assert that collective leadership has the ability to develop more school leaders who are capable of participating in leading change through various initiatives in a rural school. More importantly, Bolden (2004) states that ubuntu produces an environment and culture that stimulate high levels of care, creativity, integrity and collective desire for excellence. In addition, Hughes' *et al.,* (2014) conceptualisation of collective leadership is that it is essentially similar to distributed leadership, collaborative leadership, shared leadership and co-leadership. According to Petrov, Bolden and Gosling (2006, p.5), collectivism denotes that "both strategic and operational responsibility and influence are taken at all levels within the organisation from top-level strategic initiatives to the delivery of programmes. In line with this assertion, Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) believe that collective leadership allows the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to view their colleague managers and educators as assets that can make an immense and positive contribution towards the advancement of the school goals and vision, as opposed to liabilities in the school. Further, this is as Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) call, asset-based leadership approach which addresses the multiple deprivations of schools in rural contexts on the basis that it tends to be inward-looking first before seeking assistance from outside structures. The School Management Teams and educators are supposed to work as a collective and adopt democratic principles in decision making. Khoza (1994) asserts that school leaders should maintain that they are social beings as a consequence; their desires and capabilities are normally influenced by the product of collective wisdom by other educators, non-educators and learners. Collectivism as opposed to individualism refers to various types of social organisations like schools, hospitals, police stations, etc, in which the idea of individualism is regarded as subordinate to a social collectivity (Khoza, 1994).

Furthermore, Bennis (2007, p.3) as cited by James (2011) believes that in actual fact leadership is '*tripod*'- "a leader or leaders, followers and a common goal they want to achieve". Collectivism as an essential value of ubuntu can reduce the level of disunity or divisions, hatred, back-stabbing, clandestine activities and painful social dislocation in schools (Khoza, 1994). These cannot happen because "ubuntu places great importance on working for common good-belonging to a group … in fact on every human being as an integral member of the human race" (Khoza, 1994, p.9). The core business of the school is teaching and learning therefore it should, by its very nature remain sacrosanct and should be free from unnecessary petty, personal and narrow political or unionist squabbles. Some of my colleague principals report that when decisions have been taken by a collective at the level of the School Management Team's meeting, at the next staff meeting, some SMT members dissociate themselves with such decisions and refer to them as school principal's decisions. This apparently, sows disunity among SMT members and creates tensions which impact negatively on teaching and learning activities and further leads to a decline in learner examination results both in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Grade 12 and Annual National Assessments (ANA) Grades 8 and 9. In addition, this is grossly inhumane and paralyses respect and trust among SMT members which in turn, filters down or permeates to educators and learners. Actually, Meylahn and Musiyambiri (2017) aptly present an ideal school leadership and management situation, by asserting that for any school principal, Departmental Head or educator to implement or enact ubuntu leadership philosophy there must be strong community linkages and interdependence, transparency, democracy, responsibility and accountability in multiple-deprived rural schools.

Furthermore, collectivism can bring solutions to the underhand activities by school-based union leaders and other ordinary union members who through their ulterior motives find pleasure causing instability in the school community, thus bringing greater harm to the school's climate and culture. Similarly, there are school principals who do not appreciate and value collective effort but still stuck in the traditional and obsolete way of leadership and management. They draft and adopt school policies without thorough consultation and communication of such school policies. Khoza (1994) states that the school principal, Departmental Heads and educators need to clearly understand and genuinely appreciate humanity's need for dignity, unconditional self-respect and regard for other colleagues.

According to the Moller (2012, p.1), "in a modern society it is reasonable that stakeholders require information about curricular processes and educational results to be reported." As a consequence, collective decision making is good sign of consultation and as Kaufman (2013) posits, it strengthens teamwork. If decisions concerning the curriculum and the improvement of learner performance in a form of National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) are taken unilaterally by either the school principal or Departmental Head that creates confusion and chaos which destabilises the normal functioning of the school. Batho Pele Principles and the South African Schools Act No. 108 of 1996 promote stakeholder collaboration comprising of the school principal, deputy principal, Departmental Heads, educators, union (through the Site Executive Committee), learners (through Representative Council of Learners or RCL), School Governing Body and parents. The biggest question is how school principals, Departmental Heads and educators execute the societal mandate as stipulated in legislation (Moller, 2012). The truth is that the principal is one actor in a collective leadership of the school which is one of the reasons why he or she cannot act alone. In support of this assertion, Contractor, De Church, Carson, Carter and Keegan (2012) emphasise the notion that multiple educators or school Management Team (SMT) are charged with the responsibility of enacting leadership in schools. To put it more plainly, leadership is a social group activity (Contractor, *et al.,* 2012). Petrov, Bolden and Gosling (2006) attach major significance to collectivism by arguing that leadership needs to be distributed or dispersed to other colleagues in the school rather than to allow it to reside within the traits and capabilities of officially appointed school principals, deputy principals, Departmental Heads and educators. My experience tells me that most rural school educators including SMT members normally complain about the fact that they are not given information and they are not consulted when decisions such as budgetary processes, procurement and drafting of policies are taken by their management and SGB or SGB subcommittees. Contrary to the prevailing circumstances, Bolden (2004) does not mince his words when contending that the school principal should ask more questions rather than giving answers; provide equal opportunities for his or her colleagues to lead and also provide the necessary support to other leaders within the school.

3.3.2 Insight

According to Aslanargun (2012), school leadership, namely: management and administration is a phenomenon produced by organisational culture more than individual activity since it is shaped in life and similarly, it is part of life. Ubuntu leadership approach forms part of an African

culture which is highly sought after in rural schools. Hence, Robinson's (2007) concurrence is based on the fact that school leadership effects more often than not, vary greatly depending on the particular type of institutional leadership practice under consideration. Bolden (2004) contends that it is apparent that leadership has always and still continues to be perceived as a highly contested terrain in politics, economics, religion and education. In addition, Aslanargun (2012) is of the view that the school principal, Departmental Heads and educators as instructional leaders are responsible for both internal and external activities which are related to educators, learners, curriculum, teaching-learning process, environment, parents and the community. For that reason, any knowledge deficiency and lack of adequate understanding of school leadership, management and administration can be very disastrous for schools as organisations. Ubuntu does not tolerate mediocrity or underperformance. To underscore that argument, Kolzow (2014) posits that school leadership generally necessitates a good degree of authority and decisiveness, consequently, a leadership style that lacks these qualities (characteristics) has no room or space for improvement. According to Boateng (2012), leadership is associated with various connotations and is perceived as synonymous with other equally complex terms such as power, authority, management, administration and supervision.

A clear understanding of school leadership, especially in rural schools is very crucial, hence, Schoenburg (2004) argues that if all school principals, DHs and educators can be armed with insight and knowledge in order to be in a position to adequately respond to any leadership crisis that arises in a school situation. Wallace Foundation (2005) adds that as professionals and school leaders, principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to be proactive and confident with the leadership mantle and all that comes with it. Khoza (2013) believes that school principals are expected to see the world from the colleagues' vantage point and embrace their ideas in a manner that is non-judgemental. He further adds that attuned leaders display passion and compassion in their school work including management and administration (Khoza, 2013). School leadership, in these challenging times is more demanding, as a result, it requires a principal with an extensive knowledge and vast experience in leadership and management in order to transform multiple deprived rural schools and turn them into viable and effective institutions of learning. Hence, Hay Group (2015) asserts that school leadership cannot be equated to a black box. Further, there is a belief that there is a greater need to get the essence of leadership into the hands, heads and hearts of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators (Hay Group, 2015).

The reality is that leadership forms part of the scarce intellectual capital. Even the guru in ubuntu leadership Khoza (2012) agrees that ubuntu philosophy is importantly transformative in the sense that it has the capacity to direct schools towards an 'ethics of care'. As a result, when the SMT members and educators feel that their school principal displays ubuntu leadership approach and care for them in terms of the provision of teaching and learning resources, they develop a sense of trust. Contrary to Bolden's (2004) view, that despite the fact that the link between effective school leadership and performance is often taken for granted, worthy empirical evidence of this relationship is scarce. However, that invariably, provides an impetus in their endevour to deliver quality teaching and learning and also improved learner outcomes. Consistent with the above assertion, Masters (2016) accentuates the achievement of improved learner performance (outcomes) is a principal objective of every school and education system. This author further contends that insight or intellectual capital comprises of knowledge, skills of school leaders and educators whose value is enhanced by those school leaders and educators' willingness to perform their leadership and teaching tasks with passion, dedication and loyalty (Pillay, 2014).

3.3.3 Inspiration

A school leader that enacts ubuntu leadership perspective endeavours to inspire his or her colleagues to work tirelessly to serve the public and also transform the organisation. According to Burton (2012), inspiration is the activity of getting educators and other SMT members to act on a situation and work harder to achieve both personal and organisation goals. For that reason, inspiration is one of the critically scarce skills that school managers need to demonstrate in their leadership, management and administration in all schools, particularly, rural schools. Hence, Ames (1990) posits that motivation is actually one of the challenges often cited by educators. Its significance cannot be overemphasised because it provides an impetus, passion and morale to educators in order to achieve their common goal or objective of serving the people and providing quality public education. The reality is that educational systemic problems demoralise educators and lead to mass resignations, high failure rate and rampant corruption. Ramachandran (2005) found that motivation and accountability among educators, DHs and school principals is a huge problem. The school principal, Departmental Heads and educators who have adopted attuned leadership accord their colleagues, learners and parents that they serve with a value of self-worth, pride and in current status (situation) and optimism in the future of the organisation. In addition, he cautions the scholars that in the relationship between the school principal and his colleagues

such as Departmental Heads and educators, it is important to strike a balance between the reality and potentiality (Khoza, 2013). Schoenburg (2004) opines that the ability to manage transformation and also lead during a potential leadership crisis necessitates the skill and ability to adapt professional behaviours and various messages that can change schools into effective organisations. Similarly, various kinds of motivation, behaviours and leadership styles (approaches) come together to create the organisational climate (Hay Group, 2015).

According to Bolden (2004), school leadership is a totally complex phenomenon which is linked to many other significant organisational, social and personal processes. That is one of the reasons why Nosike and Oguzor (2011) argue that the position of the school principal as a leader in a school situation cannot be overemphasised because every DH and educator look forward to principals to provide appropriate leadership for their colleagues to follow. As a consequence, Bolden (2004) further adds that leadership depends on a process of influence, whereby school principals, DHs and educators are inspired to work towards group goals, not through coercion but through person motivation (Bolden, 2004). This argument arises from the premise that there is adequate observational evidence that a greater number of school principals, DHs and educators are leaving the teaching profession either as early retirement or resignations. Some of them cite demotivation and the work related frustrations stemming from both the level of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and schools. This led to Ritz (2007) noting that the higher the civil service motivation, the higher the school's internal efficacy. Martin, McCormack, Fitzsimons and Spirig (2014) share the same vein and emphasise that having a common vision assists school leaders and their colleagues to become inspired and committed to a shared goal. As a consequence, Ramachandran (2005) contends that school principals, DHs and educators who demonstrate sufficient motivation or inspiration show low absenteeism and late coming rate, maintain learner discipline, keep proper and accurate records, gather and report on the data, utilise funds with prudence and engage in effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Stirling (2014) identifies two types of motivation, namely: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that the school principal can build on to achieve successful school leadership. Further, intrinsic motivation comes from within the school principal, DH or educator and does not involve any stimulus or reward while extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors and is linked to incentives or benefits (Stirting, 2014). The aim of inspiring colleagues is to increase organisational productively such as teaching and learning as public service.

Actually, the lack of inspiration among principals, DHs and educators is what I have observed in the past few years. This is in stark contrast to Kolzow's (2014) line of thinking that school principals must be able to inspire their colleagues if they want to maintain their credibility among staff members and this seems to suggest that they need to have something worthy of inspiration to communicate to the entire school community. As result, it is also my firm belief that some of the educators who chose teaching profession as a last resort or those who did other diplomas or degrees and eventually complemented them with Post Graduate Certificate (PGC) do not have passion for teaching. It becomes very difficult for them to heed Boateng's (2012) call that school principals, DHs and educators are supposed to behave in a manner that motivates their colleagues and learners. This also has ability to lead to their underperformance or mediocrity. Boateng (2012) adds that school principals, DHs and educators have a responsibility to inspire their colleagues to envision promising and attractive future states, which the colleagues can ultimately envision for themselves. This is the main reason why Choy (2005) asserts that, according to him, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations describe the purpose in which an educator engages with a task or duty. In this day and age it not rare to find an educator whose learners have less amount of written class works, unmarked exercise books, incomplete Continuous Assessment Tasks (CASS) grid. This is totally un-Africa and contrary to ubuntu philosophy and it shows an inexplicable disregard for the school principal, DH or educator's calling (teaching profession). They always demand inspiration or motivation from outside the school. In response to this anomaly, Burton (2012) identifies four forms of motivations, namely, intrinsic (the drive comes from within), extrinsic (the educator does the work because he or she is paid for it), introjected (the educator does the work solely because he or she wants to sustain his or her family) and identified motivation (the educator does the work because it is what he or she wants to do) that most of the public (civil) servants need for them to be equal to the task and to truly display ubuntu and servanthood in rural schools. I am therefore, convinced that intrinsic motivation is better inspiration that resonates very well with ubuntu leadership approach on the basis that, firstly, it comes from the heart, secondly, it seeks to care and serve others, thirdly, and last it is neither driven by money or greed.

3.3.4 Commitment

The expectation of society especially, the poor rural communities is that the school principals, DHs and educators who have been assigned to teach, uplift and enlighten their children would have ubuntu and transformation at the heart of their agenda. Khoza (2013) is of the opinion that

all school stakeholders, namely, school principal, Departmental Heads and educators are required to pursue the agreed course of action and remain flexible in order to respond to changes in the school environment including colleagues' expectations. Understandably, it is a universal belief that educators play an important role in the delivery of quality public education and the attainment of educational goals in any country (Betweli, 2013). As a result, they are expected to shoulder the responsibility for maintaining high standards in education, by transmitting national ubuntu values and norms to learners by teaching them and also by being good role models to them (Betweli, 2013). In fact, commitment to a common goal of effective teaching and learning which demonstrate ubuntu values should be what school principals, DHs and educators live by. In terms of educator quality, my experience in leadership and management has taught me and even Mfaume and Bilinga (2017) acquiesce to the opinion that educator quality does not simply refer to academic and professional qualifications and training status alone. In addition, it encompasses commitment, dedication and ethical behaviour. School principals who enact ubuntu leadership approach have the capacity, through their commitment, to transform multiple deprived rural schools into centres of excellence. Commitment can be demonstrated through punctuality, regular attendance and being an active participant in all the teaching and learning programmes intended to turn rural organisations in performing and professional malpractice free schools.

According to Schoenburg (2004), school leadership and management matter more than ever, as schools and educators are met with enhanced scrutiny and scepticism from different stakeholders such as educator unions, Department of Education, parents, youth formations and civil society. On the basis that education is a 'public good' therefore school leaders must fulfil their contractual obligations by committing to enhancing their level of commitment, which in turn, can improve the quality of teaching and learning. Understandably, I concur with Msila (2014) when stating that underperforming schools should inject a certain set of values in order to steer the institution to success. One of these values is none other than commitment to a good course which is their calling. Furthermore, school principals, DHs and educators need to subscribe to the idea of developing their colleague educators as leaders so that that can increase their commitment and responsibility towards their school (Msila, 2014).

3.3.5 Probity

> *The unethical behaviour of leaders can be compared to the formation of tornadoes, a "perfect storm" resulting from the combinative effect of rotating winds, temperature*

and atmospheric pressure. Similarly, unethical behaviour of leaders occurs when a conflux of factors interact between leaders (rotating winds), followers (colliding hot and cold temperatures) and the situational context (atmospheric conditions), catalysed by critical incident or trigger event that pulls everything into the centre, similar to the vortex of a tornado.

(Chandler, 2009, p.69)

There is need to distinguish good leadership from bad leadership. To deny the distinction in serious discourse is akin to a medical school that would claim to teach health while ignoring disease.

(Khoza, 2013, p.3)

The notion that, 'see no evil and hear no evil' is unethical and actually exacerbates the leadership crisis that multiple deprived rural schools and communities are confronted with day-in-and day-out. Cordeiro (2003) invariably, sounds an alarm by asserting that the decline in ethics is very bad for rural schools and reflects a clear and unjustifiable erosion of the principles necessary for an ordered and functional modern technical society and schools as learning organisations. Khoza (2013) defines ethics as a subset of morality which has something to do with moral obligation relating to the practice of a profession like teaching. In addition, Khoza (2013) characterises ubuntu leadership as the one that reflects significant features such as probity, humility, integrity and humanness, which in turn, create a good school climate and culture of good leadership and management, governance and teaching and learning. In their studies on 'Ethical and unethical leadership' and also 'The imperativeness of transparency and probity in Nigerian public service', Brown and Mitchell (2010); Osezua and Julius (2013) define probity as complete honesty, trustworthiness and reliability which serve as virtues of good stewardship, accountability and trust. Furthermore, ubuntu leadership demands that the school principal, Departmental Heads and educators assure their colleagues, learners and parents that they are prepared to be held accountable (Khoza, 2013).

According to my observation as a civil servant and a school principal, probity is a very expensive and scarce currency in the field of leadership and management in the 21st century. Chandler (2009) in the above extract from his study titled; 'The perfect storm of leaders' unethical behaviour' explains how unethical leadership conduct plays itself out in schools and he

likened that to the factors that cause a tornado. This further paints a picture of the enormity of the problem in schools and the fact that it permeates and affects almost the entire staff of educators if it is not addressed as speedily as possible. Schoenburg (2014) accentuates that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators today are facing an enormous and difficult test of character. Hence, ubuntu worldview (philosophy) has the ability to have a positive impact when its core and concomitant principles are enacted effectively in leading rural schools in multiple deprived contexts.

According to Ankers (1986), when school leaders think of ethics, they should think not just as school principals, DHs and educators focusing of organisational ethics, but as citizens of a larger society. Cordeiro (2003, p.4) lends unwavering support of this line of thinking through his contention that in practice, ethics is not something that a school principal, DH or educator 'does' but it is something the school leader 'is' both in a school and community. There is no doubt that probity enhances mutual trust and confidence in the ethics of the school (Ankers, 1986). A dishonest and immoral school leadership is an embarrassment both to the school and the entire society. Hence, Cordeiro (2003) underscores the point that schools normally adopt and follow the displayed ethics, styles and methods of their school principal, DHs and educators. The school principal, Departmental Heads and educators' lack of probity or ethics destroys the level of respect and the ability to co-exist in a school environment. To lend weight to this narrative, Betweli (2013) asserts that educators are the most significant elements in producing quality education, thus they are all expected to abide by the professional code of ethics. In addition, Betweli (2013) argues that despite such values and significance attached to educators and the teaching profession, there are professional misdemeanours and lack of integrity amongst educators that seem to be incompatible with the goals towards the delivery of quality education.

Some of the challenges of school leadership are as a result of the Department of Education's unavailability of a well structured and clearly articulated policy on staff selection and appointments that recognises the high university qualifications as a prerequisite for appointment to the position of the school principal. The Departmental officials and organised labour heavily rely on this loophole to justify the appointment of incompetent and unsuitably qualified Circuit Managers, school principals, DHs and educators. Luckily, Newman (2005) identifies both personal and professional values that guide school leaders' leadership practices, namely: care, respect, social justice and excellence. For a person to become a school principal or DH, the

minimum requirement in terms of qualifications is matric plus three (M+3 or REQV 13) years of training as a professional educator. Some rural schools still continue to have both under qualified and unqualified educators. The issue of under-qualified and un-qualified educators is not a problem that is confined only to South Africa, even in America, there are secondary school educators who teach subjects which are not their specialisation (major subjects) (Ingersoll, 1999). Similarly, as it happens in KwaZulu-Natal, the author adds that in America a third of secondary school educators who offer pure Mathematics neither have a major nor a minor or ancillary in Mathematics (Ingersoll, 1999). However, the Department of Education should know better that education is gradually becoming more scientific and complex due to the changes in the curriculum.

In addition, school leadership is handicapped by various professional malpractices, of which some go unnoticed and unreported. Corruption and nepotism (cronyism) also play a role in the appointment of ill-equipped or incompetent school principals, DHs and even post level 1 educators because of the so called 'jobs-for-cash' saga (Department of Basic Education: Ministerial Task Team, (2016). Fu (2015) adds that educators' qualifications and merits are not considered during the appointment processes. As a result, incompetent and unqualified educators are the major reasons for various people's negative images of nepotism and cronyism (Shapiro & Stofkovich, 2011). More importantly, Aslanargun's (2012) educated opinion is that it is critical that leaders value performance evaluation, experience, human relations, training course, professional competencies and senior degree as extra qualifications in addition to interviews for being eligible for becoming principal. Luckily, Robinson (2007) articulates it more vividly, that capabilities describe what principals, DHs and educators need to be able to do and to be, execute particular duties and responsibilities in a rural school. In addition, Yones (2009) argue that the main reason for under-performance is not the lack of leadership knowledge, but rather negative internal school politics. There are many potential or aspiring school principals, deputy principals and Departmental Heads who are currently imbued with the spirit of despondency because of corruption, favouritism and nepotism (cronyism) in relation to promotion posts. The National Minister's Task Team (2016) reports that educator union members either individually or in different formations exert undue influence in the appointment of educators in order to benefit certain individuals' selfish interests.

Furthermore, the Task Team (2016) report recorded that the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) is alleged to be in *de facto* control in six South African provinces except Free State, Western Cape and Northern Cape. I agree with Serfontein and de Waal (2015) that on the basis that no leadership exists without power, school leaders should be held accountable to the power that be, who gave them authority as well as led, namely: colleagues, learners and parents. This happens in collusion with school principals, Departmental Officials or even School Governing Bodies. Brown (2007) contends that the principal, DHs and educators' character influences their ethical performance in rural schools. Hence, Meier (2004) believes that the valuable professional and academic talent is lost unnecessarily due to the fact that educators secure promotion posts on the basis of bribes, manipulation, nepotism (cronyism) and favouritism as opposed to merit deprive KwaZulu-Natal province of competent school principals, deputy principals, Departmental Heads and even Post Leven 1 educators. Unsurprisingly, Meier (2004, p.2) adds by cautioning the readers that "if an education system is not built on the concept of meritocracy, honesty and fairness, a country endangers its social, economic and political future." Based on this line of thinking, there is a general belief that the combination of the lack of ethics and incompetence seem to increase the likelihood of school leadership failures (Adams & Balfour, 2007).

I share Adams and Balfour's (2007) wisdom that good principals should avoid the radicalism of rule-bound conduct as well as undermining the rule of law with personal judgements and interests. It can, under no circumstances be overstatement that all school leaders have a responsibility and obligation to guard against unethical professional behaviours that can tarnish the image of the school and teaching as a noble profession. Notwithstanding the fact that some school principals, DHs and educators are religious people, it is also universally accepted that no one is infallible or even immune against educational misconduct. For that reason, Adams and Balfour (2007) argue that one can be a good and responsible school principal, DH or educator and at the same time commit or contribute to acts of administrative evil. In essence, administrative evil is often masked in many distinct ways, but the common characteristic is that principals and educators can engage in acts of evil without knowing that they are in fact doing anything at all wrong (Adams & Balfour, 2007).

In addition, Etica (2017) recognises that teaching is a noble profession and asserts that ethical school principals, DHs and educators are capable of taking ethical decisions, especially, when it

involves the utilisation of power against other educators, learners and parents. With a multiplicity of school principals, DHs and educators behaving so badly, Brown (2007) observes that a plethora of questions come to mind: Why have some of our school principals, DHs and educators demonstrated poor ethical school leadership? Were these civil servants good educators gone bad? Or were these public servants rotten to the core right from the beginning? Brown (2007), further, hastens to aver that most people would concur that ethical school principals, DHs and educators are individuals who normally do the right thing, even when it seems unpopular. Igbuzor (2011) shares the same vein by arguing that for schools to deliver effectively on their educational and legal mandate in a so corrupt society, they should institutionalise some mechanisms for probity and accountability. Undoubtedly, ubuntu values can foster professional connection or relationship between the School Management Teams (SMTs), educators and learners so that there cannot be "us" and "them" (Manala, 2014).

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter centred around the discussion of two theoretical frameworks, namely: servant leadership theory utilising Russell and Stone's (2002) Model and attuned or ubuntu leadership theory utilising Khoza's (2003, 2012 & 2013) Model. In addition, I specifically presented and discussed some servant leadership functional attributes such as vision, trust, honesty, integrity, service and empowerment and three accompanying attributes, such as communication, teaching and listening, followed by attuned leadership qualities such as collectivism, insight, inspiration, commitment and probity as expounded by Russell and Stone (2002) and Khoza (2003, 2012 & 2013) respectively. What was more significant about servant leadership was that school principals, DHs and educators should be willing to serve their school communities before their desire to lead them (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002). Furthermore, ubuntu leadership philosophy emphasises the important values, morals and school community justice which promotes fair and just multiple-deprived rural school administration. This leadership theory finds expression in the South African Constitution, Act, No. 108 of 1996, particularly, Chapter 2 (Bill of Rights) which deals with human rights. The principal pillar, as Khoza (1994) correctly puts it, is that it places the educators, learners and parents at the centre of everything pertaining to school curriculum delivery and management. Central to African Humanism philosophy is the strong belief that a person is a person through other people, meaning, "I am because they are and they

are because I am" (Khoza, 1994, p.8). Williams and Jones' (2009) research findings demonstrate that servant leadership provides a conceptual framework that can prove beneficial in leading and managing schools during these challenging and changing times. Likewise, as Msila (2014) passionately opines, that a school leadership that uses *ubuntu* as a basis of its management, ensures that a brand new culture of inclusiveness or collectivism is promoted in a multiple deprived rural school. This study has also revealed that servant leadership together with attuned (African Humanism or ubuntu) leadership may, indeed bring about remarkable improvement of the day-to-day management and administration of the multiple-deprived rural schools through the enactment of their attributes or qualities.

Finally, the next chapter comprises of a comprehensive presentation of my study's research design and methodology carefully chosen to guide my entire thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In my previous chapter, I presented and discussed the theoretical framework that was carefully chosen to underpin the study on servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. In this chapter, I introduce, present and discuss the essential facets of research that undergird my study such as research paradigm from ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological philosophical assumptions, research design, research methodology, convenience research population selection, data generation methods, data analysis, ethical issues, and issues of trustworthiness, triangulation techniques and the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes by explaining the two prominent methodological limitations within which my study works.

4.2 Research paradigm

Maree (2007) defines research paradigm as a combination of assumptions or beliefs about a significant truth or phenomenon that leads to a construction of a particular world view, whereas, Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Schwandt (2015) define a research paradigm as a world view, a general perspective, a manner of breaking down the complexity of the real world that shapes the study. According to Creswell (2009), there are four paradigms in research, namely, social construction (interpretivism), positivism, advocacy / participatory and pragmatism. My study was underpinned by interpretivism paradigm. Light and Cox (2001), as cited by Sharp (2013), advance an argument that the constructivist view holds an understanding that study participants do not have pre-installed knowledge about the phenomenon, and that knowledge, researcher's criteria and techniques for understanding it and the disciplines to which it contributes, is 'socially constructed.' I did not intend, during the course of conducting this study to be guided by the assumption that the truth only exists in the space where multiple Venn diagram converge. I preferred to be more honest and accept that some of the truth may be obtained in various points or places where the circles do not converge (Sofaer, 1999). Understandably, my study is shaped on the premise of the understanding that participants only learn about the reality or truth that is being sought through research, within their own context and what they learn may not necessarily

be of value to a wider community of the researched, hence, this research explored servant leadership in multiple deprived rural contexts (Sharp, 2013). Like in quantitative methodology, interpretivism allowed me to be transformative in approach and pursue the direction of increased methodological and theoretical pluralism (Poon, 2005).

According to Scotland (2012) and Ahmed (2008), a paradigm consists of various components such as ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and methods. As noted by Patel (2005), these are fundamental elements which must be taken into consideration pre/during and post any study. The ontological assumptions of any study have to do with the nature of reality or what the reality is (Krauss, 2005; Teddie & Tashakkori, 2009; Scotland, 2012). In other words, ontological assumptions are a participant's worldview of the (reality or truth) phenomenon under investigation. Ormston, *et al*., (2013) refer to it as the belief about the nature of reality and what really is there to know about the social world. For that reason, there are normally two prominent worldviews, namely, subjective (constructivist) and objectivist (positivist) worldviews. Thanh and Thanh (2015) argue that interpretive studies are normally more subjective than objective in the process of the interpretation of the reality. Even Stern (2004) underscores that constructivists dispute the notion of the possibility of objective knowledge about the reality in research. Chowdhury (2014) adds that both positivism and sociology were invented in the 18th century by French Philosopher, Auguste Comte. The ontological assumptions of my study are that there are multiple truths (realities) (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). As a consequence, the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators shared with me as a researcher, subjective multiple perspectives and versions of truth about servant leadership in rural school contexts (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Mack (2010) shares the same view and avers that interpretivist paradigm is at times called constructivism because it accepts the belief that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators as study participants have an ability to socially construct and interpret the meaning of the concept of servant leadership. As a consequence, interpretivism is referred to as 'anti-positivist' because it was invented in a response or reaction to positivism (Mack, 2010).

Maree (2012) puts it correctly that at its centre; the epistemological paradigm gives a frame of reference for obtaining and communicating knowledge to readers. On the basis of these views, I concur with Lincoln and Guba (1985) that the concept of truth or reality is regarded by research scholars as an elusive one. I fully agree with Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape (2013) when they argue that it is vitally important to know that there is no possibility for the existence of a

single, accepted way of conducting qualitative research. Hence, there are divergent views or 'schools of thought' pertaining to the existing number of paradigms in research, which leads to what researchers refer to as 'paradigm wars' (Anderson & Herr, 2012; Rhein, 2013; Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2013). Anderson and Herr (2012) argue that certain epistemological positions will be more of a threat to organisations than others will, and institutional structures and politics will, to some extent, determine the epistemological positions that can be explicitly and safely advanced. Even Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that struggles with the concept of truth are normally viewed as old as humankind. Scotland (2012) contends that it cannot be possible to conduct any research without implicitly declaring the ontological and epistemological positions of the study. It was also my belief that meaning is not accidentally or coincidentally discovered but reality (truth) is socially constructed through meaningful interaction between language and aspects of an independent world and, for the purpose of the research, the involvement of the researcher and the participants (Scotland, 2012).

Interpretivist paradigm's main tenet is that the study can never be objectively observed from the outside, rather it should be observed from inside through the direct experience of the participants (Mack, 2010). Interpretivist researchers hold a general assumption that research should be conducted with participants in the real world where they live and work (Creswell, 2009). One of the great disadvantages of positivism is that it has been continuously associated with narrow social interests and the blatant exercise of power from above (Poon, 2005). This renders it inappropriate for exploring human behaviour which cannot be explained in quantifiable and measurable terms (Roshan & Deeptee, 2009). The National Association of Secondary School Principals and National Association of Elementary School Principals (2013) hold a view that school leadership matters and the real behaviours and priorities of efficient and effective leaders have become clearer now than they have always been. This, therefore, underscores a greater necessity for interpretivist paradigm that accommodates school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' servant leadership conceptualisations, behaviours, practices and challenges. Scotland (2012) posits that it is not possible to conduct any type of study without declaring the ontological and epistemological positions which guide it. Maree (2012) argues that interpretivism is the main philosophical tradition which underpins qualitative studies. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), it is the selection of research paradigm that attributes or ascribes the intent (aim), motivation and expectations of the research. The interpretivism was selected to undergird this study based on the belief and understanding that school principals, Departmental

Heads and educators do not have any knowledge of the world independently of how they interact with it in their context (Mbokazi, 2013).

Furthermore, the adoption of the interpretive paradigm is evidenced by Howe's (1998) assertion that positivist approach to social and educational studies has been on the decline, whereas interpretivism has been on the sharp rise. As a consequence of this interpretive concept the old debate or discourse between positivism and interpretivism has lessened its intensity only to be substituted by a new debate within interpretivism. Chowdhury (2014) holds the view that interpretivism is rooted in the philosophical conventions of hermeneutics and phenomenology and the German sociologist, Max Weber is normally credited with being the pioneer and the central influence. As a result, I do not believe in a philosophy that there is an objective independent law of nature that can apply to qualitative studies and to which human life can be subjected and that it is the sole purpose of any research to discover and describe these objective laws (Maree, 2007). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) concur with Maree (2007) and insist that interpretivist paradigm's central aim is to comprehend the subjective world of human experiences and meanings making of the reality under microscope. Clearly, these constitute the social world of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators and further linked to human knowledge, human behaviour and subjective world of a person's experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Maree, 2007).

Interpretivism originated from Immanuel Kant who published the 'Critique of Pure Reason' in 1781, where he argued that knowledge can also be acquired from the participants' understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon under the microscope, in addition to the established tradition or philosophy of direct observation (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2013). It is often theoretically understood that interpretivist paradigm permits scholars to see the world through the perspectives and experiences of research participants (Thanh, & Thanh, 2015). Consequently, there is a general belief that human knowledge determines the social world of the participants, therefore school principals, Departmental Heads and educators will tell their own story about the phenomenon of servant leadership (Maree, 2007). Personally, the choice of interpretivism research paradigm was rooted in my experience and ontological position that there are multiple truths in any school situation and the epistemological position that social reality is socially constructed by study participants themselves (Maree, 2007). Furthermore, this selection is embedded in the epistemological perspective that truth, whether subjective or not, can be

generated from the participants using their own perceptions, personal experiences and feelings through their own voices, behavioural observations and also documented information for the researcher to analyse through content analysis, interpret and then present credible findings, conclusions and recommendations.

In addition, it is common knowledge, as Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape (2013) correctly aver that social science is clearly shaped by two broad overarching ontological positions, namely, realism and idealism. My idea of making a huge shift from positivist paradigm is that it is characteristically based on the assumption of realism. Realism in its true nature is based on the belief that there is an external reality or truth which exists independently of the study participants' beliefs about or actual understanding of it (Ormston, *et al*., 2013). In my view there is no truth about the existence or non-existence of servant leadership that originates on its own in rural schools and not attached to human being as school principals, Departmental Heads and educators. As a Christian, I hold the firm view that God commanded man to rule over both scientific and social worlds. Genesis One, verses 29 and 30 tells us that God told Adam to rule over all the animals and plants of the earth (Holly Bible, 1991). Logically, this passage teaches us that even the human activities like leadership or servant leadership is socially constructed by principals, Departmental Heads and educators in rural schools. Understandably, this study holds a paradigmatic position or assumption that there is no distinction between the way the social world (servant leadership) looks like, and the meaning and interpretation of that reality (servant leadership) held by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators as my study participants (Scotland, 2012). Furthermore, interpretivism was seen as appropriate for this study because it is compatible with transformative assumption that accepts the multiple-faceted nature of reality (Mertens, 2015). Secondly, idealism assumes that there is no external truth that exists independent of the study participants' beliefs and understandings of servant leadership (Phothongsunan, 2010; Ormston, *et al*., 2013). Analogically, Scotland (2012) argues that nobody can call a tree a tree if there is no one who really calls it a tree in any research environment. In addition, he claims that meaning is not just discovered but it is qualitatively constructed through the interaction between the participants' consciousness and the life- world.

The epistemological philosophy of any research has to do with the nature of knowledge and how it is created, acquired and communicated to the research consumers or readers or how we come to know the truth or reality (Krauss, 2005; Scotland, 2012; Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape,

2013). For the purpose of this study, the plurality or multiplicity of truths was known through interaction with my study participants and listening to the narratives of their perceptions and lived experiences of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. Semi-structured interviews and documents analysis played a vital role in this exercise. Hence, Bolden and Kirk (2005) argue that the view that the researcher or interviewer with a grand approach and shrewd questions (bait on the hook) can manage to bring out responses that have already been formed in the interviewee's mind (to catch the fish) cannot be satisfactory in this context for two prime reasons: it tends to make the interviewee (participant) passive and presume that answers exist. Essentially, as they further note, the story of the research interviewee (primary narrator's) lived experience is formulated and shared with or told to the researcher.

Further, Schwandt (2015) defines axiology as the study of what matters are good and how good they are, or a theoretical study of value. More essentially, axiology is concerned with the values that need to be attached to participants as human beings (Hill, 1984; Mertens, 2015). This seemed to suggest that the way in which we view the world or servant leadership as a phenomenon under microscope in qualitative studies should not be divorced from humanistic values. In addition, values in research are foundational and essential for knowledge-producing systems and projects (Hill, 1984). As a result, values are intricately incorporated in all the methodological decisions on how the study should proceed until its completion. The notion that 'Black life does not matter' does not exist. For that reason, I attached value to the lives of my study participants and also valued the narratives as part of their lived experiences of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. As noted by Sofaer (1999), qualitative research clarifies the significance of values, language and meanings attributed to study participants who play various roles in school management and administration. For me, qualitative studies stand out because researchers are sensitive to the social, religious, psychological, emotional and physical needs and vulnerability of participants. For that reason, axiologically, researchers should disclose their values in the research. Mertens (2015) concurs that respect is critical in relation to the norms of interaction with study participants and across cultural groups. Rural areas are normally disadvantaged and peripherally marginalised; therefore, participants can be easily and negatively affected. It is justifiably correct that they should be valued and accorded respect and dignity that they deserve as human beings and further to that, their narratives should be believed and understood accordingly. Kelliher (2005 agrees that interpretive studies are recognised for their explicit value in providing contextual depth and my

study sought to achieve exactly that to avoid any vagueness but acknowledge its ambiguity in nature.

Methodology relates to why, what, from where, when (date or duration), and how data is generated, presented and analysed (Scotland, 2012). In other words, this has to do with how I, as a researcher had, in practical terms to acquire what I think can or should be known.

4.3 Research design

A research design means a detailed plan of events which serves as a foundation that maps out the direction a research has to pursue towards its successful completion (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maree, 2007; De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the design is a blueprint that outlines the processes or stages that need to be followed more or less literally during the process of conducting a study. Maree (2007) and Lincoln and Guba's (1985) conceptualise 'research design' as a plan, structure and strategy which details various aspects of research, such as paradigm, methodology, research instruments (data generating methods), selection of the research population and data analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) add that a research design is a well-thought of and final statement of how the study will be conducted, even those phases that may prove to be difficult. In actual fact, a research design can be described as a method for achieving the goals of the study (Flick, 2007). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) state that there are various designs in research, such as survey, experiment, ethnography, action research, case study and testing and assessment. The choice of the research design is determined by the research paradigm and methodology.

The design that underpinned this study was a 'case study' because it is appropriate for qualitative studies (Rule & John, 2011; Emmel, 2013; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013). Roshan and Deeptee (2009) argue that a case study research is useful for studying rare or complex realities such as successes and failures of organisations. As a result, on the basis that servant leadership (Batho Pele) appears not to be popular in many governmental organisations including schools, a case study design was more appropriate for my study. Further, the motivation for a case study design was that it has an ability to adapt to a multiplicity of methodological frameworks such as ethnographic research, phenomenology, grounded theory and life history (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2011). While Rule and John (2011) identify three case study forms, namely:

case study as a story, case study as word picture and case study as argument, I am also quite conversant with the fact that there are five 'case study models' as a research genre in education as presented by Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013), namely, reflective, longitudinal, cumulative, collective and collaborative. This study utilised a reflective case study model because all the twelve study participants used their voices to share the perspectives of servant leadership (Batho Pele) reflecting on their own experiences, practices and challenges in their multiple deprived rural school contexts (Phelps, 2005; Sharp, 2013). Phelps (2005) defines reflection as a mental process in which the research participants think about their experiences by going back over them. He adds that reflection can be an individual or group activity, hence, this study utilises semi-structured interviews whereby each participant is interviewed to reflect on his or her servant leadership experiences, beliefs, practices and challenges individually. Consequently, I also wrote a reflective account for my reflective journal of what had caught my eye while doing research on site (Sharp, 2013). These accounts were issues relating to servant leadership in terms of participants' experiences, practices and concomitant challenges in the rural school context of this study. It also allows audio-taping for reflection purposes and it provides different kinds of evidence and can also be conducted over a short period of time (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013).

Even though Sofaer (1999) holds a view that a case study research can be conducted over a long term, it does not have to involve continuous immersion in specific setting or group but this case study research was only conducted over a period of three years, from 2016 to 2018. Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) further add that a case study allows a variety of data generation techniques (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Robson (2007); Rule and John (2011) assert that case studies employ a variety of data generation strategies and usually utilise multiple methods in a single study. Robson (2007); Rule and John (2011) assert that case studies employ a variety of data generation strategies or multiple methods in a single study. Further, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there have always been struggles with regard to the understanding of the concept of reality which are as old as humankind. The everyday consciousness of reality and its chameleon-like quality pervade politics, the media and literature. This study sought to argue that servant leadership is an important leadership approach that can provide solutions to some of the educational ills that are facing educational leadership and management of South African rural schools. This was undertaken with a clear perspective that leadership is socially constructed

therefore a qualitative case study design where participants give meaning to their experiences worked better for the purpose and context of this study.

A case study design was further adopted because the study's intention was to describe and interpret the narratives, meanings, opinions, feelings, behaviours, practices and documents in order to obtain a full understanding of the reality of servant leadership from the participants' perspectives (Maree, 2007; 2012). This decision was in line with Emmel's (2013) assertion that the purpose of a qualitative study is to interpret and explain the intricacies of research that sustain cases. According to Rule and John (2011), the case in this context or setting is servant leadership in South African schools especially at Ilembe education district in KwaZulu-Natal. It is a case of four schools, not a case of the whole district or province. That means that the findings may not be generalised to all the schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The cases or units of analysis are school principals, DHs and educators of multiple-deprived rural school contexts. As in line with the case study, the focus within the study is premised on the conceptualisations, practices and challenges of servant leadership and the strategies participants employ to overcome those challenges (Rule & John, 2011).

Robson (2007) further states that in qualitative studies cases are normally studied in their social contexts, and for that reason, the case of servant leadership (Batho Pele) was studied in multiple-deprived rural schools and in predominantly rural education circuits in order to maintain the correct contexts. A case study design allows multiple sources of data (twelve participants and documents) and data generating methods (interviews and documents review) at a particular or specific time and this characteristic, Robson (2007) puts it, assures the research and reader that the claims that are made as findings are indeed trustworthy and worthy of trust. The data was generated through the utilisation of semi-structured interviews and documents review, and eventually subjected to content analysis. One of the foreseen limitations of this case study was that scholars like Rule and John (2011) hold a view that a case study is a research project that deals with a singular event and is limited because the research findings cannot be replicated or generalised.

4.4 Research methodology

There is a general view that there is no universal agreement as to what researchers mean by 'methodology' (Gough, 2002). Nevertheless, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) define 'methodology' as a more generic concept which refers to the general logic and theoretical underpinning or

perspective for a research project. Maree (2012) candidly defines research methodology as strategies or techniques that researchers employ during the sampling, data generation, data documentation and data analysis and interpretation processes in their studies. Gough (2002); Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) are of the opinion that 'methodology' denotes an overall approach or theory of producing knowledge by utilising research and giving a rationale for the way a research proceeds. It is also related to the research paradigm and theoretical frameworks (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Researchers such as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011); Maree (2007); Maree (2012) and Rule and John (2011) state that there are three broad traditions in research, namely: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods.

Similarly, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) posit that a plethora of university studies still discuss research based on 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' methods. Maree (2012); Rule and John (2011) add that the research methodology is determined by the type of data involved in research and type of data analysis utilised. These views corroborate Forlarin's (2013) argument that educational leadership as quantitative and qualitative governance denotes a leadership approach, style and policy which have yielded more dividends or blessings. In addition, there is general view that qualitative studies are characterised by their aims which are related to the understanding of certain aspects of social life and their methods which generate words rather than numbers as data analysis and interpretation (Quinn & Cochran, 2002). As noted by Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2007), if a qualitative study is managed correctly, it can generate rich and valuable data which really reflect the feelings and opinions of the participants concerning the chosen phenomenon or research topic. Qualitative research mode works and accommodates various research designs, such as ethnography, case study, phenomenological study and grounded theory (Maree, 2009). Based on the above, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate and is thus utilised for this study.

Parris and Peachey (2013) conducted a literature review on servant leadership and discovered that servant leadership is often explored both qualitatively and quantitatively and that this leadership phenomenon enjoys an international appeal with research studies having been conducted in 11 countries. This therefore suggests that qualitative methodology has been successfully and empirically tested in various servant leadership studies around the globe. As a result, the choice of the qualitative methodology was informed by the fact that quantitative approach is inappropriate for this study which explores participants' servant leadership

conceptualisations, practices and challenges in multiple deprived rural school contexts because of the domination of numerical inputs and outputs or data (mathematical terms or numbers) and the manipulation of variables (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Garbarino & Hollard, 2009; Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009; Roshan & Deeptee, 2009; Bordens & Abbott, 2014). Poon (2005) further shares my line of thinking that quantitative methodology could not be utilised for this study because, notwithstanding its retooling process in the field, it has not moved the field away from its traditional or conventional monopoly of logical positivism which renders it the central way of knowing or discovering the truth. According to Holland, Thomson and Henderson (2006), qualitative research suits my study because, in their view, it is appropriate for investigating processes through its special attention to context and particularities. In addition, qualitative case studies are highly sensitive to contextual matters and can illuminate significant macro and micro-social processes, for example, the ways in which study participants subjectively negotiate the changes that occur in their lives.

The justification of the utilisation of a qualitative methodology is further clarified by Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) who theoretically assert that qualitative research attempts to develop the explanations of the social reality. In addition, it seeks to assist both the researcher and the reader to understand the social world in which they reside and why certain aspects of the social world (life) are the way they are (Hancock, *et al.,* 2009). Similarly, another advantage of qualitative methodology is that it increases the capacity not only to provide detailed descriptions of events but to comprehend how and why the 'same' phenomena are normally interpreted in varied ways and sometimes also in conflicting manner by different participants (Sofaer, 1999). The researcher further adds that this qualitative study gave a voice to rural school principals, Departmental Heads and, in particular, educators who are viewed as being far down in the hierarchical chain of leadership command (Sofaer, 1999). Last but not the least, a qualitative approach of this research was appropriate on the basis that its significant interests are the personal and organisational lived experiences of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in multiple-deprived rural contexts learnt through the utilisation of my study participants' real voices.

Empirical research shows that the choice of research methodology is normally influenced by various theoretical, methodological, ontological (nature of truth or reality), epistemological (how reality can be known) and axiological (the role of values in research) approaches to research

foundation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Anderson & Herr, 2012). Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) posit that this qualitative research studied human behaviours in their natural settings and focused on participants' different ways of looking at servant leadership as a reality being investigated utilising school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' accounts as data, invariably, without any manipulation of variables. The other clear motivation for the choice of qualitative method was that it is interconnected with my interpretivist paradigm on the basis that it has an interpretive character whose intent is to discover the meanings and understandings that the participants have for the events or activities, namely, servant leadership practices that they experience and the concomitant or naturally accompanying interpretation by the researcher (Hoepfl, 1997; Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

Qualitative methodology is one of the broad traditions of research which can explore human behaviour, thoughts and feelings (Rule & John, 2011). Creswell (2009) states that qualitative research denotes exploring and understanding the meaning those participants ascribe to a social reality or human problem. This study seeks to investigate and comprehend servant leadership as a phenomenon for school principals and educators in challenging and multi-deprived rural contexts, therefore, qualitative approach is appropriate because, as Hoepfl (1997) lucidly puts it, that it utilises a naturalistic approach that seeks to comprehend the reality in context-specific settings. The added advantage of this approach was that it allowed the researcher to utilise theory in various ways (Creswell, 2009). Specifically and uniquely, in this qualitative study, the theory was utilised in a manner that reflected broad explanations for human behaviours, attitudes and further included constructs or hypotheses.

4.5 Research population selection

According to Mack (2010) interpretivist paradigm's principal tenet is that research can never be only objectively observed from outside rather it should be observed from inside through the direct and lived experiences of the participants. Patton (1990) acquiesces in Rule and John's (2011) assertion by postulating that there is a multiplicity of different research strategies for selecting data-rich cases (participants or units of analysis) in qualitative studies. Maree (2007; 2012) and Cohen, *et al.,* (2011) state that these research population selection techniques include extreme or deviant sampling, maximum variation sampling, intensity sampling, typical case sampling, homogeneous sampling, critical case sampling, stratified purposeful sampling,

snowball or chain sampling, theory or operational construct sampling, criterion sampling, confirming and disconfirming sampling cases, purposeful random sampling, opportunistic sampling, sampling politically important cases, combination or mixed purposeful sampling and convenience sampling. Maree (2007) defines sampling as a process utilised by researchers to select a portion of the population of participants (cases or units) for study. According to this study, a sample is a portion of a population of school based educators who work in multiple-deprived rural school contexts in KwaZulu-Natal (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016).

Consequently, this study utilised non-probability convenience research population selection to identify the study participants (units) and research sites to serve in this PhD research project. Mugera (2013); Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) define non-probability sampling as a strategy where the samples (cases) are gathered in a process that does not provide all the individuals (units) in the population with equal chances (equal probability) of being selected. I am fully aware that most research evaluators maintain that it is compulsory for all the researchers to describe how the cases (samples) would differ from the ones that were randomly selected (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Patton (1990) argues that most of the times the evaluators utilising qualitative methods believe that because the sample size they intend studying is too small to allow generalisation, therefore, it does not matter how the participants are selected, hence, they might pick the ones that are easy to access and not expensive to study. In addition, there is a general view that the sampling procedures and decisions should be adequately described, explained and justified so that the readers and peer reviewers as the information consumers can have appropriate context for judging the sample (Patton, 1990). Apart from the fact that convenience population selection saves time and money (Patton, 1990), circumstances compelled me to consider it as my second option because two out of four school principals who had been purposefully selected to serve as study participants declined their participation under the pretext that they were still going to think about it and come back to me. In concurring with my decision, Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) contend that on the basis of the previous knowledge of the population of study participants and specific research purpose, the researcher is at liberty to utilise personal judgement to select a study population. As a consequence, in order to illuminate the practice or non-practice of servant leadership in multiple deprived rural school contexts these school based study participants were put under the scanner so as to share their lived experiences, perceptions, practices and challenges of servant leadership.

The main purpose of the convenience population selection technique was to generate rich data from the research participants who are school principals, Departmental Heads and educators that are currently involved in the implementation of servant leadership and that can be easily accessible to me as a researcher to participate in my study. Further, convenience research population selection was appropriate for this study on servant leadership in order to achieve its objectives stipulated in Chapter One because I only needed two primary schools and two secondary schools. In addition, there is a general observation and belief that servant leadership appears to be a sunset phenomenon rather than a sunrise leadership approach in some multiple-deprived rural schools. Justifiably, I concur with Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) that the selection technique to be utilised depends on the type, nature and purpose or objectives of the study. In addition, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) contend that the quality of the study does not only stand or fall by the suitability of methodology or instrumentation but also by the appropriateness of population selection technique that has been employed. Further, this type of sampling may assist the researcher to generate useful data that cannot be possible through using probability sampling techniques because they require more formal access to lists of populations because the participants are readily available (Cohen, *et al.,* 2011). Convenience (accidental, available, haphazard or opportunity) sampling involves selecting study participants that are nearer or easily accessible (of close proximity to the researcher and easy to recruit) and continue until the required population size has been obtained (Rensburg, Alpaslan, du Plooy, Gelderblom, Eeden & Wigston, 2010; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Mugera, 2013; Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Similarly, a researcher may use his or her knowledge of the population of participants to assess whether or not a certain sample will be representative (Msila, 2008).

This study involved four multiple-deprived rural schools, namely, two secondary and two primary schools. Theoretically, Hallinger (2003) contends that any attempt to explore school leadership like servant leadership without reference to a school context is a futile exercise. My study population comprised of three classes of participants who are made up of one school principal, one Departmental Head (DHs) and one Post Level 1 (PL1) educator per school. In addition, this population had three male school principals, one female school principal, one male Departmental Head, three female Departmental Heads, one male Post Level 1 educator and three female Post Level 1 educators from four different schools. They were of different years of age (between 35 and 58) and between 5 and 30 years of service (teaching and leadership experience). These twelve study participants were conveniently sampled because of their schools' proximity

and their availability. The purpose of selecting three classes of study participants was to assist me as a researcher in mining multiple truths pertaining the to enactment or non-enactment of servant leadership in multiple deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Understandably, the deliberate inclusion of Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 educators was an attempt to ensure that school principals do not enter into a terrain of sugar-coating the servant leadership reality in their primary and secondary schools, thus triangulating their views. In addition, all of them were in multiple deprived rural school contexts and involved in leadership and management. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) assent to the general view that convenience sampling is determined by a myriad of factors such as easy accessibility, availability at required time and willingness to participate in the study.

The reason for choosing three different classes of study participants was for triangulation purposes, such as establishing the truthfulness of each set of participants' views on servant leadership practices expressed by principals in multiple deprived rural schools. Furthermore, to underscore this narrative, Mclnnis, Ramsden and Maconachie (2014) are of the view that solutions to this dilemma revolve around the notion of distributed or shared leadership, collegiality, the necessity to recognise the mutual dependency of various functions and the alignment of management, leadership and individual responsibilities. This is in line with Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford's (2006) point of contention that the sole reliance on school principals as the primary source for generation of data about principalship limits the researchers' understanding. This traditional or conventional thinking is also displayed by Southworth (2008) and Wallace Foundation (2013) who also argue that all the changes that take place in a school situation revolves around the principal as the pivotal manager in a school, as a result, the centrality of the principal remains in the school leadership equation. Likewise, Aslanargun (2012) reports that some scholars challenge the notion that the principal is projected as the centre of exclusive power and authority within an institution instead of sharing that authority with his or her colleague educators in an attempt to accommodate servant leadership and ubuntu leadership. Contrary to this view, Brevis and Vrba (2014) posit that educators form part of the lower level of management whereas; principals are part of the top-level management of the school. To underscore this point of contention, Kennedy (2016) believes that educators are characterised as lower level managers, actors, befitting role models and salespeople, and for that reason, they need to be conceptualised as individuals with their own motivations and interests. As a result, this study assumed that leadership is a reciprocal process which enables educators and SMTs in a

community of practice to construct their own meanings or understandings that lead to a common or shared purpose of education (Lambert, 2002). Convenience research population selection assisted me to understand the study participants' conceptualisations of servant leadership and how they implemented it.

It was my belief that these three sets of participants would assist me as a researcher to obtain diverse data relevant to my study on servant leadership, thus achieving the study aims and providing answers to my critical questions. Lenth (2001) contends that research should be of adequate sample size, relative to the objectives of the study. Burmeister and Aitken (2012) posit that despite the fact that sample size is a consideration in qualitative studies, the principles that are utilised to determine whether the sample size is sufficient or not, are not similar to those that are considered in quantitative studies. Lenth (2001) further adds that sample size is not often the main issue; it is only one aspect of the quality of the research design. Even Sandelowski (1995) does not differ from his fellow researchers, and is of the opinion that a sample size of twelve study cases may be judged sufficient for certain types of homogeneous or critical case sampling, too small to achieve maximum variation of the complex reality under study or to develop theory, or too large for particular kinds of narrative analysis. Based on the above arguments, I was theoretically convinced that a total of 12 research participants comprising of four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four Post Level 1 educators constituted an adequate sample size, intended for purposes of convenience population selection and for the intended qualitative research product or findings.

4.6 Data generation methods

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) and Schwandt (2015) define data generation methods as techniques used in research to generate and analyse data, such as surveys, questionnaires, documents review, interviews and observations which are the more technical aspects of the research. Gough (2002) is in agreement with Bogdan and Biklen's (2007) clarification that study methods are techniques employed in the generation of evidence or data. These researchers further state that the selection of data generation methods is guided by the purpose of the study, critical research questions, research ethics and resource constraints or availability. According to Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2000); De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport, (2011) in qualitative research scholars rely heavily on generating data through the utilisation of documents, interviews,

observations and audiovisual records. In this research, I used semi-structured interviews and documents reviews to generate data.

4.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Maree (2007); Roshan and Deeptee (2009) define an interview as a two-way direct conversation (or conversation between two or more participants) whereby the researcher poses (asks) interview questions to participants with the aim of generating data and learning more about their views, beliefs, practices and behaviours. According to Moriarty (2011), interviews continue to be the most popular data generation technique in qualitative studies and are a familiar and flexible strategy of asking participants about their opinions and experiences. In an attempt to benefit the reader, I felt it necessary to clarify that, the researcher is always expected to state whether he / she utilises structured (with a prepared set of questions) or unstructured (with a general idea of what to discuss but without a prepared set of questions) interviews (Bordens & Abbott, 2014). Theoretically, qualitative interviews are generally classified as either being semi-structured or in-depth (Moriarty, 2011). Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) aver that qualitative inquirers often employ 'semi-structured interviews' which entails a number of open-ended questions based on the phenomenon (topic area) that he or she wants to examine.

Data generation through semi-structured interviews was my study's primary data generation method and were conducted with four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four educators of multiple-deprived rural school contexts. I went to the field so that I could interact with my study participants and generate credible and voluminous data that could enhance quality and authenticity of my study findings. This took a maximum of approximately 45 minutes of digitally voice recorded interviews per each of the twelve conveniently sampled research participants. I chose to employ semi-structured interviews as multiple interviews because they are trusted for producing richer data as compared to a short group or focus group interview even though they demand more from the research participants (Moriarty, 2011). Roshan and Deeptee (2009) emphasise that the semi-structured interviews which are qualitative analysis tools are convenient for various reasons in organisations, hence, these interviews re-conscientised the School Management Teams and educators, and in turn, did self evaluation and ultimately, self correction. These interviews were guided by an initially well prepared interview guide or schedule approved by my University of The Witwatersrand supervisor and the Research Office.

An interview schedule / guide (topic guide) is a document with a list of prepared interview questions or topics that the researcher wants to pose or discuss during each interview (Hoepfl, 1997; Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009). Moriarty (2011) posits that the interview schedule should have a series of open-ended questions on a series of matters that, I, as a researcher considered being relevant to the topic around the phenomenon being studied. In addition to the interview guide, I approached the semi-structured interviews with written prompts in an endeavour to ensure that the necessary ground was levelled and adequately covered so as to obtain the required relevant and valuable information (Hancock, *et al.,* 2009). I sought, right from the onset to try and establish whether my study participants had understood the contents of the information sheets (leaflets), had the consent forms been signed, did participants have burning questions related to ethical issues and lastly, double check whether the digital voice recorder was functioning and had been switched on (Hancock, *et al.,* 2007). According to Hoepfl (1997), semi-structured interview schedules ensure optimal utilisation of limited interview time; they make interviewing multiple study participants more systematic and comprehensive and further help to keep interactions focused. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), interviews allow the researcher and the participants to interpret the world in which they reside or sojourn, and further state how they perceive the situation from their own point of view. In Maree's (2007) own words, the purpose of qualitative interviews was to assist the researcher to see the reality or world through the eyes of the research participants.

The semi-structured interviews were chosen as one of the data generation methods because of their three purposes, namely: as principal means of generating data relating to the critical questions. In addition, they were a suitable tool to elicit participants' knowledge, values, preferences, attitudes and beliefs. They made it easier to obtain information such as study participants' conceptualisations, experiences and practices of servant leadership in rural schools and in turn, give the researcher adequate insight into the meaning and importance of what was happening (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were selected because of their flexibility and adaptability; and that they allow the researcher to obtain the maximum in-depth information through probing or follow-up interview questions, clarification and elaboration to obtain specific accurate responses (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Maree, 2007). Probes or probing questions seek to get to the bottom of the participants' views and understandings of the phenomenon being investigated (Maree, 2007).

More importantly, interviews are invariably audio recorded, hence, digital voice recorders are best for this and easier to utilise and less intrusive as compared to tape recorders (Hancock, *et al.*, 2009). Similarly, these interviews were meticulously digitally voice recorded so that I could have proper, accurate and coherent interview data. Hoepfl (1997) and Robson (2007) are of the view that recordings help to capture verbal data (participants' voices) more accurately than hurriedly written notes might and also assist the inquirer to focus on the interview process. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) add that taking verbatim notes is much time consuming and also more data can get lost if the interviewer relies solely on his or her memories to write responses after the interview. I prepared the interview guide or interview schedule in order to allow a free flow of the interview without any hurdles (obstacles) (Rule & John, 2011). When I happened to detect that the interview session had halted to be productive (the evidence or information is redundant) and fatigue was getting into our bones, the interview was terminated. Further, a summary of the digitally voice recorded responses was played back to the participant for him or her to react (member check), comment, correct, add new data and validate his or her responses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In an endevour to address this, I provided guidance to my research participants so that they could return to the main theme of the question asked through probes (Rule & John, 2011).

4.6.2 Documents reviews

The second data generating technique that was used was be documents review or study. Moriarty (2011) assents to (acquiesces to) Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) as he states that documentation can also be utilised as one of the data sources with the aim of supplementing the primary method of data generation, such as semi-structured interviews. Documents study refers to the analysis of various written materials which contain relevant data or information about the phenomenon of servant leadership that is being investigated (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2011). Documents are classified as primary and secondary sources (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011). For the benefit of the reader it was significant for me to state that primary sources are the original written materials of the school internal practices whereas secondary sources entail the material which has been derived from another person as the original source (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2011). Maree (2007) adds that when I as a researcher utilises documents as a data generating technique (method) I need to focus on various types of written communications which may shed light on the phenomenon of servant leadership that is being researched. According to Maree (2007; Hancock, *et al.*, (2007), the written documentary (data) sources that

may be analysed can include: mission statements, school monthly reports, agendas and minutes of meetings, memoranda, policy documents, code of conduct, newspaper articles, school newsletters, school magazines, letters and any other administrative documents with relevance to servant leadership enactment in sampled primary and secondary schools. Initially, this study intended to focus on analysing vision, mission statements, logbooks, minutes, reports, service commitment charter and service delivery improvement plans as significant documents for exploring servant leadership in these multiple deprived rural school contexts. On the contrary, some of these documents were not found in schools. Therefore, it was my belief that these documents would assist me as a researcher to understand and interpret their actual contents in relation to servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts.

Due to a large quantity of documents and records to be reviewed or analysed, this process was also anticipated to take place between September 2017 and June 2018. The important school documents (records) that were conveniently sampled were those with a life span of four years (from 2015 to 2018). The four year aged documents helped to shed light whether servant leadership (Batho Pele) has been implemented or not in the recent past in these multiple-deprived rural school contexts. In addition, they also indicated whether there had been any recent decision to commence with the enactment of servant leadership in the management and administration of these multiple-deprived rural schools. As a qualitative study this thesis made use of primary non-personal documents such as vision, mission statements, minutes of different meetings, logbooks and various reports in order to discover and produce qualitative rich and hidden data in the schools' cupboard shelves (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2011). These documents, especially, vision, mission statements, service commitment charter and service delivery improvement plans speak directly to issues of service delivery in schools and are closely related to Batho Pele principles. Further, they were useful in trying to assist me as a researcher to understand the philosophy of these multiple deprived rural school contexts (Hancock, *et al.*, 2009). In these documents, I looked for aspects or issues which spoke to servant leadership practices as a phenomenon under microscope. Maree (2007) is of the opinion that when the researcher utilises documents as data generation methods, he or she focuses on the written words that may help to throw light on the reality that is being studied. I developed a document review guide or schedule so that I could know exactly as to what to look for in all the documents that were made available to me for analysing their contents. As a result, the whole process was guided by a documents review schedule approved by my supervisor.

The advantages of documentary analysis are that documents are often quickly and easily accessible, on a relatively low-cost or free basis, non reactive, prone to making a confession as opposed to interviews, a solution to inaccessible participants, stable, relevant and rich source of information, thus no delay can be foreseen in terms of procuring (obtaining) them and working on them timeously (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; De Vos, *et al*., 2011; Maree, 2012). Secondly, the use of documents for this purpose has no negative or harmful effect on the document itself (Robson, 2007). De Vos, *et al*., (2011) further outline the disadvantages of documents study as follows: incompleteness, bias, preservation of documents is a challenge, lack of availability of some documents; lack of linguistic skills diminishes their researchability, lack of standard format, origins of documents (difficulty in ascertaining the origin or date of documents) and bulk of documents a researcher has to interact with. The limitation of documentary methods is that they are often biased due to the fact that they are authored or written by one person, hence, they are not representative (Maree, 2012). In order to address this weakness, I discussed these documents with some of the participants in order to eliminate bias and other errors.

The purpose for utilising two different data generating methods (techniques) was to produce data that would be used for triangulation purposes, thus enhancing credibility of the findings. Flick (2007) avers that there are four types of triangulation methods, namely: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation. Consequently, this one was a methodical triangulation in order to enrich knowledge produced through the primary data generating method which was semi-structured interviews. Triangulation or utilisation of two data generation methods helped me to make a determination whether documents' information corroborated or refuted the findings obtained through semi-structured interviews.

4.7 Data analysis

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007); Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2011), qualitative data analysis refers to the process of systematically searching and suitably arranging the interview data transcripts, organising and explaining data, noting patterns and themes, field notes and other relevant materials that the researcher accumulates to enable him or her to come up with findings. More essentially, Schwandt (2015) conceptualises it as a task of making sense of, interpreting and theorising data which is conducted through a variety of approaches that aid working back

and forth in between the data and opinions. In this process I, as a researcher worked with the data, organised it, broke it into smaller and manageable units, coded it, synthesised it and looked for similarities or patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Qualitative data analysis may be based on various aims, firstly, describing the phenomenon, secondly, identifying the conditions permitting such differences, which means searching for explanations for those differences, and thirdly, developing the theory underpinning the phenomenon being studied (Flick, 2007). This study utilised De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport's (2011) model of textual analysis of documents and also their model for content analysis of semi-structured interviews with the aim of achieving or arriving at convergences (similarities), divergences and emerging themes.

4.7.1 Interview data analysis

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011), interview data analysis refers to the process of ensuring that there is order, structure and underlying meaning to the voluminous generated data. I was aware that qualitative analysis of the interview data normally focuses on non-numerical spread of the views of the phenomenon over various groups of participants (De Vos, *et al.*, (2011). Interview data analysis was significant because, generally, perceptions are often as good as reality until they are put under a microscope and data (results) analysed and findings reported on. I learnt that there is a multiplicity of techniques that can be utilised in interview data analysis, namely: managing data, reading and writing memos, reducing the data, testing emergent understanding and searching for alternative explanations, interpreting and developing typologies (systems) and presenting the data (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011).

More importantly, this study acknowledges that it can never be sufficient for any evidence (data) to be classified as rigorous, lucid and well presented. Whether it is accepted as credible depends on the researcher that is presenting the data, how he presents it and whether the evidence fits into the existing study assumptions and also adequately responds to the critical questions (Northern Ireland Assembly (2015). Based on this afore stated argument, I wish to indicate that data is not definitive, what works in one study and context, cannot work in another study or context. As a result, the Northern Ireland Assembly (2015) further contends that researchers need to continually interrogate or challenge and also have a zeal for a clear, rigorous and credible experimentation and evaluation to enhance the conceptualisation and comprehension of the phenomenon under study.

Due to the adopted qualitative research methodology, this study employed an adapted version of De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport's (2011) Content Analysis Model of the generated semi-structured interview data because it explores a phenomenon of servant leadership. Content analysis was chosen on the basis of *fit for purpose* and the fact that it could be able to assist me to find appropriate responses to the four critical research questions that guide this study. These eminent researchers outline their data analysis model in eight steps as follows: planning for recording of data, data generation and preliminary analysis, managing data, reading and writing memos, reducing the data, testing emergent understanding and searching for alternative explanations, interpreting and developing typologies and presenting the data. However, for the purpose of this study, the first two steps were excluded because they are more of preparatory stages as they occur before the actual data analysis process commences (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011).

4.7.1.1 Managing data

This served as my first data analysis stage because it took place away from the schools as research sites and it is normally referred to as the actual intensive data analysis phase (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport, 2011). Rule and John (2011) assert that the researcher should, before commencing with data analysis, check, organise, prepare and clean the data, which is, doing interview transcriptions for analysis. Even Bogdan and Biklen (2007); Maree, (2007) emphasise that all the data generated through electronic devices or gadgets need to be transcribed verbatim and this can be best performed by the researcher himself or herself in order to include non-verbal gestures or clues in the transcript. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) argue that there is only one way in which the researcher can organise a qualitative data analysis. Noting that mostly analysis of qualitative data is inevitably interpretive in nature (Maree, 2007), I therefore grouped all the similar responses from each and every participant together in order to create themes, patterns and similarities. As a result, I organised my interview data into file folders, index cards or computer files. This was followed by a process of converting my files to suitable text units, such as a word, a sentence and a whole narrative for analysis purposes. I intended doing the transcription of the recorded interview data as it was a significant step before interpretation. The research questions served as a guide in terms of the amount of data to be transcribed. It is a general view that organising for data analysis should always start with the inventory of what the researcher has. De Vos, *et al.,* (2011) further state that when the researcher engages in interview transcription, it offers him or her an opportunity to get immersed in the generated data, an exercise which often illuminates emergent insights.

4.7.1.2 Reading and writing memos

After finishing the transcriptions of the interview data for all the twelve study participants, I then organised and grouped the interview responses in the sequence of questions and fit them into different columns. I read all the transcripts (entire database) many times so as to get immersed in the details, in an endevour to get a sense of the interview in its entirety before I could break it down into small parts (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport, 2011). Due to my limited knowledge of computers I decided to do the codes by hand. In addition, the analytic memo created a relationship between the interview data and more theoretical thinking, thus forming the basis for the actual analysis of data in the research report (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011). I also penned some ideas or key concepts in the margins of the transcripts as part of the coding process called 'analytic memos' as suggested by De Vos, *et al.,* (2011). All my decisions were guided by the '*rule of economy*' which means that I recorded only the information that I deemed necessary and appropriate for answering my four critical questions (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011). Apparently, these analytic memos were threefold, namely: operational notes, theoretical notes and code notes. These code notes provided code labels and their meanings. The theoretical notes / personal notes helped me to reflect on the deeper meanings of terms and also reflect critically on my feelings about the research. Operational or methodological notes provided detailed and relevant information that helped me to understand the data. This included suggestions for future data generation, giving details on what and how I or other researchers needed to generate that data, what to do in order to improve the quality of interviews and which participants to approach and talk to next.

4.7.1.3 Reducing the data

This stage involved the process of generating categories and accurately coding the data. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011) emphasise that category generation or formation constitutes the heart of the proper data analysis process. In this stage, I identified salient themes, recurring views and patterns of narratives that connected the participants with the settings or contexts. As categories of meanings continued to develop, I then needed to look for those that depicted internal convergence (regularities or consistency) and external divergence (different from one another) which can be referred to as 'first level coding.' Even Flick (2007) posits that coding

should be regarded as a central technique of data analysis. First-level coding identifies meaning units, attach them into categories and give them codes whereas second-level coding is where the researcher begins to interpret what earlier first-level categories actually mean (De Vos, *et al.,* (2011). Similarly, this process of breaking the information down into a number of categories was intended to reduce the generated interview data to a smaller and manageable set of salient themes to write in the final research report (De Vos, *et al.,* (2011).

4.7.1.4 Testing emergent understanding and searching for alternative explanations

This is the stage or Chapter Eight where I examined how the things that were not mentioned in the data could be significant for analysis. Actually, this means that I analysed what is said and also what is not said (meaning what is in the data and what is not in the data). In addition, this included issues that did not occur but were important for the data, issues that the participants were unaware of and issues that the participants wanted to hide or misrepresent so as to protect themselves or their colleagues (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011). Typology is a conceptual framework in which phenomena are classified in relation to the characteristics that they display in common with other phenomena (De Vos, *et al.,* 2011). Further, there are two kinds of typology as noted by De Vos, *et al.,* (2011), namely: '*emic approach* or *first order*' interpretation and '*etic approach* or *second order*' interpretation. These researchers, De Vos and his colleagues (2011), explain that first order classification is related to the categories of meanings of the participants being studied. As a consequence, I interpreted the data by illuminating how the study participants viewed or saw the social world in front of them, how they conceptualised the phenomenon under microscope and what meanings did they attach to it. Theoretically, second order taxonomies relate to the process where I, as a researcher made my own discovery of and reconstruction of the first-order interpretation or other scholars' views in the reviewed relevant literature (De Vos, *et al.,* 2011). In essence, this second typology assisted me to elicit underlying meanings in-built in the research interview data.

4.7.1.5 Interpreting and developing typologies

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011) assert that research interpretation refers to truly making sense of the analysed data, the 'lessons that have been learned.' This was the appropriate time for me as a researcher to ask an important question: What is really going on with this

generated data here? Generally, it cannot be disputed that perceptions can at times be confirmed as reality by study participants through the analysis of generated interview data as evidence and research findings. Hence, interpretation of data uncovered the hidden or underlying truths about the phenomenon that was being explored. I further developed systems or typologies for categorising concepts in order to make sense of qualitative materials or data at hand. Understandably, this study focused on the school principals, Departmental Heads (DHs) and educators as units of analysis in an attempt to explore their conceptualisations (understandings), practices and challenges of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. Pietersen (2014) reports that there is a general argument that a promising way of monitoring, evaluating and reporting on current service delivery in schools is to compare the perceptions of school leaders as service providers and learners and parents as customers who consume education as a public service. Conceptually, school leadership is about personnel professional relationships, hence, it exists in colleague educators' relationships and in their imagination and perception of all the involved parties (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson & Jinks, 2007).

4.7.1.6 Presenting the data

The significance of data interpretation and presentation cannot be under-emphasised. It is the climax of any research project. During the data presentation, I engaged in the interpretive act and shaped the generated raw data so that it could have a meaning and help me to understand how my study participants viewed their social world in terms of servant leadership (De Vos, *et al.,* 2011). These scholars believe that in qualitative research report writing, presentation of findings is an integral or central part of comprehending the 'story' of the data (De Vos, *et al.,* 2011). According to them, any research report has to meet certain requirements as stipulated in their research textbook, titled 'Research at Grassroots,' such as organisation (short or long format, comprising of chapters, headings and subheadings), accuracy, consistency (not distortions of facts), clarity and communication (no misunderstanding in communicating the research methods and findings to the readers), conventionality (spelling and choice of words), conciseness (short message with a minimum number of words), relevance (the report must be relevant to the research topic and purpose) and objectivity (no researcher's preferences and aversions or dislikes). The generated and transcribed interview data was presented question by question (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). My research report comprises of the findings,

which, in turn, were compared with each other. Theoretically, I agree with Mertens (2015, p.80) that "truth is linked to action and has to be tested continuously and substantiated". As stated under documents review analysis, my research report also utilised documents review findings and extracts from the reviewed relevant literature and theoretical frameworks so as corroborate the interview findings. All my claims were strengthened by verbatim quotations from my study participants' interview responses / voices.

The negative findings or divergent views were also be reported on. The findings were followed by the discussion. Central to the discussion were my views as a researcher, of what the findings seemed to suggest and how they needed to be interpreted. Furthermore, I also reported on the emerging issues from the data or themes. These were followed by conclusions, recommendations and implications of the study. The advantage of content analysis was that the data was in a permanent written form (text), therefore, it could be easier to verify by subjecting it to re-analysis and replication if possible (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

4.8 Issues of trustworthiness

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness denotes the extent to which the inquirer or researcher assures the readers or audience and the self that the research report is worth paying attention to and worth taking account of. Similarly, Vithal and Jansen (2008) state that trustworthiness principles verify or assess whether the meaning and interpretation of the research truth or reality is sound and whether sufficient measures were employed to ensure that the research findings are accurate and are a true reflection or outcome of what the researcher intended to find out.

Loh (2013) posits that many researchers, who adopt qualitative research as a narrative study underpinned by interpretive-constructivist paradigm, are often questioned about its credibility and quality. I had a full knowledge and understanding that the readers as potential consumers of my research findings should find this developed or produced knowledge useful for or capable of influencing any educational changes or reforms (Loh, 2013). As most researchers attempt to do, I also endeavoured to produce a study that could withstand rigorous multiple scrutiny by peer researchers and peer reviewers and hold its head up high (Loh, 2013; Shenton, 2004).

There are four key features of trustworthiness in qualitative studies, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Rule & John, 2011; Loh, 2013). In compliance with the features of trustworthiness of a case study on the conceptualisations, practices and challenges experienced by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in relation to servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts, I utilised all of them. The principles of trustworthiness that I employed in this study are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln, *et. al.,* 1985; Maree, 2007, Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Rule & John, 2011; Maree, 2012).

4.8.1 Credibility

Firstly, credibility is one of the major and significant principles or criterion of trustworthiness that I addressed in the study which investigates perspectives and experiences of school principals, DH's and educators around the issue of servant leadership in challenging and multiple- rural school contexts as a subject under study. Trustworthiness can be defined as a process of ensuring that the information or data that is utilised in the research is accurate, quality and is derived from reliable or credible sources (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Rule and John (2011) define it as "the extent to which a case study has recorded the fullness and essence of the case reality".

In an attempt to address the issue of credibility, I had prolonged engagements and triangulation (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The use of peer debriefing assisted in establishing credibility. Peer debriefing is the process whereby the researcher utilises a disinterested scholar to scrutinise some aspects of the research findings by acting like a devil's advocate through posing questions and testing the researcher's honesty in the production of the research report (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln, *et al.,* 1985). Debriefing can eliminate the researcher or inquirer's unintended emotions and feelings that can cloud good judgments about servant leadership as a phenomenon under study and stopping the emergence of new ideas or themes about how the study should proceed until it is completed (Lincoln, *et al.,* 1985). Essentially, Creswell (2009) advances an argument that the strategy of debriefing contributes to an independent interpretation of the research findings by peers and enhances credibility of the researcher's account or position**.**

4.8.2 Transferability

Secondly, transferability (applicability) was also an important principle of trustworthiness for which necessary and appropriate provisions were made to ensure that it was established in order

to achieve it. Hoepfl (1997) teaches us as scholars that other researchers use terms like transferability, naturalistic generalisation, extrapolation and retrospective generalisation. I have noted, through various studies that qualitative researchers invariably value the deep understanding provided by information-rich participants whereas quantitative researchers always value the generalisations to larger populations of research participants allowed by random and statistically representative cases (samples) (Sandelowski, 1995). According to Hoepfl (1997), transferability means an ability of the study to generalise or transfer findings across different environments or contexts. Shenton (2004) contends that mostly, the findings of a qualitative study are specific to a smaller number of particular participants and terrains or settings, and it is impossible to show that the findings and conclusions can apply to other situations and individuals (participants). In line with that thinking, Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.124) assert that "the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between the two contexts or settings what we shall call 'fittingness'.

For this to be realised, I, as Creswell (2009) suggests, made use of rich, thick description to communicate the research findings to enable other scholars who have an interest in the study to make a transfer of the data and use it in other contexts or even the same context at another time in future research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Rule and John (2011) concur that it is not the researcher's obligation to give an index of transferability but it is his or her duty to offer the data base that can allow potential users to make an appropriate judgement whether to transfer or not. Such a decision, as Rule and John (2011) suggest, must be based on 'reader-determined transferability. Servant leadership appears to be a fertile ground for transferability or future research; as a result, I gave detailed descriptions of the hypothesis and findings so that other inquirers can re-use the data in other contexts or even same context for future research. Creswell (2009) further advises that the researcher should provide detailed or thick descriptions or perspectives of the themes in order to make findings more realistic and richer.

4.8.3 Dependability

Thirdly, dependability is, similarly, a prominent aspect of trustworthiness which requires special attention in the study for it to be adequately addressed. According to Rule and John (2011), dependability looks at replicability and measures to make it possible for the research findings to be repeated in a different setting or context. It further looks at the methodological rigour and coherence in the production of research findings and the case claims that the research audience

can accept with confidence. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that credibility cannot be achieved without dependability. These principles are interlinked and work together well. To address dependability as a principle of trustworthiness, I used a technique of 'overlap methods' which works like 'triangulation' which is the technique of employing various research methods and data sources like semi-structured interviews and documents review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) advises me as a researcher that all the processes or stages followed in the research project should be reported in detail (dense or thick descriptions) in order to enable the future inquirer to repeat the study, if not necessarily to achieve the same findings and conclusions.

Furthermore, I utilised the dependability technique of external research audit so as to authenticate the study findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In business a finance auditor inspects and balances the financial records or books of the company, similarly, in research the auditor examines the research processes, makes determination and announcement about the acceptability and dependability of the research report. I also utilised the services of a capable, seasoned and highly competent PhD graduate to read and examine my research processes, quality and authenticity of the data, findings, conclusions and recommendations so as to have an independent opinion and make a fair and unbiased determination whether this study does meet the dependability principle requirements. If there were any weaknesses or shortcomings that were identified by the auditor, I would then address them before the research report was finalised and submitted.

4.8.4 Confirmability

Fourthly and lastly, confirmability was a paramount salient point of the trustworthiness of the study which necessitated careful focus in order to produce trustworthy research findings and conclusions. Rule and John (2011) posit that confirmability as a principle of trustworthiness refers to the mechanism that the research utilises to deal with or to avert the researcher's influences and biases on the research project. I therefore employed triangulation of multiple data generation methods, sources of data and theoretical perspectives to assess the strength of the researcher's viewpoints (Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are various techniques for confirmability as one of the principles of trustworthiness, namely: audit trail and audit process. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the most prominent technique of establishing or ensuring confirmability is confirmability audit. As a consequence, I,

as a researcher (auditee), asked a seasoned scholar to do audit or inquiry (research) trail by scrutinising raw data like audio recordings (Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004). The other appropriate technique for establishing confirmability as a principle of trustworthiness was the audit process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.9 Triangulation

Triangulation means a process of utilising multiple sources of information (such as people, times and settings) and methods or techniques (interviews, observations and documents), researchers, theories and types of data (texts and recordings) to support findings generated in a case study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Krefting, 1991; Maree, 2011; Maree, 2012; Rule & John, 2011; Shenton, 2004). While Lincoln and Guba (1985) believe that triangulation originated from the metaphor of radio triangulation or broadcast utilising directional antennae set up at two ends of a known baseline, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) argue that triangulation originated from the application or use of trigonometry to navigation and surveying. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) add that when the concept of triangulation was received in qualitative research it bore its old meaning which was 'verification of facts.' The idea was that different sources of data worked better than one source because many sources give a fuller and better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). According to Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2009), triangulation is used in a research project with the sole purpose of allowing the data to correlate positively. Based on the aforesaid statement, it has become clear to me that triangulation has the ability to enhance research quality and strengthen research rigour or trustworthiness (Rule, *et al.*, 2011). In addition, triangulation assists the researcher in minimising inaccuracy or bias resulting from the utilisation of a single research method, theory and researcher (Rule, *et al*., 2011).

As expected, it is common knowledge that human behaviour is not easy to comprehend, hence, triangulation, as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) put it endeavours to demonstrate the richness and complexity of it by researching it from a multiplicity of sources of information and methods. Krefting (1991) conducted a study in Canada on 'Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness and as a consequence identifies four types of working triangulation methods, namely, triangulation of data methods, triangulation of data sources, theoretical triangulation and triangulation of investigators. In addition, Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Cohen,

Manion and Morrison (p.196, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), sponsor other types of triangulation in research, namely: time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation but this study will use only methodological triangulation (triangulation of data methods), data triangulation, triangulation of data sources, theoretical triangulation and space triangulation techniques. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that no individual item of data ought to be given serious scrutiny unless it can be adequately triangulated. Principals, DH and educators' experiences and perceptions (conceptualisation) of servant leadership in multiple-deprived school contexts could not be taken at face value, therefore to avoid running that risk; I had to triangulate in order to test their truthfulness by subjecting their views to validation through triangular techniques named above. This hopefully resulted in credible results, a well-structured, well-coordinated and coherent data analysis and presentation of the findings. In addition, the use of triangulation helps the researcher to convince the reader or audience that the research work was carefully done (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Without disregarding Bogdan and Biklen's (2007, p.116) word of caution that the term or concept of triangulation should be used and not talked about because it "confuses more than it clarifies, intimidates more than enlightens," in an attempt to filter in triangulation in this study, I used two different data generation methods or techniques such as semi-structured interviews and documents review (triangulation of data methods). There were also multiple sources of data because I had to interview twelve research participants, namely: four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four educators (triangulation of data sources). The data generated from four school principals was triangulated by interviewing four Departmental Heads and four Post Level 1 educators so that they could validate the data by either confirming or refuting the data that had been generated. I also conducted multiple semi-structured interviews with the same study participants as another form of triangulation of data sources (Loh, 2013). This served to establish whether there was any faltering by the participants in a way of self-contradictory statements. To put it exactly in Shenton's (2004) words, here individual perspectives and experiences can be verified against others and, eventually, a rich image of the needs, attitudes, or behaviours of those under examination can be constructed in accordance with the contributions of a range of participants. The theoretical frameworks of servant leadership and attuned (ubuntu) leadership (theoretical triangulation) further provided credibility to the study findings by adding a different dimension in the content analysis of the data.

The bottom line, as Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest, is that triangulation was loaned from natural sciences by social sciences with the aim of justifying that in order to establish the truth or fact you need to utilise more than one source of information (data). Furthermore, triangulation of investigators was done through involving other teams or groups of researchers with diversified approaches to the examination of the servant leadership as a reality or phenomenon under investigation (Krefting, 1991). Lastly, space (site) triangulation was also done in this fashion, based on Shenton's (2004) understanding; four different schools were conveniently sampled and utilised for interviews and documents review, as a result, the study involved participants from four different institutions with the purpose of achieving a diversity of views regarding servant leadership. Shenton (2004) adds that if the outcomes (results) that emerge out of these different institutions were similar, the study findings would achieve credibility in the eyes of the readers and other researchers.

4.10 Ethical issues

According to Moriarty (2011), all studies sharply raise ethical issues. Resnik (2015) defines 'ethics' as the norms for a researcher's conduct which differentiate between unacceptable and acceptable behaviours. Further, ethical issues in research are a set of principles which safeguards the human dignity, justice and relationships between the researcher and his or her participants and also contributes to the quality of research (Rule & John, 2011). The Experts Working Group on Data Protection and Privacy chaired by Caroline Gans-Combe (2009) refers to research data as a 'living material.' Hence, as they correctly put it, data is expected to be circulated among and modified by various users within a multi-actor study project, which normally raises issues of potential malevolent utilisation. This is the principal reason why I needed to seek written approval from the Research Ethics Committees of the University of the Witwatersrand and the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Education Department. Resnik (2013) elaborates by stating that there are various reasons why it is critically important to pay much attention to ethical norms in research. In his substantiation, he emphasises that ethical norms promote the objectives or purpose of the research, such as truth, knowledge and avoidance of error.

There are various common principles of ethics in research, namely, autonomy and informed consent (permission, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, voluntary participation, deception of participants, debriefing of participants, denial of treatment), non-maleficence (avoidance of harm), beneficence (compensation or benefits), and doing justice to participants (De Vos,

Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 2011; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Bordens & Abbott, 2014; Flick, 2007). More importantly, ethical norms or guides also serve as a watchdog for issues like fabrication, falsification or plagiarism (Resnik, 2013).

4.10.1 Confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent

The first principle that I addressed in this study was confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent. This principle means that the participants' rights to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity should be respected. It further calls on the researcher's personal autonomy (self-determination) which needs not be compromised. Holland, Thomson and Henderson (2006) caution me as a researcher that concerns about maintaining confidentiality always arise in relation to data archiving and data sharing with other researchers. The signing of informed consent forms means that study participants agree to a controlled breach of their privacy for a particular purpose and specified period of time (Experts Working Group on Data Protection and Privacy chaired by Caroline Gans-Combe, 2009). This group of esteemed research experts further sound a word of caution in saying that all the research participants must be clearly aware of the research methods used; justification for requesting their personal data; duration of data utilisation and storage and lastly, guarantee relating to the rightful utilisation of their data.

Secondly, issues relating to data ownership invariably come up when there is any research that is conducted. This involves the question of who owns the generated data, who will have access to the research sample and who can publish from the data set, which demands careful thought and clear and adequate clarification (Holland, *et al.,* 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985) also assert that the researcher that uses a case study is required to balance several factors that pertain to confidentiality and anonymity. For that reason, I used pseudonyms to protect the identities of my participants. Furthermore, I explained to them that participation in the study was voluntary and as a result they could withdraw their participation at any time without seeking my permission and without fear of any retribution or negative consequences (Maree, 2007). I sought ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand Research Office and permission to conduct this research from the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Education (as a gate-keeper), school principals (as gate-keepers and institution heads), School Governing Body Chairpersons (as governance heads) and other research participants. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) posit that the first difficulty that researchers normally encounter is obtaining permission to conduct the study and my experience has proved that this very true.

Furthermore, the question of privacy, data protection and confidentiality extends to the issues of access and storage of data including the publications (Experts Working Group on data protection and privacy chaired by Caroline Gans-Combe (2009); Humber Research Ethics Board (2016). This group of research experts together with the Humber Research Ethics Board (2016) argue that issues of privacy arise every time when data is generated and stored, as a result, data storage should be secured in order that it cannot be accessible to various unwanted third parties and to be strictly protected against any disaster of risk. Likewise, I explained to the participants and gatekeepers both verbally and in writing that research materials such as digital voice recorder and transcripts would be kept under lock and key in the office of my supervisor. These would ultimately be secretly and safely shredded after a period of five years after the completion of the study (Maree, 2007; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009; Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001).

4.10.2 Non-maleficence

The second principle of research ethics that I observed was non-maleficence or justice to my participants. This principle means that the research findings should under no circumstances cause emotional, professional, personal, moral, psychological, physical, cultural and religious harm to the study participants, their work institutions and the community in general (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Rule & John, 2011). Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001) view this principle as calling for a need to exercise equal share and fairness. They further stress the significance of ensuring that the research project is free from any exploitation, abuse and possible traces of vulnerability of the researched and their contribution to the study (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) correctly caution that some studies/ researches are exploitative to participants and that all that the participants accrue from the arrangement is not clear.

In addressing this principle it was quite appropriate to accept and implement Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2011) mantra that the golden rule is that the research must ensure that study participants are no worse off at the end of the research than they were from the inception of the research. It was very important for me to identify potential improper use of research participants' data because of the fact that any potential misuse of data might have unexpected harmful consequences (Experts Working Group on Data Protection and Privacy Chaired by Caroline Gans-Combe, 2009). Essentially, the best way for me not to be found wanting, was to read and familiarise myself with the ethics policy (code) of the University of the Witwatersrand. Even

though I concur with Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2011) assertion that it is not clear or easy to tell what constitutes 'harm' but I always endeavoured to avoid sensitive and controversial information or arguments that may tarnish the image of my research participants and cause them to lose their jobs or affect their public standing negatively. Further, I had planned to resort to alternative techniques if the ones I was utilising were causing or proved to be sparking a potential harmful controversy or debate (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). I also attempted to avoid putting too much unnecessary pressure on my research participants either to partake in the study or to respond to controversial questions. I adopted a more sensitive approach to data generation, ensuring that my study participants were aware that they were at liberty to stop or refuse to answer particular interview questions (Moriarty, 2011). It was very significant and befitting for me as a researcher to properly manage power relations during interviews in order to create an impression of equality and harmonious atmosphere conducive to good and free flow of interview responses or ideas.

4.10.3 Beneficence

The third principle of research ethics that was implemented in this study was beneficence. According to Mertens (2015, p.81), "beneficence is defined in terms of the promotion of human rights and an increase in social justice". This principle also refers to the issue of benefits that the study will be able to bring to the participants and the society (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Rule & John, 2011). Bogdan and Biklen (2007); Rule and John (2011) add that this principle also talks to matters of the provision of feedback to the research participants but only if this was negotiated prior to the commencement of the study. These research results in the form of recommendations may also assist or benefit government decision makers, policy makers, researchers and various Department of Basic Education sub-directorates that are responsible for planning, school leadership, governance and management. Bogdan and Biklen, 2007 and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) add that even the researcher may gain benefits such as promotion, publication, a degree, research sponsorship, to mention but a few.

4.10.4 Doing justice to participants in analysing data

This means that the interpretations and discussion of findings should be certifiably grounded in the generated data, like participants' voices or real statements (Flick, 2007). In an attempt to address the principle of justice, I, as a researcher did all that was humanly possible to ensure that all the research processes and decisions were just and fair to participants. In conducting this

research, I was guided by the relevant code of professional ethics as stipulated by the South African Council of Educators (SACE) (DoBE, 2016). I also used verbatim quotations so as to bring in the participants' voices, thus strengthening my arguments. In addition, in compliance with the above assertion, the question of fairness and justice was accorded the importance it deserved in an endeavour to produce a fair, just and ethically sound research report. Furthermore, I exercised reasonable judgments and also took necessary precautions in order to ensure that potential biases did not result in unjust practices (Maree, 2012). Flick (2007) cautions me not to include judgments or findings on a personal level and also not to subject participants to a personality diagnostic assessment. If it happened that there were any traceable unfair and unjustifiable comparisons between two or more participants' behaviours and coping skills which could embarrass or tarnish the image of the participants, such findings (claims) would be removed or excluded in consultation with the affected participants. I, as a researcher would increase the participants' access and benefits (compensation) from the results of the research. This would be achieved through utilising various ways of sharing research findings with the participants, for example, oral dissemination, electronic dissemination or use of hard copies (Maree, 2012). Furthermore, I strived to ensure that a fine judgement was fairly and consistently applied in an endeavour to balance the potential value of my research against the potential risk of causing distress (Moriarty, 2011).

4.11 Limitations of the study

Rule and John's (2011) understanding of limitations is that they can stem from methodology, data generation methods, research sites, sample, personal attributes like the researcher's position, etc. Maree (2007) emphasises that these challenges have the potential to affect the research's progress. This study on 'servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts worked within two prominent limitations. Firstly, the major limitation of qualitative approaches to corpus analysis is that their results cannot be extended to wider populations with a similar degree of certainty that quantitative analysis have (Atieno, 2009). Even de Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2011) agree that transferability of qualitative study findings to other populations and contexts (settings) is viewed by other researchers as a weakness in the approach. In an attempt to address this challenge, I provided a detailed theoretical framework to indicate how data generation and analysis was guided by concepts and models (de Vos,

Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2011). Even Lincoln and Guba (1985) add that it is entirely reasonable to expect a researcher to provide adequate information about the context in which the study is carried out so that anyone else who has interest in transferability can have a base of information appropriate to the judgement.

Secondly, convenience / accidental / available research population selection has its own shortcomings in the sense that the easy availability of the research participants can cause serious biases because certain cases in that population may be over-represented or under-represented (van Rensburg, *et. al.*, 2010). Furthermore, as de Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2011) submit that the judgement of the researcher is clearly a very important factor in this type of sample. Maree's (2007) input is that smaller sample sizes may not always be representative of the population of the research community. Maree (2007) also holds the view that mostly, in homogeneous research populations, where the members are similar with respect to variables (characteristics) that are significant to the study, smaller samples may sufficiently represent the population. In an endeavour to address the issue of representativity of the school population, I selected school principals, DHs and Post Level 1 educators with varied years of experience so that the findings could be representative of participants of different post levels or leadership positions, experience and gender (Oppong, 2013).

4.12 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the research design and methodology employed and the general methodological constituents that construct and locate the entire study. From the inception, I discussed the research paradigmatic assumptions which underpin this thesis. I then advanced to discuss the research design, research methodology, participants' sampling strategy, data generation techniques, data analysis procedures, ethical issues, issues of trustworthiness, triangulation and limitations of the study. In this chapter, I demonstrated that this study is in interpretivism (paradigm) and it adopted a case study research design and qualitative research methodology. In addition, I engaged in an elaboration process to provide a motivation for the selection of the research paradigm, research design and research methodology to endeavour to respond to my three critical questions presented in Chapter One. It is therefore my belief that a clear and convincing framework of the nature of my study's paradigmatic assumptions of ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodological and methods were adequately presented. In

the entire chapter, it became crystal clear that study participants' knowledge supports servant leadership practices that change reality, and these participants' perspectives and practices, in turn, produce knowledge. Thus, any knowledge production is not an independent representation or even reproduction of the research reality, since phenomenon is produced or created by power-knowledge complexes (Altrichter & Elliott, 2000).

In the subsequent chapter, I present and discuss the salient and pertinent findings of the data generated through semi-structured interviews and documents review.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCEPTUALISATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research design and methodology that served as a foundation which undergirds this research. Owing to the vast amount of the data generated, data presentation and discussion was split into three chapters, namely, Chapter Five, Six and Seven. Chapter Five builds on authentic and primary data generated from four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four Post Level 1 educators as participants and documents reviewed at two primary schools and two secondary schools in multiple deprived rural contexts in KwaZulu-Natal. The data was analysed descriptively utilising literature reviewed in Chapter Two and theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter Three. Secondly, Chapter Six presents data generated on the enactment and promotion of servant leadership practices in schools in the contexts of multiple-deprivations. Chapter Seven serves as a concluding chapter for data presentation and discussion of findings and analyses data generated on the challenges to the implementation of servant leadership practices and the attempts employed to overcome them.

These chapters are divided according to themes and sub-themes in order to assist the researcher to identify and focus on the working assumptions and in turn, comprehensively comprehend the nature and practices of servant leadership in multiple deprived rural school contexts. Further, this voluminous data was ethically generated in four multiple deprived rural schools through semi-structured interviews and documents reviews with twelve conveniently sampled study participants. A meticulous and rigorous interrogation of the findings is performed through the cross-examination of the critical questions, reviewed literature and two theoretical framework presented in detail in Chapters Two and Three proportionately or *mutatis mutandis*.

It is quite imperative for me to clarify right from the inception that any research should be rooted in the existing body of knowledge in the literature because research is about standing on the shoulders on the giants. In a similar vein, this study on servant leadership in the South African context is based on the existing knowledge from various empirical studies. The presentation and discussion of empirical research (authors' voices) in Chapters Two and Three was an endeavour to authenticate the voices of study participants in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Some scholars

maintain that servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and challenges remain under-researched and there is no consensus on the definition or theoretical framework found in literature (Muller, Smith & Lillah, 2008; Brubaker, 2013). Similarly, Coetzer, Bussin and Geldenhuys (2017, p.2) add that "the application of servant leadership remains a challenge for researchers and managers as the role and functions of a servant leader are not yet clarified meaningfully in the current literature". Keith (2009) affirms that, unfortunately, there are not enough servant school principals, departmental heads and educators in the world because the dominant model of leadership in society is the power model which assumes a hierarchy. As a consequence, it is not uncommon to find multiple-deprived rural schools which reflect con-collegial, self-serving, disrespectful and authoritarian leadership practices which exacerbate the call for a more humane leadership style, namely servant leadership (Gedifew & Bitew, 2017).

In an attempt to refresh the mind of the reader, the key research questions stated in Chapter One, are restated here under. These were as follows:

- How is servant leadership conceptualised by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in school leadership and management in multiple-deprived rural contexts?
- How is servant leadership enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in leading and managing teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural school contexts?
- What challenges are encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in the implementation of servant leadership and what strategies do they employ in resolving them in multiple-deprived rural school contexts?
- What do participants believe should be done to enhance servant leadership practices of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators as they lead, manage and teach in multiple-deprived rural communities?

More essentially, during the entire data presentation, analysis and interpretation, I ensured that the real voices of the study participants were infused into the discussions through the utilisation of *verbatim* quotations. This research approached data analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings with an open and critical mind in order to unravel both the hidden and the visible meanings of participants' perspectives of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Relevantly, striking research findings were scrutinised, analysed through content analysis,

interpreted and presented thematically. The data analysis followed the model of content analysis presented extensively in preceding chapter on research design and methodology.

As a consequence, the research findings gathered through semi-structured interviews were presented first and then subsequently presented the findings from the data generated through documents review. The semi-structured interviews comprised of twelve study participants, namely, four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four Post Level 1 educators. Additionally, the documents review comprised of school vision and mission, minutes of the School Management Teams meetings, Staff meetings, Departmental / Phase meetings, School Governing Body meetings, parents' meetings, school reports and staff development records with a life span of four years, 2015 - 2018. It is worth noting that schools were very economical in terms of giving me as a researcher all the minutes available in the school. In some instances, I was given scanty versions of SMT minutes and scanty versions of staff minutes. The implications, therefore, were that schools classified information in some of the minutes that they did not want me as a research to be privy to, and opted to keep them as secret or confidential information. Specifically, Chapter Five comprises of the introduction, conceptualisations of servant leadership with two sub-themes, namely, putting people first and going beyond the call of duty, and lastly, the chapter summary.

5.2 Discussion of findings

This section reports on the responses obtained from the study participants from the two primary schools and two secondary schools that were selected to participate in this research. The team of study participants incorporated school principals, Departmental Heads and PL1 educators as actors who are at the coalface of teaching, management and administration of the four researched schools in relation to the enactment of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts.

5.2.1 Conceptualisation of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts

Two major themes on the conceptualisations of servant leadership, namely, putting people first and going beyond the call of duty were identified. These are discussed below:

5.2.1.1 Putting people first

Apparently, all the interviewed study participants in the two researched primary schools and two secondary schools demonstrated that they understood servant leadership to mean 'putting people first'. This was an indication that they related the American coined concept of servant leader to the South African coined concept of Batho Pele principles. In their narrative of leadership it became evident that servant leadership is a strong cornerstone for strong quality school leadership, management, administration and teaching and learning. These findings seem to suggest that the school principal, Departmental Head and Post Level 1 educator are not supposed to elevate themselves to the level of the 'boss' but should be prepared to humble themselves and become servants of the entire school community. By developing interest to serve others namely; Department of Education, learners, colleagues, parents and the community at large, they give priority to the needs of their learners and colleagues. This is a prime example in an endeavour to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the multiple-deprived rural schools.

The Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School depicted passion when explaining his understanding of the concept of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts. This is what he said:

> *As a Departmental Head, education is a public service whereby we are expected to put people in the forefront in whatever we do; for instance, as we are serving the people of the Republic of South Africa, people are the foremost important people that we are dealing with, namely, learners that we are teaching including their parents, they come first, so, that is what servant leadership demands of us.*
>
> (Mr Mthunzi, Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

One other study participant had this to say:

> *The concept of servant leadership comes from the concept 'serve'. To serve is to perform duties or render services to someone or institution with an intention of fulfilling his or her institution's interests. It means to empower someone or an institution so that aims and objectives are accomplished…….For me, the person who serves first, is a servant leader.*
>
> (Mr Shabalala, Principal of Mcambi Primary School)

Further, the principal of Mcambi Primary School also characterised a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator as someone who shows love for the teaching profession. It is someone who depicts honesty in his or her professional work which is teaching and learning as well as leadership which comprises of management and administration. This seems to suggest that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators do not rely on supervision but they are often responsible and highly committed and dedicated to their school work. Moreover, they comply with the Department of Education's professional standards. In an interview, he asserted that:

> *Servants comply with their employers' minimum expectations. The individuals (servants) who serve for malicious compliance do not qualify to be classified as servant leaders because, for me, servant leaders are servants who accept responsibility.*
>
> (Mr Shabalala, Principal of Mcambi Primary School)

In addition, his Departmental Head underscored the imperativeness for a highest level of versatility of the servant leader that demonstrates the capabilities to serve and also at the same time lead successfully. Further, she was of the view that servant leadership cannot be divorced from trust. In other words a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator needs to establish and forged good working relationships with his or her colleagues, learners and parents. The demonstration of both leader and servant qualities helps him or her to win their trust. More importantly, she felt that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should not undermine the intelligence of their colleagues but should endeavour to be good listeners and provide solutions in their schools. This is how she put it:

> *In my view, I perceive servant leadership as whereby the leader leads and at the same time works for the people or community. By so doing he or she satisfies the needs of the people and win their trust. In the servant leadership, leaders need to be good listeners and must have good hearts. They must be able to listen to what their colleagues say or need and find the way to satisfy their needs. As a leader in my school I consider myself as a servant leader because I always listen to my educators and learners whether they are complaining or seeking for advices. I am not biased and I always give answers.*

(Miss Mpanza, Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School)

Similarly, the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School advanced his line of argument, stating that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should emulate the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was skilfully able to lead his disciples and also serve them at the same time. This seems to suggest that there should be no remarkable differences between a servant leader and his or her colleagues. The servant school principal does not lead through the utilisation of coercive power but he or she relies greatly on his or her leadership influence and collaborative skills of leadership and management. This also implies that he or she utilises his or her authority correctly because he or she carries power with an adequate legitimacy and this distinguishes him or her from other kinds of leadership styles. As a consequence, he explained this as follows:

> *Servant leadership is understood as the kind of leadership where anyone in the leadership position regards himself or herself as a servant to serve others just like Jesus did. If you serve you lead at the same time. A leadership philosophy in which an individual interacts with others, either in a management or fellow employee capacity with the aim of achieving authority rather than power. The authority figure intends to promote the well-being of those around him or her.*

(Mr Ngubane, Principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The above participant's perspective of the conceptualisation of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts; is echoed by the principal, Departmental Head and PL1 educator of Sukumani Primary School. The principal equates servant leadership to distributed, democratic or participative school leadership approaches. He is of the opinion that school principals should share leadership power with their colleagues. Furthermore, he accentuated the fact that the servant school principal has unique attributes in the sense that he or she has the interest of the school at heart. As a consequence, he or she makes sure that he or she works towards the advancement of the aspirations of the community. He does not only lead his or her school from the front but he or she also takes the colleagues along with him or her to show them direction and ensures that he or she builds leadership capacity in them in an attempt to enhance their professional productivity.

He averred that:

> *Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy whereby one shares power with his or her colleagues and put the needs and interest of others first and people develop and perform efficiently and effectively.*

(Mr Mkhize, Principal of Sukumani Primary School)

His Departmental Head affirms the above narrative or position and opines that there should be added dimension to the notion of servant leadership, that is, the school principal, Departmental Head and educator need to show passion to serve the school community and be positively minded towards the collective leadership. This seems to emphasise that the success or failure of any school relies on the principal, Departmental Head and educator's transformed mentality which demonstrates emotional intelligence, political and professional will, positive thinking and positive attitudes. These are the missing qualities in most schools which ultimately become a hindrance in pursuit of the goal of quality public education.

She posited that:

> *My understanding of the concept of servant leadership is that a servant or worker can both be a servant to the people he or she leads and a leader who must put his or her team first at all times. The leader needs to first have the willingness to serve people he or she leads and must have right / positive attitude towards them.*

(Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

Similarly, the educator concurred with the viewpoints of her school principal and Departmental Head and added that servant leaders lead by example, share power and authority with colleagues and carry out just administrative practices. Additionally, servant school principal, Departmental Heads and educators embrace the values of ubuntu such as care, learner and colleague centredness, humility and reverence.

This is how she clearly articulated her position:

> *Servant leadership is both a leadership philosophy and a set of leadership practices e.g. power sharing, putting the needs of others first and helping people to perform as highly as possible. A servant leader is seen as someone who is exemplary*

and encourages justice. Servant leadership upholds many values of ubuntu leadership such as care, people centredness, humility and respect. It is a leadership style that is closest to ubuntu.

(Miss Buthelezi, Post Level 1 educator of Sukumani Primary School)

As evidenced by the above selected voices or verbatim quotations, all the four multiple-deprived rural schools that participated in the study had adequate conceptual comprehension of the phenomenon of servant leadership under a microscope. This seems to suggest that the school principals, Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 educators were aware of the significance and high demand for servant leadership in the current educational situation in the Republic of South Africa in general and KwaZulu-Natal in particular. Further, they emphasised that, to correct all the ills in education, including the decline in quality public education, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators must demonstrate willingness to serve first and put learners, colleagues, parents and community first. This is an indication that any educator in the teaching profession should be willing to serve first before contemplating assuming any promotional post or leadership position.

Moreover, as clearly stated in Chapter Four of the research design and methodology, I also sampled and utilised documentary analysis in this research for the purposes of triangulation. It is worth reporting that the documents reviews served as my study's secondary data generation method for triangulation purposes. I, as a researcher, managed to get hold of some of the important documents from the four sampled schools. The documents that were scrutinised comprised of the School Management Team minutes, staff minutes, School Governing Body minutes, parents' meeting minutes, Finance Committee minutes, logbook entries and staff development records which had a life span of four consecutive years, from 2015 to 2018. These documents gave me a broader picture of the circumstances in relation to the evidence of either the implementation or non-implementation of servant leadership in these four schools.

The minutes of Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team (SMT) meeting held on 26 June 2016 revealed that one of the items on the agenda dealt with the issue of school leadership. It was emphasised that for school leaders to be effective they needed to follow the five steps of leadership that gives birth to effective and quality production. It was also explained that school leaders had not to only enjoy the position of power and authority but had to ensure production,

human relations and reaching the highest level of satisfaction in his or her curriculum delivery and learner outcomes. The principal, Mr Musawenkosi Ngubane went further to express his gratitude for the dedication displayed by his colleague educators who had voluntarily begun with the morning classes and that impacted positively on the school's image.

Similarly, in a staff meeting held at Sukumani Primary School on 10 January 2017, the principal, Mr Siyavuma Mkhize told educators that he had authority over them but he used 'ubuntu' because they are the family. If anyone of them had a problem he or she had to go to him any cry to him but he also added that educators were warned not to come to him with a negative attitude because his would be more negative that theirs. Furthermore, the minutes of Sukumani Primary School staff meeting, held on 16 January 2018 indicated that the staff resolved that all of them had to ensure curriculum coverage in terms of the annual teaching plans which dictate notional / contact time (time allocation) per subject and phase. As a result, no teaching time could be allowed to disturbed (the protection of the notional time was going to be prioritised). In another SMT meeting held on 24 February 2018, the Departmental Head for Foundation Phase, Mrs Bongi Marjorie Luthuli reported that she, at times brought her own subject file to phase meetings in order to demonstrate to her Foundation Phase educators as to how the file had to be assembled and how it had to look like.

Essentially, the minutes of Mcambi Primary School staff meeting held on 21 April 2016, recorded one educator explaining to her colleagues that the principal was complaining about gaps in learners' work. She also implored her colleague educators try and close those gaps and be exemplary to the school community. He went to say that all of them needed to commit themselves so that they could be able to provide quality education and good learner outcomes. Additionally, in the School Management Team (SMT) meeting of Mcambi Primary School held on 7 August 2017, the minutes revealed that the Departmental Head of the Foundation Phase, Miss Purity Lindiwe Mpanza reported that she had checked Grade 1 learners and educators' work and discovered that one Grade 1 educator's work was good and in line with the ATP, whereas, the other educator's work was not in line with the ATP and examination guidelines. Then the principal, Mr Innocent Zakhele Shabalala commended her for doing class visits (observations) and he also reiterated the significance of utilising the ATPs and other policy documents like examination guidelines in planning for lessons and assessment tasks. Likewise, the Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School, Mr Lindani Mthunzi in his

Mathematics and Sciences departmental meeting held on 18 January 2018 advised his educators to develop turnaround strategies, namely, school academic performance improvement plan and subject improvement plans so as to assist progressed learners achieved better outcomes at the end of the 2018 school academic year.

The above documentary review findings appeared to corroborate the other findings from the interviews as the primary data generation method that servant leadership is to some extent understood and implemented by some principals, Departmental Heads and educators of the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools. The reason for stating that, to some extent, is because one observation which I made in all the four researched schools was that I did not see the Batho Pele principles, service delivery commitment charter and service delivery improvement charter displayed on the wall in the reception. In addition, the school organogram was not displayed in the offices in all the four schools under study.

Furthermore, the actual participants' voices on their conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts suggest that the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators have an idea of what servant leadership is and the significance and impact it carries in their schools. They also evince a notion that servant leaders ought to be multi-skilled and possess various attributes. This view is also maintained by Thabethe (2011) who asserts that servant leadership comprises of a multiplicity of competencies and good attitudes so as to be able to influence colleagues to perform their professional tasks appropriately. The question of a plethora of competences and good attitudes is equally corroborated by Claar, Jackson and TenHaken's (2014) contention that servant leadership presents a leadership style which is invitational to colleague SMT and educators and the school as an organisation. More importantly, in a study conducted by Achua and Lussier (2013) the findings affirm the study participants' viewpoints as the researchers accentuate that servant leadership is the type of school leadership which transcends all self-interests to appropriately serve the needs of the school community without the expectation of any form of accolades. This is a clear demonstration that a servant school principal, Departmental Head and educator always endeavour to put people (colleague educators, learners and parents) first. A servant school leader considers the school as his second home. As result, he or she tries by all means to do things that put his or her school first in terms of benefiting it in a multiplicity of ways, such as the provision of quality education, infrastructure, teaching and learning resources, human resource management, human relations, etc.

Undoubtedly, the reviewed literature presented above corroborates the both the interviews and documents reviews findings in that the notion of putting people first is given adequate prominence.

Theoretically, Russell and Stone (2002) developed and presented twenty people-centred tenets of servant leadership which comprise of nine 'functional attributes' and eleven 'accompanying attributes' which inform the structure and nature of servant leadership. For that reason, servant leadership is one of those leadership styles which consist of dimensions which inform the manner in which school principals, Departmental Heads and educators can lead and serve their schools effectively or in a manner that takes their school performance to greater heights (Kolzow, 2014). In addition, teaching and leadership as a calling to serve are normally deep rooted, value-based impulse and keenness to transform schools and other educators and learners' lives for the better (Sipe & Frick, 2015). This is a very cumbersome task which cannot be achieved by any leader that is not prepared to serve, lead and more importantly, put educators and learners first. Relevant to this study, Greenleaf (1977) believes that the issue of servant leadership starts with a natural feeling that a school principal, Departmental Head or educator wants to serve first and aspire to lead as a servant leader. This seems to corroborate the study participants' notion of putting people in a school as an organisation first in all the decisions that are taken by the school community.

Drawing from ubuntu leadership approach, it is believed that the success of any school principal in leading and managing the school is largely dependent on the cooperation and selflessness of colleague educators (Khoza, 1994). In addition, ubuntu is a terminology which can serves as a foundational principle for good, ethical and sound human relations in multiple-deprived rural school contexts (Khoza, 1994; Nkomo, 2006; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013; Letseka, 2014). It is therefore very imperative that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators embrace ubuntu and servant leadership in order to be able to defeat egocentrism and petty personal issues which have the ability to dilute the spirit and zeal to serve and put the school and the community first.

The above findings from the field demonstrate that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who are servant leaders have the interest of the school at heart. They ensure that the school comes first in all their personal and professional activities. The zeal to serve the school

community should be an enormous driver of the underlying keenness to serve and lead schools. Such individuals aim at putting their colleague educators, learners and parents first.

5.2.1.2 Going beyond the call of duty

The second finding is a perspective that is very crucial and often scarce in the teaching profession in most rural schools. Two out of four schools indicated that they go beyond the call of duty in their teaching, management and administrative tasks. This is one of the attributes that most of the school principals, Departmental Heads and Departmental Officials are complaining about in terms of its paucity in young educators and some long serving educators. Nevertheless, school leaders and educators are supposed to do their work with a highest level of distinction in order that the children of South Africans, especially in multiple-deprived rural schools can have a brighter future and become responsible citizens who make an enormous contribution to the growth and development of the economy of South Africa. Educators are governed by various pieces of legislation, like the Constitution of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996, Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998, South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 and Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) 2016) which oblige them to perform their professional duties with diligence, honesty and greatest level of integrity. On the contrary, these pieces of legislation are not put into practice, for reasons not clearly known to the Department of Education.

The principal of Mcambi Primary School averred that going beyond the call of duty requires a servant school principal who is prepared to serve others and sacrifice his or her valuable time and money for the betterment of his or her school. This is the calibre of a school principal, Departmental Head or educator who demonstrates complete love for the teaching profession and does not rely on the ability of his or her seniors for policing or supervision. To underscore this, he stated that:

> *Servant school principals develop love for what they do as they don't search for their bosses' whereabouts before effecting change in the organisation. Servant leaders focus on benefiting the organisation and its people despite being supervised. They get inspired by what they do. They go beyond the call of duty. Servant Leaders do not look at the hours allocated for the duties they perform but they are prepared to offer more of their time than the allocated time to support the organisation / institution and its beneficiaries. For instance, in a school situation, you may find*

educators coming to work to do morning class, weekend classes, holiday classes and evening classes without expecting to be paid. You may also find educators using monies and petrol in order to transport learners to clinics and hospitals when they have been injured in school.

(Mr Shabalala, Principal of Mcambi Primary School)

His Departmental Head shared the same view, by explaining that a servant leader is able to perform multi-tasks, as an educator, a manager, a social worker and a Home Affairs official.

She affirmed that:

At school, we as educators do not only focus on the curriculum but we also pay a visit to the community to find out if there is anything we can do to help them with……. An example is when a parent does not have an Identity Document, he or she cannot apply for the government grant and deprive the a child of his or her right to receive monitory support from government and that can cause the learner not to have what he or she needs at school. So what we do as servant leaders, is reporting the matter to the relevant department for them to come and help the school community.

(Miss Mpanza, Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School)

Similarly, this sentiment was further echoed by the principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School

who posited that they no longer work for seven hours a day and five days a week but they at times work for seven days a week and also 24 hours (sleepover camps) a day with the sole purpose of preparing the learners thoroughly for their examinations. It is also worth noting that even though educators try to go an extra mile in terms of discharging their responsibilities, they are not paid for overtime work. These are her exact words:

I think as educators and principals we provide this kind service whereby we go beyond the teaching in the classroom by exercising a great deal of pastoral care and committing to good service in accordance with servant Leadership. That means teaching on Saturdays, Sundays and taking the afternoon classes and morning

classes, since we know that an educator is paid for only 7 hours according to the Employment of Educators' Act, No. 76 of 1998. Anything beyond that is free and out of deep love and passion for the nation. We also conduct sleepover camps especially this month to prepare our learners for their final examinations.

(Mrs Mbatha, Principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Furthermore, the educator of Sukumani Primary School was in agreement with the principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School and she believed that educators are no longer solely focusing on teaching and learning and educational leadership and management but they extended their teaching practice to include some elements of philanthropy and social work. This is how she put it:

Yes, there are times where educators go an extra mile by being mothers to learners when they have problems at home, for example, when they are orphans. They provide them with food and uniform. They are also able to identify learners who are struggling in learning and provide them with special needs education and attempt to invite social workers.

(Miss Buthelezi, Educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Contradictorily, the educator of Zinqobele Secondary School held a divergent view, and his line of contention was that not all educators are willing to go beyond the call of duty or to go an extra mile because they are still failing to demonstrate honesty and integrity in relation to the performance of their core-business / function which is teaching and learning in and outside the classroom.

His actual words are:

No, some educators do not demonstrate any keenness to go beyond the call of duty. Sometimes they do not honour extra classes. We also encounter problems during holiday classes. Some do not pitch up. One colleague said his car is not an

ambulance when asked to help a sick learner. They can only help if they can be paid for that task.

(Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Similarly, the principal of Mcambi Primary School did not mince his words when expressing his unhappiness with the circumstances which prevail in some multiple-deprived rural school contexts. He stated that:

Based on my observations, I am of the view that there are few educators who serve as servant leaders in multiple-deprived rural school contexts such as this one where I am currently working. I am observing that most of educators do not understand and embrace this concept of servant leadership. The majority of educators fail to recognise that they are leaders and should build followers by doing their work ..... and inspire others to be servants as well in their lives.

(Mr Shabalala, Principal of Mcambi Primary School)

Three of the four researched schools had documentary evidence that they embraced the notion of going an extra mile or beyond the call of duty in executing their professional duties and responsibilities. The documents reviewed also tried to illuminate some of the salient points about the conceptualisations of servant leadership by study participants. This is the theme which had scanty documentary evidence. Notwithstanding the above assertion I, as a researcher managed to locate and relate some of the documentary data to the study participants' verbal responses. The data revealed that some school principals are duty conscious. In the SMT meeting held on 18 June 2018 at Mcambi Primary School, despite the having his own teaching load, the principals had been able to go through and assess all the educators' subject files including the question papers. He discovered that some files were in order while others were not. Correspondingly, the minutes of the SMT meeting of Sukumani Primary School, held on 13 February 2017, seemed to suggest that the School Management Team demonstrated eagerness to go an extra mile in terms of performing the daily duties. They decided to organise a counselling session for school girls who had been observed to have started writing 'love letters' to each other. It was discovered that both boys and girls had started that dangerous practice of proposing to each other. They involved one of the female educators who is a priest and a qualified counsellor and the School Governing Body chairperson who was also a female. They explained to learners the challenges and

problems that may be encountered by young primary school learners who wanted to involve themselves in early sexual relationships, such as teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases like human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV and Aids). In addition, the meeting resolved that educators were to be involved in 30 minutes recovery teaching programme starting 7H00 o' clock every Monday.

Furthermore, Zinqobele Secondary School had its own fascinating programmes, such as camping with Grade 12 learner at night and the adopt a child project. The two sets of minutes revealed that educators took turns sharing information about their experiences, challenges and improvements observed in their interactions with their adopted learners (adoptees). The principal commended the educators for their good gesture of showing love, care and welfare for the needy learners. The second set of minutes reported the initiative taken by educators and SMT to commence with the camping programme for Grade 12 learners in September of that year. This was aimed at improving learner performance in the school. As a consequence, the findings obtained from the documents reviews seemed to corroborate the findings obtained through semi-structured interviews.

On the contrary, to underscore the divergent perspectives of some of the study participants on the notion of trying to go beyond the call of duty in ensuring that schools recorded success stories with regard to the delivery of quality education to the children of the poor rural communities, the minutes of the School Management Team of Zinqobele Secondary School held on 29 August 2018 documented that some educators were not showing any keen interest in serving the school community selflessly. They behaved as if they wanted to attach terms and conditions in the manner in which they were intending to partake in the exercise of extra teaching classes, especially holiday classes. In that meeting, the school principal requested one male and one female SMT members to approach and talk to two female educators who appeared not to cooperating with other educators in issues of extra classes. The school principal stated that those two educators had habits of non-compliance that the school had witnessed over years. Further, he asked the Departmental Heads to record the conversations they would have with those two individual educators as proof of interventions.

Additionally, the verbatim quotations seem to suggest that educators are not of the same calibre and not all of them embrace the concept of a leader as servant or servant leadership. The perspectives of the study participants are not consistent with the documentary records findings of

these schools. This is a clear demonstration that participants hold divergent perspectives on the phenomenon of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools.

This indicates that principals, Departmental Heads and educators hold different perspectives with regards to the conceptualisation of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts.

Ssonko (2010) avers that South Africans yearn for multiple-deprived rural schools that have an ability to strengthen ethics, integrity, professionalism, transparency and responsibility in order to safeguard public resources and improve school performance. An educator who attempts to go an extra mile in discharging his or her responsibilities is not a cheque collector but an embodiment of a true servant leader that lives by professional values. The author conceptualises servant leadership as synonymous with going beyond the call of duty in carrying professional duties and responsibilities in a school. Further, he believes that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators demonstrate ethics as sound school culture based on ethical morals, values and principles (Ssonko, 2010). The specialised knowledge of instructional leadership practices in multiple-deprived rural school contexts is vital and necessary because such rich knowledge can be utilised to transform dysfunctional schools to become effective and functional centres of excellence in relation to effective teaching and learning (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). The reviewed literature also suggests that deviations in terms educator professional conduct are rife in multiple-deprived rural schools. Mle (2012) further argues that some public institutions are characterised by widely reported unprofessional and unethical behaviours by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators. The reviewed literature corroborates the findings gleaned from the data generated from the field. Some educators want to be at school as a malicious compliance. They are physically present by functionally absent from work. Making a sacrifice in terms of money, time and energy is viewed as very difficult if not foreign to them.

Correspondingly, viewed from the servant leadership theory, a school principal, Departmental Head and educator's character is quite significant in relation to their professional behaviours (Russell & Stone, 2002). Not every educator can be able to go beyond the call of duty without embracing the principles of servant leadership. Going an extra mile calls for extraordinary commitment and dedication to the teaching profession. This may also be explained by prior research which has concluded that a good character and ethical values of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators constitutes a cornerstone of decision making and professional conduct in a school. For that reason, Mihelic, Lipicnik and Tekavcic (2010) and Kolzow (2014)

add that integrity invariably involves trust, honesty, values, traits and consistency of behaviour. The findings also indicate that there are educators who demonstrate deviant behaviours by not being keen to go beyond the call of duty. In this regard, Sipe and Frick (2015) caution school leaders that a true servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator lives, loves and leads by genuine conscience which serves as a driver that indicate internal moral values in relation to what is right and what is wrong in any professional conduct. The mere fact that some educators evince some enthusiasm to remain behind at school after the normal teaching hours is a good gesture that things can still change for the better in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This can make it possible for these schools to compete with township and urban schools in terms of quality education.

Furthermore, Khoza (1994) believes that some of the domains of ubuntu leadership emphasise hard work and respect for educators, learners and parents as important stakeholders in education. Semantically, hard work as proposed by Khoza (1994) is invariably synonymous with the notion of going beyond the call of duty. *Ubuntu* can teach educators the mantra that 'my child is your child and your child is my child'. In that case an educator can teach all the learners as if they are his or her own children. A servant leader school principal, Departmental Head and educator value ubuntu and humanity and translate that into professional actions of effective teaching and learning and going an extra mile in terms of the provision of quality public education in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. It is worth remembering that the apartheid government bequeathed the citizens of new South Africa with a public service which is not people-oriented and fails to meet the developmental needs of the country (Ngidi & Dorasamy, 2013). School principals, Departmental Heads and educators should work together to achieve the objectives of the school. This view is also shared by Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) who posit that collective leadership empowers school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to view their colleagues as assets which can make enormous and positive contribution towards the success of the school as an organisation. In addition, Khoza (1994) argues that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to view themselves as social beings and their decisions should be influenced by the product of collective wisdom by School Management Teams, educators, non-educators and learners (Representative Council of Learners (RCLs). This can make educators jealously guard the quality of education of the multiple-deprived rural communities because education is the only vehicle that can take them away from abject poverty, backwardness and marginalization.

To draw this chapter to a close, the interview and document reviews findings have revealed that servant leadership is to some extent enacted in some multiple-deprived rural school contexts. In essence, the level of understanding of servant leadership as a theory in these schools is not to the expected level among educators. This is demonstrated by those educators who inadvertently or advertently, fail to emulate their leaders by dedicating themselves to their calling and ensure that all hands are on deck. Surprisingly, although there are principals, Departmental Heads and educators who demonstrate some level of zeal in a venture of going beyond the call of duty by working extra hours like extra classes in the morning, afternoon, evening (camps), weekends and holidays, there is still no collectivism because some of the educators are not singing the same tune from the same hymn book. As a result, the performance of these multiple-deprived rural schools leaves much to be desired. They fail rise to the occasion and be counted amongst the best schools in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

5.3 Chapter summary

In this Chapter Five the conceptualisations of school principals, Departmental Heads and PL1 educators from four different multiple-deprived rural contexts gained through semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis were presented and discussed in detail in line with the critical questions, literature reviews and two theoretical frameworks, namely, servant leadership theory and ubuntu theory. It has become clear that educators are divided in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. They are those who understand the concept of servant leadership and they even demonstrate it in words and practice. There are also those who view it as a foreign concept. As a result, they do not want to serve but they only want to receive their salaries on the 15th of each month without satisfying the needs of learners. These are the kinds of educators who do not put learners first. In addition, they do not endeavour to go beyond the call of duty by executing multi-tasks beyond the classroom situation. In an attempt to address these misconceptions, educators should to workshopped on servant leadership.

In the next chapter, I present and discuss the servant leadership practices as enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in multiple-deprived rural school contexts so as to ensure that they lead and manage effective schools.

CHAPTER SIX

SERVANT LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED RURAL SCHOOLCONTEXTS

6.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented, analysed and discussed the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This chapter presents and analyses descriptively servant leadership practices enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in teaching, leadership, management and governance of their schools. The findings were interrogated through the utilisation of the critical questions, literature review and theoretical framework as documented in detail in Chapters Two and Three. Salient findings were analysed utilising content analysis as presented in Chapter Four.

6.2 Discussion of findings

The following findings were obtained from the twelve study participants who were conveniently sampled from the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools. These study participants consisted of four school principals, four Departmental Heads and four PL1 educators. In addition, the sample comprised of two secondary schools and two primary schools and all of them fall under the category of multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This study found that there is a plethora of servant leadership dimensions which seek to characterise the quality of leadership and service delivery such as quality education in rural schools. Similarly, to be precise, in the literature, it is reported that there are more than 100 dimensions of servant leadership which need to be implemented in all public school (Sendjaya, 2003). Due to the maximum number of pages stipulated for this study, this section cannot exhaust all the servant leadership practices enacted by study participants in their schools. Essentially, in this chapter, the servant leadership practices are discussed and interpreted under five broad themes highlighted in the above introduction, based on available data generated from the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools.

6.3 Servant leadership practices (domains) enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in multiple-deprived rural school contexts

6.3.1 Vision and mission statement

This study found that all the four researched schools had clear vision and mission statements displayed in the reception areas of their administration offices. Expectedly, strategic planning forms the 'nerve axis' of the school. To put it differently, it resembles a 'heart which pumps blood and supplies it to the aorta' and in turn, circulates it to the whole body. The general principle is that 'if a school principal or educator fails to plan, he or she is planning to fail'. More importantly, all the study participants attested to the significance of the vision in schools as organisations of teaching and learning. Interestingly, their vision statements spelt out what their schools intended to achieve in relation to the learners' best future. Further, the gist of their vision statements demonstrated their acknowledgement that schools were supposed to be centres of excellence characterised by quality education and good learner performance. In view of this, the principal of Mcambi Primary School explicitly highlighted that:

> *The vision of my school states that: 'We aim to produce the learners who are knowledgeable, technologically literate and who will be capable of competing in the modern economic context'.*

(Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

In addition, he further accentuated the importance of the school vision by stating that:

> *I think the vision of my school is important because it serves as a driving force for the teachers. Through our school vision of, our learners are now able to use tablets and laptops. They try to do some of their school work using the Information Communication Technology (ICT), although they are still having a low level of competence.*

(Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

The vision of Mcambi Primary School is contemporary in the sense that it seeks to prepare learners for the technological world. The introduction of Information Communication Technology (ICT) will prepare learners for the fourth industrial revolution. These primary school

learners will be able to boldly face the world of work with great optimism. Undoubtedly, they will acquire the ability to make a remarkable contribution towards the artificial intelligence or the robotic technology. This study deduced that the strategic plans for some schools sought to prepare learners to venture into the field of Information Technology (IT) with an ultimate long term goal to stimulate the South Africa economy.

In echoing the views of other schools pertaining to the role and importance of vision in schools, the educator of Sukumani Primary School had this to say:

> *The vision of our school is: 'To become a leading school in promoting the values of Education by developing learners who are confident and competent within and outside the boarders of the Republic of South Africa'. In addition, the school vision is important because it shows a long term dream which does not only prepare learners to pass in our school until Grade 7 but they need to demonstrate skills both in South Africa and internationally.*

(Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Further, Sukumani Primary School is aiming at instilling educational values by ensuring that learners are armed with knowledge, skills or competency that will enable them to compete in the world of work, not only in South Africa but even globally (on the world stage).

Likewise, the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School posited that:

> *Our school vision is: 'We want to produce well-grounded learners who will make a difference in the broader community'.*

(Mr Ngubane, principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Furthermore, he explained why he thought the vision of his school was important by making this addition:

> *The vision is important because all stakeholders understand their roles and they have an impact in producing the kind of a product we can be proud of. It is displayed on school notice boards and offices. The school has a year plan which shows all the activities of the year. All these help us to have a clear direction and synergise our actions for our common goal.*

(Mr Ngubane, principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

In an explicit response which depicted concurrence, the Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School vividly articulated her position as follows:

> *Leadership and strategic direction call for a leader to have a clear direction to present or put on the table for his or her colleagues, learners and the parents.*

(Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

Schools are centres which are designed to nurture learners and prepare them for a brighter future. Additionally, they are educated to be literate and highly skilled in order to develop their communities and also contribute to the growth of the South African economy. It is worth noting that learners come from communities, as a result, they are enlightened so as to uplift the living standards of their families and the communities.

The Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School, in an endeavour to underscore the essentiality and indispensability of the vision as one of the servant leadership practices, said:

> *Our vision is: 'To produce learners who are hard workers and receive the status of being independent'.*

He also went on to explain that:

> *When we formulate it we make sure that it suits the environment. We cannot say we want to produce learners who are able to manufacture cellphones. That can't happen because of the environment we teach in. Our vision is made according to the needs and resources around that particular area. Our vision must limit us according to the resources. We cannot aim higher than what we can achieve.*

(Mr Mthunzi, Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

The vision statement of Siphosakhe Secondary School seeks to create a culture of commitment and dedication. The sense of hard work can assist learners to reach a level of maturity and in turn, become independent lifelong learners and future scholars and contribute to the national agenda of the production of knowledge. The characteristic about this vision is that it is not

abstract but it is practical in the sense that it takes the issues of environment and available resources into consideration.

I also had access to the four case study schools' vision statements. All of them had the vision displayed in the reception area. The vision of the two secondary schools was formulated by various stakeholders including the Representative Council of Learners (RCL's) because they have grade eight (8) and higher as per the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996. Those for primary schools were also products of consultative meetings of SMT's, educators, non-educators SGB's and parents. The vision of Sukumani Primary School acknowledges that learners live in a global village; as a result, they need to understand and practise the values of education and also be confident and competent within and beyond the borders of South Africa. Zinqobele Secondary School intends producing learners who are well-grounded and who can make meaningful contributions in their communities. Equally, Siphosakhe Secondary School endeavours to produce learners who are hard workers and independent citizens of South Africa. Furthermore, Mcambi Primary School aspires to produces learners who can master technology and be valuable in order to uplift their communities.

These findings appeared to show that all the four schools were mindful of the fact that they exist in a technologically advanced world. In other words, learners should be prepared to coexist and compete with the international students at the level of primary, secondary and tertiary levels. These vision statements were designed to develop learners in totality, in terms of cultural or societal, knowledge and skills so as to arm them for future challenges in the world market. Technology has become 'the' thing or life and soul of the 21st century job environment. In essence, the job market knows no colour, family background or historical prejudices. Expectedly, it requires learners to compete on equal footing. Notably, the interview findings are congruent with the documents such as vision and mission that were reviewed.

Fortunately, through literature review, it was found that the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools are legally correct by involving different stakeholders such as SGB members, educators and RCL's in the formulation of the school vision and mission statements (SASA, 1996). This resonates well with Eacott's (2007) argument that strategic planning in education has to be characterised by a plethora of activities which include envisioning, engaging, articulating, implementing and monitoring. In essence, no vision can be properly implemented without proper planning and consultation. In support of that notion, Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013) are of

the opinion that school vision should be an enterprise where school governing bodies, principals, SMT's and educators engage in planning and anticipation of the future of the institution, developing achievable vision and mission statements and keeping situations and challenges in context. The findings of this study seemed to suggest that schools were in line with the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) because one school's vision statement talked about making learners ready for the fourth industrial revolution while others dreamt of preparing the learners to make a difference both in their communities and on the global market. Greenleaf (1977) advocates learners who are successful and autonomous (independent) in life. The school vision, mission and goals are critically important and indispensable because they enforce the leader's responsibility and accountability in relation to the school performance (Christie, 2010). Further, it transpired from the findings that the gist of all the vision statements of the four researched schools took into consideration Bunt-Kokhuis and Peshawaria's (2014) model which portrays the vision as the 'brains, bones and nerves' of the school. According to them, the 'brains' represent the strategy; the 'bones' symbolise structures and systems; and lastly, the 'nerves' signify the culture of the organisation.

Theoretically, the vision is considered to be an ideal picture or image that school managers as servant leaders portray about the future of the organisation (Russell & Stone, 2002). Equally, Brevis and Vrba (2014) assent that a vision is a statement which expresses exactly what the institution wants to achieve and where it intends to be in future. As all the four case study schools stated, Bhengu and Mthembu (2014) underscore the perspective that the development of the school vision has to be a collaborative effort whereby school principals, SMT's, educators, SGB's and other important stakeholders with key interests work together to create a promising and successful future of the community they serve. More importantly, Douglas (2001) adds that school principals, Departmental Heads, educators, non-educators and learners (RCL's) need to demonstrate an ability to communicate the vision, mission and goals to all stakeholders or school community. It was evident from the vision of Mcambi Primary School that the leadership was conversant with the fact that technology has become an integral part of every society's life. In addition, they understood the scarcity of technology in the country and the fact that without technological development and advancement the country's future in terms of economy would be immensely affected. Similarly, the vision of Sukumani Primary School sought to inculcate educational values which would in turn, result in the development of competence and independence. In that respect, Monroe (2014) is agreeable with this viewpoint and posits that

school principals invariably stand for something very significant, which is the vision and also for other very vital aspects which are values.

In conclusion, the vision statements of all the four researched schools demonstrated that they were forward looking and sought to skill the learners for 21st century for them not to be replaced by the fourth industrial revolution (mechanisation or robots). Those vision statements acknowledged that in future technological innovation were going to be embedded in almost all human activities. Furthermore, those vision statements were not only designed to prepare learners and satisfy the world job market.

6.3.2 Teaching as a core-business / function of the school

This study deduced that some educators understood that teaching was a core-function of the school and attached a great value to it. They indicated that by stating that teaching and learning should be of good quality in order to improve learner attainment. They also acknowledged the significance of didactic triangle comprising of educator, learner and subject content knowledge and the educator, learner and parent triangle in the educative environment. The Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School articulated her views as follows:

> *It is important for schools to provide quality education. As a Departmental Head I strongly emphasise in our phase meetings that educators should perform their teaching job honestly, sticking to their Annual Teaching Plans (ATP's) and give it the best of their ability. They should have regular consultative meetings with parents when some learners show signs of underperformance. They should also be evidence in files (written and signed) of such consultations and how redress was practised*.
>
> (Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

Understandably, the principal of Mcambi Primary put more emphasis on instructional leadership as a way of ensuring proper curriculum management. He believed that curriculum was key to the success of curriculum delivery in the classroom. Furthermore, this study deduced that the school principals should avoid the dereliction of duty at all costs. In the same vein, the establishment of a good climate and culture of teaching and learning was key to improved learner achievement.

These had to be documented in the school service delivery charter and displayed in the offices. This is what he said:

> *I regard instructional leadership as the core of my duties. …… I oversee curriculum planning at school and help teachers to develop and use team planning and teaching techniques and develop and manage learning resources. I set clear school instructional goals, allocate resources, manage, monitor and lead curriculum and create the climate which is conducive to teaching and learning. I make sure that the clientele know about our services by ensuring that the school service charter is developed and displayed and made visible to everyone who enters our school office.*
>
> (Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

Likewise, the educator who served under the same Departmental Head at Sukumani Primary School advanced this explanation:

> *In an attempt to demonstrate that teaching is my core-business as an educator I ensure that I provide quality education to learners so as to enhance and stimulate independent and responsible thinking and I make that my priority, hence, learners are our valuable customers*
>
> (Miss Buthelezi, educator at Sukumani Primary School)

Similarly, the educator of Zinqobele Secondary School indicated the drivers which made him to maintain his true commitment and dedication to his teaching task. He highlighted the legal status of the school and the principle of '*loco parentis'* as vital factors which propelled him to perform his duties and responsibilities with diligence to the expectation of parents, community and the Department of Education. He said:

> *The understanding that the educator is in the place of a parent has helped me to do my work industriously. Secondly, the fact that the school is a legal person, and in that vein, it can sue and it can be sued helps to discharge my duties.*
>
> (Mr Cele, educator at Zinqobele Secondary School)

Equally, the Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School equated teaching as a core function of the school to the concept of servant leadership. She did everything that is humanly possible

for her as a servant middle manager to lend a hand to her educators in terms of planning and the provision of the necessary teaching and learning resources. She said:

> *In my school I work as a Departmental Head, this means that I lead educators and learners. It is my duty to influence them to plan what they are going to teach in the classroom. As a servant leader I support them in their teaching and learning tasks by providing them with teaching and learning resources they need to do their work successfully.*
>
> (Miss Mpanza, Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School)

Contradictory, the principal of Mcambi Primary School believed that some educators did not recognise teaching as a core business of the school and that they need to strive to deliver quality teaching and learning in the classroom. His contention was that:

> *Some educators do not understand that to achieve high level of performance with their learners, they should humble themselves by serving first in the manner that could appeal to observers, such that the observers and recipients of service could see the need to emulate their educators and start to work extra hard to serve others in their environments*.
>
> (Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

The documents reviewed revealed that all the four researched schools understood the importance of teaching as their core-function. In the Siphosakhe Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 24 January 2018 the school academic performance improvement plan was presented and discussed. Secondly, in the same school's governing body meeting held on 22 February 2018 it was emphasised that all subject educators were obliged to teach in English as a language of teaching and learning in the school. Similarly, in the Sukumani Primary School parents' meeting held on 12 August 2018 the educational triangle was accentuated by educators who implored parents to check their children's exercise books when they arrived home in the afternoon so that they could detect early if a child was not attending school regularly and not writing his or her school work. Likewise, in the Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 27 January 2017 the principal enquired whether the minimum amount of

homework given to learners was enough. The house agreed on giving homework regularly to learners, even above the stipulated minimum amount per week. Equally, Mcambi Primary School demonstrated that they took the matter of teaching very seriously. In that respect, in the School Management Team meeting held on 7 August 2017, the school principal as the chairperson of the meeting cautioned educators to teach topics in line with the Annual Teaching Plans (ATP's) and CAPS documents. He further urged them to apprise learners with compositions (essay writing) and presentations in order to improve their language proficiency and writing skills.

The four case study schools demonstrated that teaching was considered as a core business and a priority. Despite that effort, not all educators show the same level of commitment and dedication to their school work. The management appeared to be showing love for their professional duties such as the management and administration. The findings indicate that they endeavoured to ensure that planning was regarded as key in all the school activities. Some school principals did rely entirely on the Departmental Heads to see to it that curriculum delivery was done properly but they themselves opted to be hand-on as well. That seemed to suggest that even though they delegated some responsibilities to their colleagues but they did not abdicate their own responsibilities and accountability. It was also worth noting that they tried to involve parents in most of the actions they took in relation to teaching and learning. Further, some of them recognised that they operated in the place of a parent. Consequently, it can be said that even though their learner outcomes were poor, some educators and managers were prepared to serve the Department of Education well. Undoubtedly, the interview findings and documents review provided corroborative evidence adequately to make their claims solid.

The empirical evidence seems to indicate that more educational pressure is placed upon the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' shoulders to produce quality public education. All the study participants showed that they understood the sensitivity and great importance of teaching and learning as the core business of the school as an organisation. The principal of Mcambi Primary School emphasised that he regarded instructional leadership as one of his core duties in the school. In line with that perception, Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane

(2015) argue that the school principal has a tremendous responsibility as a chief executive officer to ensure that teaching and learning are taking place in his or her school. They further emphasise that the school principal must supervise and monitor curriculum delivery through classroom (lesson) observations without fear or favour (Chikoko, *et al.*, 2015). Undoubtedly, Kanyane (2010) believes that responsibility, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency are the cornerstones of quality service delivery in schools. The findings from some study participants, further deduced that the school management emphasised the importance of the provision of quality education, planning, provision of resources and honesty in multiple-deprived rural schools. For that reason, Pietersen (2014) holds a view that education cannot improve unless educators who foot soldiers work with parents as customers to enact servant leadership or Batho Pele principles in rural schools. Additionally, Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) assert that multiple-deprived rural school need servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who are capable of moving them away from the mentality of victimhood and deficit thinking towards asset-based approaches.

Ngidi and Dorasamy (2013) highlight the point that despite the introduction of Batho Pele in 1997, multiple-deprived rural schools are still faced with a multiplicity of challenges arising from the remnants of apartheid. Notwithstanding the spirit of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act no. 108 of 1996, Molofo (2012) argues against the subjecting of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to any form of performance management system which is linked to management-by-objectives with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. This resonates lucidly with the findings that there are still educators who either advertently or inadvertently fail to comprehend the national desire or imperative to improve the quality of education in multiple-deprived rural schools. Surprisingly, in the opinion of one study participant, some educators do not see the urgent and crucial necessity to humble themselves in the eyes of the customers like parents and learners so as to gain credibility, trust and respect and in turn, achieve good learner outcomes both at the level of management and classroom. In a process of observing a myriad of challenges in multiple-deprived rural schools, Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) share some of the study findings where they report that commitment, dedication, time, responsibility and accountability can be perfectly utilised as the principals, Departmental Heads and educators' greatest assets because they are tools of trade which do not have to be borrowed from outside the school. As a consequence, Jones-Burbridge (2012) make a observation that servant school leaders obtain good

learner achievements not solely by focusing on their personal achievements, but giving top priority attention to the needs and aspirations of their colleagues, learners and parents as important customers or clients.

In considering servant leadership as lens of inquiry, Russell and Stone (2002) unequivocally state that if the obsession about power continues to dominate school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' thinking, multiple-deprived rural schools will never move to a highest standard of leadership and learner performance. An avalanche of literature on servant leadership makes unambiguous claim that a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator is the one who opts to become a servant first before assuming a leadership position (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002; Crippen, 2004; 2005; Jones-Burbridge, 2012, Sipe & Frick, 2015). All the four case study school principals reported that they have teaching duty loads so as to demonstrate exemplary leadership. Russell and Stone (2002) agree with the study participants' perspectives and posit that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who wish to empower their colleagues must teach and do it effectively and efficiently. Similarly, this is further supported by Coe, Aloisi, Higgins and Major (2014) who argue that a servant leader needs to ensure that effective teaching and learning do occur in the school in an attempt to improve learner outcomes which matters most in the learners' future careers.

According to Khoza (2012), *ubuntu* as an African philosophy is transformative because it is able to direct schools towards an 'ethics of care'. That frame of mind conscientises educators to remember that 'a person is a person through other people' (*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu).* As a result, it is imperative that they serve the nation with diligence and honesty. In essence, ubuntu leadership (attuned leadership) does not tolerate mediocrity and any form of poor performance. For that reason, Kolzow (2013) emphasises that school leadership normally necessitates a grand degree of authority and decisiveness. Consequently, any leadership style which lacks these attributes cannot improve the quality of teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Consequently, the ultimate goal of servant leadership is that good education should be considered as the only measure of breaking the cycle of abject poverty for rural poor learners (Du Plessis, 2014).

To conclude this section, the findings of this study seem to suggest that even though some educators understood their role of providing quality public education, some were singing a different tune. Therefore, this speaks volumes about the herculean challenges that school principals and their SMT's were facing in multiple-deprived rural schools. Those school managers and educators, who tried everything that is humanly possible to keep the South African flag high, ensured that there was quality curriculum management, proper planning, parental involvement and effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Notwithstanding all these inputs made to these schools, the quality of learner outcomes is still poor in multiple-deprived rural contexts.

6.3.3 Educator professional development programmes in multiple-deprived rural school contexts

This study found that all the four researched schools had the educator professional development programmes. All the twelve study participants in the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools posited that their schools had the educator professional development programmes which are aimed at capacitating educators to improve their performance. In addition, the School Management Teams (SMT's) benefit from those capacity building programmes so as to improve their leadership, management and administrative skills. Two schools showed me minutes of such development programmes to scrutinise. The findings revealed that educators were not only workshopped on curriculum matters (delivery) but they were also workshopped on how to select good Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSM) especially textbooks and budgeting. At times such professional development programmes are linked to Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) comprises of Development Appraisal System (DAS, Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and Performance Management System (PMS) as stipulated in Collective Agreement no. 8 of 2008). Furthermore, the Departmental Heads conduct induction workshops for the newly appointed (novice) educators in line with servant leadership requirements. It was interesting to note that issues of community culture and ethics were prioritised so that educators could embrace ethical leadership, moral leadership and servant leadership attributes. The Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School said:

Induction training is conducted by Departmental Heads to all the newly appointed on issues like school and staff policies. They are also made to be aware of the community the school is serving so that they can be familiar with their culture and ethics. In the Phase, SMT and staff meetings some of these principles are discussed. Before the end of the year educators are given a privilege to draw up a budget on the LTSM and are workshopped by their Departmental Heads on how to choose good brands of what they are requesting for or ordering. This has developed a sense of recognizing value for school money in line with Batho Pele principles. I have been serving in the School Development Team for IQMS since 2010. I conduct induction workshops to novice educators.

(Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

In echoing what the Departmental Head had said, the educator of the same school opined that IQMS was one of the strategies used to develop educators. This was done together with Special Needs Education Services (SNES) which included Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS). In this respect, educators are empowered to deal with learners with learning difficulties. She said:

I participate in IQMS programmes as a Development Support Group (DSG) member of my colleagues. I develop them where they show areas of development (weaknesses) I am also a scriber in the School Based Support Team (SBST). As a team we help to develop educators on how to identify learners with barriers to learning.

(Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Similarly, the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School who was also very instrumental in ensuring that educator development programmes took place in his school explained that:

The educator development programme we have in our school is leave management. I allow the teacher union representatives to workshop educators on leave on site. I request them to expose educators on different types of leaves. Mine is to manage it (leave) by keeping proper records.

(Mr Ngubane, principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Another school principal from Siphosakhe Secondary School also indicated that she was doing her level best to develop her colleagues both professionally and Human Resource (HR) matters. In echoing other participants' perspectives, she claimed that:

> *There are various educator development programmes that we have ranging from subject disciplines. The subject advisors do also come to workshop educators on curriculum matters. There are also ones that touch on Human Resource Matters like developments on leave which we put a slot or we allocate a slot on the agenda of our meetings. This is normally done by myself. At times we include other topics that could be of great interest and need to educators in that point in time.*

(Mrs Mbatha, principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Further, the principal Mcambi Primary School passionately and eloquently explained how educator professional development programmes are collectively implemented in his school. In his explanation it became evident that he was actively involved in these staff development activities and he provided support for those programmes to run smoothly and successfully. He revealed that he even went to an extent of appointing an experienced educator to coordinate educator development programmes. In an endeavour to demonstrate his commitment and keenness in championing this servant leadership dimension, he provided the coordinator with the materials such as journal articles with relevant topics which appeared on their educator development programme. He also provided refreshments during those staff development session. It was interesting to note that their staff development programmes were well crafted and arranged in the order of priority. Essentially, educators themselves played a pivotal role in the identification of the topics to be included on the list. It was also worth mentioning that educators sacrificed their time and attended workshops outside the normal teaching hours, namely, between 14H00 and 16H00 every Thursday. He had this to say:

> *Staff development programmes take place every Thursday afternoon from 14H00 until 16H00. We tackle different topics which are identified by educators at the beginning of the year. We compile these areas of development and arrange them according to their order of priority as identified by educators. Part of the topics that dominated our staff development included class discipline, professionalism, duties of a class teacher, how to draw an ATP, how to draw a lesson plan, assessment human*

relations at school, leave measures, classroom management, curriculum coverage, teamwork, etc. I appointed an experienced senior educator to coordinate the staff development activities in the school. I support her by providing her with articles and journals of different topics. I also provide financial support for them to do catering.

(Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

For triangulation purposes, the four researched schools made their minutes of meetings and staff development reports available for scrutiny. The above documents (records) were able to accentuate the voices of the study participants' perspectives of their schools' educator development programmes. In that case, the Siphosakhe Secondary School Management Team minutes of the meeting which took place on 24 January 2018, recorded that a staff development plan which comprised of issues such as finance, legal matters, educational matters, target setting, etc was developed. Likewise, the Sukumani Primary School staff meeting held on 16 January 2018 discussed the question of the educator development plan. The school principal added that there are many types of leave; as a consequence, he alluded to the fact that he was going to schedule a workshop on leave measures shortly. To arm educators with skills of dealing with learners with barriers to learning a feedback on the workshop on inclusive education or Special Needs Education Services (SNES) of the 3rd and 4th of May 2017 including Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) and types of schools, namely, mainstream, full service and special schools was given to all educators and non-educators.

Moreover, the Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 7 June 2016 received a report on Departmental Heads' workshop that had taken place at North Coast Primary School on 6 June 2016. The workshop centred on leadership including decision making, dismissal on account of incapacity, etc. Equally, Mcambi Primary School also attached an immense significance to the issue of educator development. To make that a reality, the school appointed one senior educator to be the coordinator of all the educator development programmes. Further, the reports indicated that the school developed a long staff development priority list on 7 November 2017. Interestingly, the school had a workshop on 'professionalism' on 22 February 2018 and another one on Circular D1 of 2014 dealing with 'Compliance with Section 58B of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996' on 1 March 2018.

The four researched multiple-deprived rural schools did engage educators in a variety of staff development programmes. These comprised of leave measures, IQMS, legislation and inclusive education. The question of leave was one that had the ability to paralyse the schools because normally, educators have a tendency of pretending as if they do not understand it. Secondly, the majority of schools do not take the issue of inclusive education seriously. As a result, Sukumani Primary School was doing a good job when exposing educators to inclusive education, especially, SIAS. The other grey area is the tendency to pretend as if they do not know that SMT meetings, staff meetings and workshops are supposed to take place outside the normal teaching hours. By organising such activities after the expiry of the duration of seven hours was an indication that they respected the notional (contact) time. The fact that all the four schools have the empowerment programmes was an attempt to address a myriad of challenges faced by educators in relation to proper planning, subject content knowledge, teaching methodology which in turn, impacted negatively on learner outcomes. Notably, the documents review data affirmed the interview findings because what was obtained through the voices of study participants was also documented in minutes of meetings and reports.

All the four case study multiple-deprived rural schools were found to be engaging in various forms of educator professional development programmes. Significantly, the gradual and infinite evolution of school leadership, management, curriculum policies and approaches place the continuing professional development at the centre of organisational leadership. According to Hassel (1999) and Hilton, Hilton and Dole (2015), educator professional development is aimed at improving educators' knowledge, methodology (pedagogy skills), values, attitudes and leadership competencies in order to have effective schools and good learner achievements. It also became evident in one school that these programmes were taking place every Thursday afternoon from 14H00 to 16H00. This is in line with Mahlangu's (2014) point of argument that school managers and educators cannot be trained once and for all if they are to be mandated to deliver quality education in multiple-deprived rural school classrooms. Additionally, Mahlangu (2014) and Soman (2015) opine that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be exemplary and also empower their colleagues through couching and mentoring programmes.

Even though some schools indicated a variety of staff development programmes comprising of but not limited to, induction, planning, budgeting, selection of books, inclusive education, professionalism, human resource such as leave matters and human relations, other schools did

not have balanced programmes which addressed all the pertinent issues affecting school leadership and curriculum delivery in general. For example, Zinqobele Secondary School principal mentioned leave only as an aspect of educator development. In addition, the presentation was only done by unions. This had both advantages and disadvantages because at times unions tend to protect educators, as a result, they could provide them with censored information to the detriment of the school. This was contrary to Philips' (2008) point of contention that a balanced educator professional programme should include induction, mentoring, university study for senior degrees or diplomas and reflective studies based on facilitation of learning in the classroom. Likewise, Horng and Loeb (2010) emphasise that school principals and Departmental Heads should mentor educators by observing their teaching practices, offer timeous feedback and also by modelling instruction when it is necessary. It was also interesting to note that Mcambi Primary School involved all educators and non-educators in the identification of topics for the planned workshops for the year. In the same vein, Flores, Rodriguez and Garcia (2015) affirm the importance of professional learning communities (PLCs) in developing a community of practice which promotes effective school learning (educator empowerment) and ultimately, school improvement.

In terms of servant leadership theoretical framework, the goal of professional educator development is an attempt to create or develop many other servant leaders in different management levels of the school as an organisation (Russell and Stone, 2002). It is therefore imperative that human resource development is prioritised by all multiple-deprived rural schools. To some extent the role played by participants in empowering their colleagues was commendable. Even Sipe and Frick (2015) accentuate that the knowledge and skills that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators have need to be shared with colleagues. Similarly, Greenleaf (1977) and Waddell (2006) judiciously affirm that the main duty and responsibility of a school leader, regardless of the management level (echelon) is to ensure the professional growth of colleagues. In addition, the colleagues who are served should be prone to becoming healthier, professionally wiser, freer, more independent (thinkers) and more inclined to become servant leaders themselves.

The findings revealed that what some of the four case study schools were doing in terms of empowerment programmes was not enough. In essence, the principals, Departmental Heads and educators of the multiple-deprived rural schools need to realise that the professional development

that is initiated and coordinated by educators themselves enhance professional autonomy and creates platforms for the validation of the educator-voices. In addition, in an attempt to address a myriad of educator development challenges, Wong and Page (2003) advise that school leaders and educators should collectively develop the appropriate curricula which will be able to address various shortcomings in terms of leadership and management skills, subject content knowledge and methodological skills and interpersonal skills deficiencies. According to Khoza (2013), school principals, Departmental Heads and educators have to comprehend the fact that they are a community of professionals and should embrace the values of *ubuntu*. Hence, Mbhele (2015) states that many educators leave multiple-deprived rural schools because of the lack of transformative leadership which is void of *ubuntu*.

In this thesis, the case study schools, participants demonstrated that professional educator development was considered to be an important variable that had the ability to address some of the challenges faced by multiple-deprived rural schools, ranging in capacity with regard to curriculum delivery in the classroom, management, leave taking and human relations.

6.3.4 Schools as organisations in the eyes of the law

This study found that a servant leader cannot manage the school without the utilisation of relevant educational legislation (legal prescripts). As a result, some of the study participants indicated that they relied on various pieces of legislation when executing their teaching, management and administrative duties and responsibilities in multiple-deprived rural schools. Interestingly, this study further deduced that without the prudent use of legal prescripts, schools could deteriorate into chaos and dysfunctionality. Educational laws aided some educators to understand the danger of administering corporal punishment on learners in schools. Further, the SMT used it when taking decisions in relation to the distribution of teaching loads (periods) to educators. Notwithstanding the widely reported cases of misconduct by educators, some educators were conversant with the prescripts of the law like section 17 of the EEA, no. 76 of 1998 which deals with serious misconduct which had to be avoided at all costs. Therefore, it cannot be disputed that servant leadership coupled with the application of the educational law, can engender corporate culture (governance) and good school leadership. One study participant posited that:

I rely on the SASA, no. 84 of 1996, section 10 which deals with the abolishing of corporal punishment. EEA, no. 76 of 1998 guides us in the distribution of duty loads to educators in our phases. Educator are urged to honour duties assigned them as per their employment contracts. Section 17 deals with serious cases like drinking and fighting within the school premises. This is a case of non-negotiables and is taken to the disciplinary committee where the SMT decides whether to take the case to the upper level (district). This may also lead to a dismissal.

(Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

Similarly, another study participant pointed out that the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 and the Employment of Educators' Act, no. 76 of 1998 assisted him in running the school properly. Through legislation, he began to have a lucid understanding of the status of educators and learners in the Department of Education including their rights and responsibilities, and those of learners. Furthermore, he was able to work and co-exist with the SGB solely because he was well acquainted with certain sections of the education law. As a consequence, any claim of ignorance by a school manager cannot be an excuse. This is how he explicitly put it:

I use the Employment of Educators' Act and SASA. These help me to have a clear understanding of what an educator is and who is responsible for what. The role of educators, rights of learners and responsibilities of SGB are clearly put up.

(Mr Ngubane, principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Equally, the principal of Mcambi Primary School heavily dependent on SASA, EEA, PAM document and Educators Laws Amendment Act (ELAA) of 2007 for guidance when executing his own duties and responsibilities in the school. The legislation empowered school principals to understand their role like doing general administrative duties and professional management which involved the performance of instructional leadership in the school. Additionally, the educational laws direct the principal to be responsible for the induction and mentoring of new appointed educators. Interestingly, legislation served as arms and ammunition in instances where opportunistic departmental officials, uninformed union leaders and militant or disruptive educators wanted to unjustifiably crucify school principals and undermine their powers and authority, thus, creating leadership crises and ultimately dysfunctional schools. He said:

The SASA assists me to discharge my duties as a school leader because it allows me not only to manage my school but lead my school by developing high quality strategies for teaching and learning. The EEA and PAM document help to perform my administrative duties and professional management which involves the performance of instructional leadership at my school. The Educators Laws Amendment Act of 2007 stipulates that I must compile and submit an annual report on the academic performance of the school in relation to the minimum outcomes and standards and processes of assessment as determined by the Minister of Education. Further, a school academic performance improvement plan is also drawn up and submitted to the department. Legislation serves as my shield if I get attacked by militant teachers within the school who like to oppose my leadership which demands accountability.

(Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

Likewise, the educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School was of the view that pinning her hopes on the implementation the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 to make her a good servant leader who ensured that learners had access to better and quality education. In addition, the other Acts which promoted learners' rights such equality found resonance with her worldview or philosophy of the educational setting. She said:

I think it is the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 as well as other government policies which say that every learner must have access to quality education. My role as an educator is that I don't rule out some learners not to get proper education but I try to treat each and every learner equally.

(Miss Zulu, educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Interestingly, the educator of Sukumani Primary School added that the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998, conscientises her to do her professional work diligently and with great loyalty. In line with that thinking, conscience is a very critical component or ingredient which has an ability to propel an educator to perform his or her duties and responsibilities honestly without any supervision and the stringent application of the education laws. Moreover, she believed that the SACE Code of Professional Ethics regulates educators' conduct and enhances their professionalism. As a result, this study argues that servant leadership has the ability to instil

good virtues in school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to be true servants of the people, namely, learners, fellow educators (colleagues) and the community. The notional time needs to be respected. Therefore, any illegal disruption of teaching and learning should be discouraged in the strongest terms because it defeats the noble purpose of achieving the goal of the provision of quality public education in multiple-deprived rural schools. She opines that:

> *I rely on the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 and the Employment of Educators Act no 76 of 1998 which dictates the job description of educators so as to be loyal and teach the learners properly. In addition, I consider the SACE Code of Professional Ethics as important because educators are supposed to be guided by SACE code of conduct in order for the goal for professionalism to be achieved and promoted worldwide.*
>
> (Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Equally, the educator of Zinqobele Secondary School indicated that he was familiar with the South African Council for Educators Act, no. 31 of 2000 which deals with the issue of the dress code. Additionally, it promotes ethical and moral virtues in the multiple deprived rural schools. He stated his viewpoint as follows:

> *I agree with SACE when it comes to the dress code because an educator must lead by example. I do dress presentably, but that cannot be said when it comes to some of my colleagues, especially the younger generation.*
>
> (Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

As stated in the previous chapters, various documents were solicited from the school management to authenticate the interview findings and they indeed illuminated the nature and extent to which educational legislation was used in multiple-deprived rural schools. The minutes of the English First Additional language subject meeting of Zinqobele Secondary School educators held on 19 January 2018 recorded that the Departmental Head distributed copies of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 to all educators and also shared certain sections with them. Secondly, certain sections of the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998 relating to educator misconduct such intimate relationships with learners, examination irregularities, etc

were also discussed. Similarly, in the Sukumani Primary School parents' meeting held on 12 August 2018, the principal told the parents that the school was obliged to respect the basic right of learners to education as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South, Act, no. 108 of 1996 and not withhold the learners' examination report cards solely because they had failed to pay the R50-00 donation for the security guard.

Likewise, Mcambi Primary School records of 1 March 2018 stated that the school complied with the South African Constitution Act no. 108 of 1996, especially the Bill of Rights in Chapter Two, section 29(1) which stipulates the sacrosanctity of the basic right to education. Further, they implemented the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996, especially section 58B which spells out the guidelines for the management of underperforming schools. These guidelines state that a primary school is deemed to be underperforming if, using Literacy as a proxy; it has more than 50% of learners performing at level 3 (40%) and below in the Annual National Assessment (ANA) in Grades 3 and 6. In addition, a secondary school is deemed to be underperforming if its percentage pass in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination falls below 60%. They also indicated that they relied on SASA, section 16A which outlines the roles and responsibilities of principals in regard to planning, reporting, accountability and the performance of schools. Equally, the minutes of Siphosakhe Secondary School governing body of 22 June 2017, Mathematics and Sciences Departmental meeting of 18 January 2018 and the SMT meeting of 24 January 2018 indicated that the SGB, SMT and educators presented and discussed the school academic performance improvement plan as dictated by SASA, no. 84 of 1996, section 58B, as amended, which stipulates that the principal must compile a School Academic Performance Improvement Plan annually and also report on the progress made in implementing the School Academic Performance Improvement Plan quarterly.

The four case study schools demonstrated that they utilised education legislation to lead and manage schools. It cannot be disputed that education legislation is of vital significance in multiple-deprived rural school leadership. These schools understood the supremacy of the South African Constitution, Act, no. 108 of 1996 and its legal implications. For any educator to do his or her professional duties well, he or she needed to understand how to balance the learners' basic rights and the vital need for education in rural schools. Similarly, the school principals have a responsibility to apply the education laws without fear or favour. Besides the ability of the legal frameworks in determining the scientific relations within the school, it also regulates educators'

professional practices including their behaviours. For that reason, the researched schools indicated that the SASA, no. 84 of 1996 empowered them to understand that the roles of educators, learners, parents and the centrality of knowledge and skills should be viewed as inseparable. The employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998 and PAM document spell out how the teaching duty loads are to be distributed in line with the post level of each educator. Further, these empowered managers and educators in understanding and also dealing with issues of misconduct. Invariably, the interview findings corroborated with the documents review evidence from the field.

It is worth noting that there are various pieces of legislation that are designed for school leadership and management. On the contrary, the participants used them selectively because they failed to mention some of them. The literature reviewed revealed that schools are public institutions that need to be governed and managed through various relevant acts and policies. In concurrence with this view, Oosthuizen (1998) believes that there is an intricate relationship between democracy, law and education. The three acts which dominated the interviews and documents review were the South African Constitution, Act no. 108 of 1996, South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 and the Employment of Educators Act no. 76 of 1998. Similarly, the literature seems to suggest that the South African Constitution has superbly laid a good and strong basis for a free, just and democratic system of education in multiple-deprived rural schools (Msila, 2008). Further, the new policies are underpinned by the interwoven network of regulations on labour relations, performance management and governance which tend to complicate the task of leading and managing schools in multiple-deprived rural contexts (Christie, 2010). Kolzow (2014) maintains that the first century schools are characterised by conflict, hostility, manipulation, confrontation and miscommunication, hence, education laws and policies are more necessary than before. The Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School used SASA to emphasise the abolition of corporal punishment and the EEA to emphasise issues of misconduct, especially section 17. In line with that view, Maphosa and Shumba (2010) aver that the democratisation of schools in South Africa outlawed some of the disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment and newcomer learners' initiation practices in the interest of learners' fundamental human rights. Correspondingly, SACE (2002) states that school managers and educators cannot claim to be servant leaders if they do not conduct themselves in a

proper and becoming manner which does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute and fail to promote fundamental human rights, hence, critical importance of intertwining of servant leadership and education law.

In theory, educational laws and policies are not solely required by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators for leading and managing multiple-deprived rural schools but they are also required by all educators so as to empower themselves for situations where they are confronted by an avalanche of discipline related challenges and for prudent decision making when handling such matters. The theoretical perspective of servant leadership and educational law dictate that the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to model good behaviour so as to influence their colleagues and learners to act ethically and walk within the confines of the law (Russell & Stone, 2002; Smith, 2005). It was discouraging to note that thirty two years after Greenleaf had written his game changer essays, Russell and Stone (2002) still observed a persistent chronic crisis of school leadership, characterised by ubiquitous incapacity of schools to cope with the genuine expectations of parents and communities as their constituents remaining a factor worldwide. In essence, educational legislation brings order and smooth governability of schools. As a consequence, it has an ability to right all the evils that were observed by Greenleaf in various public and private institutions (Greenleaf, 1977). This study deduced that servant leadership does not turn school leaders into lame ducks. Instead, they like all other educational leaders have been armed with an array of educational legislation as tools to manage schools properly. Even though this study seems to show that the four case study schools utilised various educational laws but there were still a multiplicity of shortcomings which gave rise to a cocktail of deviant behaviours foreign to servant leadership. In agreement, Wong and Page (2003) argue that the school principal, Departmental Head and educator do not have to give up their power and authority in order to become servant leaders. In an attempt to substantiate their point of view, they further state that by definition, school principals, DH's and educators possess diverse bases of power, namely, reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expect power without which no school manager or educator can function properly (Wong & Page, 2003).

In reality, both servant leadership and educational law are intended to establish an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning which in turn, yield good learner outcomes. Interestingly, the principal of Mcambi Primary School utilised various pieces of legislation to achieve those organisational objectives. Equally, the educational law and policies' goal is to

challenge school leaders and educators to lead their personal lives and professional lives morally and ethically and their conventions to do the right things and do them the right way (Moosbrugger & Patterson, 2008). Likewise, the Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School emphasised that she used the Employment of Educators Act NO. 76 of 1998 to ensure that teaching periods were distributed equitably to all her educators in the Foundation Phase. Secondly, she also used the same act (law) to caution her colleagues against committing issues of misconduct as stipulated in chapters 17 and 18 of the EEA, no. 76 of 1998. That finds resonance with Wong and Page' (2003) assertion around the oxymoron that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators can be humble servant school managers on one hand and wield a big stick in the form of educational law and coercive power on the other hand.

Similarly, Jusso (2015) observes that in an escalating litigious community wherein parents and learners file a series of endless claims against the Department of Education, it is vitally important that school principals and their colleagues have at least, rudimentary understanding of educational laws. The educator of Sukumani Primary School indicated in the theme on educator professional development earlier in this chapter, that she empowered her colleagues with knowledge and skills required for inclusive education such as screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS). In that respect, O'Connor, Yasik and Horner (2016) postulate that the roles and responsibilities of educators have often necessitated that they should have basic knowledge of special education law and policies. This because, as they put it, educators are normally the first to identify learners with barriers to learning and refer them for evaluation and support by the School Based Support Team (SBST) and the District Special Needs Education Services (SNES). As a consequence, this study has demonstrated that without any knowledge of the legislative frameworks, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators cannot win the battle of creating effective schools and changing the school environment (Jusso, 2015).

To conclude, this study found that some participants were unable to explain how they enacted certain pieces of legislation in order to ensure effective leadership and management. However, this study deduced that servant leaders are not weak leader because they do not only show empathy to their colleagues but they also implement educational policies and acts in order to ensure effective school leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. In essence, the familiarity with the legal prescripts empowers the principal, Department Head and educator to apply to take prudent and legally defensible decision in their day-to-day operations.

6.3.5 For any school principal, department head or educator to succeed in the marketplace, he or she should first succeed in the workplace

It cannot be disputed that for a school principal or Departmental Head to win the hearts of educators and learners to give them a high yield or production during examinations at the end of the year, they need to win them in the classroom during the course of the year. Notably, the majority of participants indicated that the servant leadership principle of encouraging innovation and rewarding excellence was practised in their schools. They demonstrated in-depth understanding of the importance of intrinsic motivation to harness educators and learners' energies and skills and channel them toward hard work. The matter of excellence was elevated to the level when both educators were rewarded for their good work in the classroom and outside the classroom. This unsettled the underperforming educators and made them yearn for quality education and outcomes because of the incentives. This practice was copied by subject educators who also began to sacrifice their money to award learners who performed well in the different terms of the academic year. Essentially, it is vital for educators and learners to work very hard in their academic tasks so as to be fairly rewarded and avert the idiomatic expression which states that 'desert and reward seldom keep company'. This practice was a morale booster. It shaped the organisational or corporate culture of the school and improved both learners and educators' productivity in the classroom. The Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School said:

> *This means that one should encourage citizens who do well by innovating new strategies like rewards for everything they excel in. Trophies and certificates are issued for learners and educators who have achieved best learner performance and higher academic achievements by educators to encourage them. Even in class, educators are encouraged to reward learners in the classroom with best results in tasks throughout they the year.*
>
> (Mrs Luthuli, Departmental Heads of Sukumani Primary School)

This was also echoed by an educator serving in the same school with Mrs Bongi Marjorie Luthuli who said that innovation and rewarding excellence was not part of the initial eight Batho

Pele principles promulgated and gazetted as a 'White paper on the Transformation of Service Delivery' in public institutions in 1997. She said:

> *This Batho Pele principle was an addition to the original list as a result of many of the participating departments' innovative and creative ways of 'doing things better'. Innovation can be a new way of providing better service, cutting costs, improving conditions, streamlining and generally making changes which tie in with the spirit of Batho Pele. It is also about rewarding the staff who 'go the extra mile' in making it all happen. Trophies and certificates are issued to learners and educators who perform well in their school work.*
>
> (Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Similarly, the Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School had this to say:

> *When somebody has performed well, that person needs to be rewarded with a certificate of merit in order to appreciate the good work that, that person has done. So for instance, in my department I call the educator if he or she has done well to congratulate them, even if I need to award them with certificates, I can if they have performed well in terms of the matric results. If they have performed in Mathematics or Physical Sciences I call them to a meeting and congratulate them in front of others so that they can keep up the good work.*
>
> (Mr Mthunzi, Departmental Head of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Additionally, the educator of Zinqobele Secondary School indicated that his school was also practising this servant leadership dimension of rewarding excellence in an attempt to encourage educators and learners to either maintain or improve their performance in multiple-deprived rural schools. Interestingly enough, he alluded to the fact that top ten learners were given a limelight by being called and awarded at the assembly in the presence of all the learners, School Management Team and educators. In essence, this was quite befitting because the top ten learners had outshined the rest of the classmates through performance in the examination. This is how he put it:

Excelling learners are given certificates of excellence at the end of each term. Top ten learners (achievers) per grade are called at the assembly spot to receive their certificates of excellence.

(Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The four case study schools' minutes of meetings and reports were interrogated in order to either rebut or affirm the interview findings. Some of the documents that were reviewed did indicate that the appreciation of good work and rewarding of excellence was taking place in multiple-deprived rural schools. The only challenge that was conspicuous and experienced was the inexplicitness of such practices in the minutes of meetings and managers' reports. The documents only show evidence of the awarding of learners and not educators. The minutes of Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 7 June 2016 evinced that the meeting urged educators to promote competition among learners and appreciate and reward good performance in order to motivate them. Correspondingly, the minutes of Mcambi Primary School Management Team meeting held on 9 January 2017 showed that the Departmental Head thanked her school principal for his encouraging words of appreciation. She further stated that she hoped that the school (educators) would work together to keep a good spirit. Moreover, Sukumani Primary School was different from the other two schools; they awarded promoted Grade R and 7 learners through graduation ceremonies. For that purpose, the minutes of Sukumani Primary School staff meeting held on 22 November 2016 and Foundation Phase meeting held on 10 October 2017 discussed the issue of Grade R and 7 graduation ceremonies respectively. The lists of invited guests including the guest speaker were compiled.

These study findings seemed to suggest that the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools were appreciating educators for good work and also rewarding them for excellence through trophies and certificates of excellence. The educators were only awarded at the end of the year whereas learners were awarded quarterly and in class by their own subject educators. The essence of rewarding excellence was an attempt to motivate both educators and learners to excel in their school academic work and desist from mediocrity. In reality, the awarding of excellence and appreciation of good work was a virtue of good servant leadership because it served as symbol of extrinsic motivation to educators and learners. What appeared to be common practice

in primary schools was the awarding of excellence and appreciation of good work through graduation ceremonies for Grade R and 7. This is an activity which has enhanced competition amongst primary schools and it has increased the learner enrolment in the primary schools that are doing it. Most parents send their children to such schools, especially to enrol in Grade 7. Even though all the researched schools indicated that this was their common practice but it was not clear in the documents that were reviewed. I only picked up the issue around Grade R and 7 graduation ceremony. As a consequence, there was no sufficient congruence between the interview findings and the reviewed documents.

The empirical evidence seems to affirm the view that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators have a moral obligation to inspire other educators by acknowledging their academic and professional needs and rewarding them for good academic performance both in the classroom and outside the classroom (Mwenje, 2016). Correspondingly, Fook and Sidhu (2009) assert that the school principal as an accounting officer has an untold responsibility to transform the educational landscape of the organisation so as to achieve excellence, justice, equity and in the last analysis, greater accountability. The findings seem to suggest that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators experience low morale and burnout. As a consequence, rewarding colleagues for good performance is a huge morale booster and also serves as an intrinsic motivation or drive. All the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools indicated that they awarded both learners and educators who excelled in their school work. Awardees received certificates and trophies from their class managers and school management. This is in line with the common practice; hence, Sibanda (2012) insists that the initiative of benchmarking calls for creativity and innovation so that the best practices can be modified to be suitable for that particular school. The findings from the documents reviewed clearly showed that primary schools used end of year graduation ceremonies for Grade R and 7 award and show appreciation to the learners. This was found to be a common practice in all the primary schools in the sample.

The theoretical underpinnings of this study, namely servant leadership and ubuntu (African Humanism) underscore the significance of embracing the asset-based approach to school leadership and management. In that respect, Russell and Stone (2002) state that the significance of servant leadership and its benefits are inspiration and achievement of a learning school as an organisation. Moreover, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators alike, have an ethical obligation to model good behaviour to their colleagues so that such behaviour can be

emulated for the betterment of school outcomes. This seems to suggest that the school principals and Departmental Heads should attach greater value to their learners, colleagues and their contributions in terms of learner outcomes. That is the main reason why Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora (2008) argue that servant leadership virtues including rewarding excellence are invariably linked to theology. Additionally, this also has a theoretical foundation from the Book of Matthew 25:14-28, when Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth narrated a parable of the talents. The three servants were given talents of money, five, two and one by their master (employer). The one who received one talent of money dug a hole and hid it underground while the other two servants multiplied theirs by two to gain ten and four respectively. Ultimately, the employer (master) said every servant who has a will should be given more, and she or he will have abundance. Similarly, SMTs, educators and learners who are servant leaders deserve to be rewarded for their excellent or good performance in multiple-deprived rural schools. In terms of African Humanism (*ubuntu)* philosophy, Terrell H. Bell as cited by A. C. Ames (1990) says there are often three pillars to remember in education, firstly, motivation, secondly, motivation and thirdly, motivation. Stirling (2014) mentions two types of motivation, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that a school principal can build on to achieve successful school leadership. Undoubtedly, Grade R. and 7 graduation ceremonies and the awarding of certificates of excellence and trophies to educators and learners symbolise servant leadership and ubuntu leadership virtues and the willingness to turn the situation around in terms of learner performance.

In conclusion, it was pleasing to note that the level of caring by both the school management and educators which was demonstrated through rewarding both learners and educators who had performed well in their school work was high. Further, it was interesting to learn that the school culture was engineered in such a way that it negated the idiom which says ‘virtue is its own reward’ which simply means that when an educator or learner performs well or does something good, there is no necessity to reward them because of the fact that their knowledge and understanding that they have done a virtuous act is a sufficient reward itself.

6.4 Chapter summary

To synopsise, schools are regarded as the melting pots where all the servant leadership domains have to be gathered, consolidated, coordinated and implemented as an endeavour to respond to

most of the challenges of poor school leadership, governance, management and administration including teaching and learning. However, if school managers do not have the courage to confront and deal decisively with evils in rural schools, servant leadership will always remain a talk shop and there will be no resultant fruits (Wong & Page, 2003). This study found that servant leadership is suitable for the multiple-deprived rural schools because it is among others, characterised by commitment to the growth of educators and valuing colleagues in building a school community. Further, this calls for the viewing of colleague educators as assets as opposed to viewing them as liabilities in the school. Servant leadership can assist communities around the school to view schools and educators with a different positive worldview. Additionally, parents can then appreciate educators' contributions and support them by attending meetings and in turn, contribute positively to all the activities which seek to achieve the school vision, mission and goals. Undoubtedly, this can improve school leadership at various levels of school management and service delivery in the classroom. Regrettably, this study deduced that the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Education did not have strategies of popularising and entrenching servant leadership practices (Batho Pele) in multiple-deprived rural schools through workshops, seminars and conferences.

In the next chapter, I present a descriptive analysis of data generated on the challenges to the implementation of servant leadership practices and attempts to overcome them.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES UTILISED TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES TO THE PRACTICES OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter was dedicated to the presentation and discussion on the enactment of servant leadership practices in multiple-deprived rural schools. This chapter concludes the three data presentation, analysis and discussion chapters. Precisely, Chapter Seven presents and discusses descriptively the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators' challenges in relation to the implementation of servant leadership. In addition, this chapter presents the measures taken to overcome the obstacles to the enactment of servant leadership in the researched schools. A meticulous examination of the study findings was anchored by the incorporation of the critical questions, reviewed literature and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study.

7.2 Discussion of findings

Similar to the two preceding chapters, these findings emanated from the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews and document review from different study participants comprising of three female Departmental Head, One male Departmental Heads, three male school principals, one female school principal, three PL1 female educators and one PL1 male educator from the four multiple-deprived rural school contexts.

7.2.1 Challenges encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and Educators when implementing servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts

South African education, especially in KwaZulu-Natal is bedevilled with a multiplicity of surmountable challenges, ranging from parents, community, educators and government (Jumare, Maina, Ankoma-Sey, 2015). Research question three sought to examine the challenges faced by study participants in their endeavour to implement servant leadership in their schools. These systemic weaknesses often culminate in what is known as lowering of education standards in multiple-deprived rural schools (Jumare, *et al.* 2015). Firstly, this research question further

revealed that there is an avalanche of challenges which in turn, impede the provision of quality education. Wong and Page (2003) hold a view that school principals, DH's and educators should undergo personal transformation before they can even contemplate transforming their organisations. Secondly, this section also sought to respond to critical question four which investigates the participants' experiences and perspectives on how to enhance servant leadership practices in their rural schools. However, Wong and Page (2003) report that servant leadership is rare in multiple-deprived rural school contexts because of school leaders' lack of bravery of purposeful vulnerability and clear voluntary surrender of personal egoism and pride.

This research found that there is a multiplicity of challenges that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are facing in their multiple-deprived rural schools. These challenges are counterproductive in the sense that they work against the goal to have efficient and effective leadership, management and curriculum delivery in the classroom. Additionally, the plethora of challenges has the capacity to render the school ungovernable and dysfunctional. The study revealed that multiple-deprived rural schools are characterised by lack of adequate teaching and learning resources like textbooks, lack of furniture, classrooms without electricity, theft, vandalism, poor and inadequate sanitation, lack of parental involvement, lack of discipline, lack of safety and security, demotivated learners and educators, poor learner outcomes, high level of poverty, overcrowding and at times low learner enrolment, etc. Specifically, due to the limited number of pages required for this chapter, this section will only explore and report on educator-union dominance and militancy, late coming, absenteeism, non-honouring of teaching periods, under-teaching, educator-learner sexual relationships, assessment and examination malpractices, fraud and corruption, Post Provisioning Norm (PPN). This is affirmed by Du Plessis (2014) who asserts that rural school managers encounter a plethora of challenges which are unique to their working environment. Actually, the data reveals that in some multiple-deprived rural contexts, servant leadership appears to be nobody's business. At times, it was selectively enacted by educators in their schools.

7.2.1.1 The colossal elephants in the room

The findings of this study paint a picture that the enactment of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts is hindered by the union politics and the concomitant dominancy

and militancy in schools. The evidence seems to suggest that there is a stronger dominance and interference of teacher unions in all the aspects of school leadership which includes administration, management and governance. The union members' militancy places a lot of pressure and stress on school principals. The main intention by unions is to establish and maintain a strong voice in all decision making processes in schools. They seem to challenge the powers and authority of school principals either because they are not in their camp or they are perceived to be weaker and can easily be manipulated and in turn, vanquished. It is universally accepted that teacher unions are supposed to be the vanguard of their members but the excessive power and the politicised school environment has a capacity to render rural schools dysfunctional and ungovernable.

Noticeably, the teacher unions have apparently instilled fear in some of the school principals in these schools. As a result, they are no longer courageous enough to take firm decisions independently and without fear or favour. On the contrary, school principals represent the Education Department Director General in KwaZulu-Natal which implies that they are solely accountable to him or her for everything that occurs in schools. The findings seem to suggest that teacher unions have purposefully graduated to have a stronger voice as compared to school principals and the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal. The sharp contradiction is that teacher unions do not account to the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal but they report to their leadership at branch, regional, provincial and national levels. The other finding was that the Department of Education was not innocent in that conundrum because the data seems to suggest that the officials of the Department of Education were making wrong appointments where some educators were appointed to teach the subjects, especially in Grade 12 that they had no content knowledge and pedagogy of. Resultantly, the educator unions capitalised on that when they wanted to attack school principals. One school principal reported that:

> *The teacher militancy (resistance narratives pervasive in educator union's gatherings) opposes servant leadership practices because it promotes the idea that when rendering their services, the educator must measure their services that they offer to schools with the benefits that they get from the employer. Educator militancy projects education outcomes as one of the products in the corporate world; and learners are viewed as tools that are used to produce goods and services (products). This principle suggests that if educators go on strike, or serve poorly, the employer*

will feel the pinch if educators neglect the learners and focus on their personal interests.

(Mr Shabalala, Principal of Mcambi Primary School)

The principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School concurred with her colleague principal when she said:

Unions are mostly protecting and promoting educators' rights and they treat principals as the employer and cover the educators even on wrong doings, sometimes forgetting that a principal is also an educator, but due to the fact that he or she is the only person that is senior in the school, the Department of Education then decides to declare principals as acting and pursuing duties of an HoD. As a result, the union has a tendency of excluding principals from everything even in Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), we feel that principals' rights are rarely looked at and considered important. In fact, principals are just like outcasts and very much expected to be compliant with everything, which is very very unfair.

(Mrs Mbatha, Principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Even the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School weighed in this discourse and echoed the same sentiments by his colleague principals when he added that:

I agree, they think union membership is a defence structure for unruly behaviour of members. They think they contest power with the principal. They want to attend meetings in numbers without the proper consultation with the principal. The principal is called the employer and attacked left and right. They will always threaten to report to the union upper structures or leadership any mistakes made by the principal.

(Mr Ngubane, Principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The principal of Sukumani Primary School could not mince his words when explaining how unions interfere with the normal running of multiple-deprived rural schools. He had this to say:

Yes Mvelase, unions are taking it too far in terms of the legislative framework. Principals are the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of their institutions (schools)

being guided by a number of legal prescripts obtainable from the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996. The most driving factor here is the corruption that most of teacher union leaders want to full up their stomachs at the expense of democracy.

(Mr Mkhize, principal of Sukumani Primary School)

Even though all the four researched schools admitted that they were working under tremendous pressure from the educator unions but some of them did not keep records of the interactions they had with the unions. Some of the written documents were analysed and affirmed the notion of the teacher union power dominance and militancy in multiple-deprived rural schools. In the minutes of the meeting of Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team (SMT) and the National Teachers' Union) (NATU) representatives held on 25 January 2018, it transpired that the union wanted to coerce the school principal and the School Management Team to reverse the decision they had taken to terminate the services of one educator who was a member of their union. This happened against the backdrop that the educator could not be converted to appear in the school staff establishment and the payrolls because she was still appearing in the payroll of her previous school. This was very surprising because that educator did not meet the curricula requirements of a secondary school in terms of her subject specialisation and education phase or band. These minutes revealed that the school principal had sought some advices from the Chief Education Specialist (CES) Circuit Management. Furthermore, it was noted from the minutes that the same educator had refused to sign EHR5 form in order to extend her employment contract until the end of February 2018, citing that she wanted to consult her union. Despite the comprehensive report that was given by the school principal, the union insisted that they wanted to escalate the matter to the level of the District Director.

Furthermore, the logbook entries of Mcambi Primary School demonstrated that the issue of Zinqobele Secondary School was not an isolated case. Even other schools experienced the same political pressure from educator unions. On 13 May 2015 SADTU branch leaders stormed into school and demanded that the school be closed because educators had to join them in their strike action. They confronted the school principal who then told them that he had not received any communication to that effect from the union. He also explained to them that the decision to

close the school had already been taken by the SGB chairperson so as to ensure the safety of learners and educators.

According to another logbook entry, a similar incident occurred on 22 November 2017, where the South African Democratic Union (SADTU) branch leaders visited Mcambi Primary School and accused the school principal of forbidding educators from attending a mass meeting which had taken place a few days ago. This document specified that the school principal told them that he did not receive the circular timeously so that he could inform parents and SGB about the disturbance of teaching and learning and the dismissal of learners early on that day. According to the principal, the circular was received in the morning of that mass meeting. The principal felt that allowing educators to leave learners would compromise his integrity and standing in the community. The union leaders did not accept his explanation and they threatened him.

This documental evidence corroborates the findings obtained through interview data. The study participants' views were also documented in the form of minutes and logbook entries. Both revealed that school principals do not have sufficient power and authority to manage schools. As a consequence, they succumb to the political pressure of the organised labour (trade unions). School principal have learnt strategies to appease the educators union members in the name of 'labour peace'. Some have started to give site committee members slots in staff meetings in order to neutralise their militancy. Even educators themselves are more loyal to their unions as opposed to their school principals and SMT. Undoubtedly, this challenge curtails school principals' ability to manage schools effectively and ensure quality curriculum delivery.

In this study, I found robust empirical evidence which suggests that educator unions are having an upper hand in school leadership and management in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This phenomenon of union abuse of power may be explained by prior studies which have concluded that there are important disparities between the management of multiple-deprived rural schools where educator unions appear to be wielding strong political power and influence and where the trade unions are weak (Msila, 2014).

In the studies conducted by Msila (2014) and Jaume and Willen (2017), the findings suggest that powerful educator unions are capable of causing paralysis to the school leadership, and in turn, impact negatively on the outcomes for the establishment of effective teaching and learning

culture. This is supported by Wills (2016) who argues that, essentially, the manner in which the organised labour exert political power and control over the school leadership and management and the resultant conflicts that ensue between them and school principals are critical factors which justify the poor learner attainment in multiple-deprived rural schools. According to Livingstone (2012), some commentators view educator unions as greedy and serving their own personal interests, whereas unions perceive themselves as protectors of educators (their members). Corroboratively, the literature revealed that unions have a great impact on educator effectiveness because they, more often than not, influence who gets appointed in various posts within the Department of Education, including how they conduct themselves and perform after having been appointed.

Theoretically, it became evident that there is no congruence between the study findings and the theoretical framework underpinning this study. According to Russell and Stone (2002), school principals are not supposed to be afraid of union leaders. They need to demonstrate courage of the highest order and through their actions, set up the ethical tone in their multiple-deprived rural schools (Russell & Stone, 2002). School principals reserve the custodianship of school leadership as the Chief Executive Officers and accounting officers of their schools. Legally, they are not supposed to be dictated to on how to manage schools by educator unions. In disputing this notion of the justification of the union dictatorship and militancy, Russell and Stone (2002) add that school principals should establish appropriate power taxonomies and fearlessly wield their power and authority as servant leaders when interacting with various stakeholders including organised labour. According to Khoza (2012), all leaders should desist from employing strategies of grandeur to gain obedience and compel others in silence and compliance. Contrary to this existing toxic union leadership, Nussbaum (2003) states that *ubuntu* attempts to build bridges between school principals and union leaders. Faeth (2004) adds leadership occurs within designated power and various authority structures in a school. For that reason, this researcher further clarifies that servant leadership allows school principals to deploy power; authority and influence in their schools and that power taxonomy comprise of social power, reward, expert, legitimate and referent power (Faeth, 2004). This will in turn, aid them to act with expected level of integrity and refuse to be swayed into taking wrong decision by trade unions.

In conclusion, all the four secondary school principals appeared to suggest that they operate under tremendous political pressure from educator unions. This phenomenon of union

dictatorship and militancy became an obstacle which made it difficult for school principals to freely and courageously serve their school communities. As a consequence, they project themselves as feared colossal elephants in schools.

7.2.1.2 Late-coming and absenteeism in multiple-deprived rural schools

The findings seem to suggest that some educators in these participating schools are not servant leaders. The data from the four researched schools indicate that late-coming and absenteeism by educators is rife in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. If educators come to school late and also absent themselves from school without valid reasons or without following the normal due or prescribed procedures of applying for various leaves of absence that can have a negative impact on the behaviour of learners. For that reason, this is synonymous with the narrative that 'the tree once said to the wood chopper that: the axe is one of us'. The learners will copy that deviant conduct and remark that they copied it from educators. Likewise, if it is done by school managers, educators will copy it and cite that they copied it form the School Management Team. Resultantly, the educators will no longer be able to discipline learners who come late and also absent themselves unnecessarily. This deviant behaviour by educators does not support the implementation of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Further, this impacts negatively on the attempts to provide quality public education to the disadvantaged rural learners. The implication here is that there are some educators who would like to see schools being managed through laissez faire leadership style where educators do as they please. The Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School reported that:

> *On Tuesdays, we have staff briefing sessions which start at 7H00 O'clock in the morning. In these briefing sessions we still have educators who are struggling to cover time. Fortunately, these sessions are chaired by the principal and he always encourages educators to keep time and treat these sessions as very important because it is where we discuss matters which may hinder our performance. Sometimes he raises his voice to make us see how serious time is.*
>
> (Miss Mpanza, Department Head of Mcambi Secondary School)

Her school principal concurred with her viewpoint and this is what he had to say:

Yes, out of ten (10) educators one of them does come late regularly. If I question her about it, she replies by indicating that it was not her intention but her husband is the cause for this. Her husband is working as an attorney in Durban, apparently, he does not have a car as he is new in the profession and he demands that she has to transport him to Mandeni taxi rank everyday in the morning so that he can catch a taxi to Durban. She has indicated that if I continue to put pressure on her to arrive early, it would mean that she has to divorce her husband first because he is very stubborn. I am afraid of destroying their family.

(Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

On the issue of absenteeism by educators the same Departmental Head added that:

We also agreed that if an educator will be absent from school, he or she must find a substitute educator before hand to take over the work that is planned for the day on which the educator will be absent and pay the substitute from his or her own pocket. This has helped to minimise unnecessary absenteeism because educators find it difficult to pay R50-00 for a day on which they are absent themselves.

(Miss Mpanza, Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School)

This deviant behaviour has also been observed by the educator of Zinqobele Secondary School who boldly indicated his surprise with the unabated level of late-coming and absenteeism by educators in his school. He astonishingly recorded his view as follows:

The level of absenteeism and late-coming among educators is high. I think the cause is that most educators are demotivated.

(Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Similarly, the educator of Sukumani Primary School admitted that late-coming and absenteeism do occur in her school. She added that all the educators who fail to observe punctuality are caused to sign the late-arrival register and if any educator decides to leave school early or during the normal teaching hours, he or she is made to sign the early departure register for record and filing purposes. This is how she put it:

All educators who arrive late or leave early should sign the late arrival or early departure register and furnish reasons for their late arrival or early departure.

(Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

Even the fourth researched school has the same experiences of late-coming and absenteeism by educators. The following words came from the educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School who shared the same sentiments about the misconduct by educators who come late and also absent themselves from school. She articulated her version of these phenomena of late-coming and absenteeism by educators by stating that:

With regard to late-coming by educators, unfortunately, we do not have enough human resources. So, when an educator is coming late to school, one of our colleagues who is free must occupy that class so that he or she can assist that class and then swap periods with the late educator. Same thing applies with absent educators and they leave work for the learners.

(Miss Zulu, educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

The pleasing thing was that all the four schools had systems in place to deal with educators who displayed deviant behaviours such as late-coming and absenteeism. The principal of Zinqobele Secondary School keeps the educator timebook on the table in his office in order to see to it that all educators write the correct times of arrival in the morning and departure in the afternoon. He further stated that if an educator comes late repeatedly he or she gets reprimanded by him. Secondly, if an educator absents himself or herself he or she has to report directly to him and when he or she comes back to school he or she fill in the leave form and attach the relevant supporting documents. This is how he put it:

I make sure that the timebook is in my office. Educators have to write down the correct times of arrival and departure. If the educator repeatedly comes late, he or she gets reprimanded by myself and I even involve the immediate supervisor of the educator. In addition, educators have to report to me directly as the principal if he or she is absent from school and he or she fills in the leave form. The leave has to be approved by me.

(Mr Ngubane, principal of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Correspondingly, the principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School does not permit laissez faire leadership (delegated leadership) style to take root in her school. This is the type of leadership where the school principal is not hands-on and often delegates every task to his or her colleagues and does not monitor the execution of these managerial tasks. This was indicated by her response when she said:

> *Well, on the issue of educators' late-coming, I call that particular educator and tell him or her dangers of late coming and after that he or she begins to come early. With regard to absenteeism, it is a bit challenging because you cannot punish the educator. So, what I normally do is that I workshop them.*
>
> (Mrs Mbatha, principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

Additionally, various documents were also made available and interrogated with the purpose of triangulating the interview data from the twelve research participants. However, it was noted that there was a limited data obtained from reviewed documents in most of the researched schools. All the four researched schools experienced the phenomenon of late-coming and absenteeism by educators. In the SMT meeting of Zinqobele Secondary School held on 29 February 2018, the issue of absenteeism was deliberated on, and the meeting agreed that it was indeed affecting both learners and other educators negatively. The school principal told the meeting that when addressing the issue of absenteeism he would like to talk to the educator concerned in the presence of his or her Departmental Head. He further stated that he believed that that approach would reduce the developed patterns of absenteeism in the school. Similarly, the minutes of Sukumani Primary School SMT meeting held on 27 January 2017 discussed the problems of late-coming and absenteeism by educators at length. The principal insisted that absenteeism and late-coming had to be strongly discouraged. The meeting agreed that any educator who absented himself or herself had to call the school principal and report his or her absence rather than just keeping quiet. Secondly, on the issue of late-coming, the school principal registered his concerns and also advised the meeting that when an educator was late for school he or she had to call him and report his or her late arrival so that the SMT could assign a reliever to occupy his or her class. On arrival such educator would have to start from the office of the principal and report his

or her arrival. The principal would then cause him or her to sign the late arrival register and same thing would apply for early departure, an educator would sign the early departure register.

These findings from all the four researched schools seem to suggest that the principal's position in multiple-deprived rural contexts is not an easy one. Educators are causing a lot of headache for their school principals. The data generated through semi-structured interviews revealed that there is proclivity of late-coming and absenteeism in these rural schools. As a consequence, the ethos and servant leadership are adversely affected by these professional malpractices. The positive part of this is that three school principals reported that they do not allow these deviant behaviours to go unpunished and unabated but they have systems in place on how to attempt to overcome the problem of late-coming and absenteeism by educators. Correct management of timebook, late-coming and early departure registers serves as strategies to minimise these deviant behaviours. I was flabbergasted to learn that the principal of Mcambi Primary School allows an educator to come late to school every day and does not institute disciplinary measures solely because he does not want to destroy her marriage. This contrary to servant leadership principles and the non-negotiables as contained the ANC January 8th Statement of 2007. Additionally, the practice of hiring an unknown and unqualified person to serve as a substitute educator by an educator who has chosen to be absent from school is against the policies of the Department of Education and the SACE Code of Professional Ethics which stipulates that any educator who stands in front of learners in the classroom should have been registered with SACE and possess a SACE certificate. This exposes learners and other educators to an untold danger. Finally, the persistent late-coming and absenteeism by educators destroys rural school education and also send a bad message to learners, who may ultimately copy that foreign tendency. Apparently, there is a correlation between the interview findings and the documentary review data. Both demonstrated that educators continue to come late to school and also absent themselves from schools. This puts a strain on the shoulders of the SMT because they have to make arrangements for certain classes to be occupied due to the late-coming and absenteeism of educators.

The available literature notes that there is a high rate of absenteeism and late-coming is multiple-deprived rural schools. In a study conducted by Musyoki (2015) it was found that absenteeism appeared to be one of the far-reaching unethical practices encountered by many schools internationally and nationally. Absenteeism is often conceptualised as any failure by an educator to report for duty or else remain at school as scheduled in terms of policy, irrespective of the reason advanced by the educator concerned (Ivatts, 2010). Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) (2016) stipulates that the formal school day for educators in a public school is 7 hours. Further, it is worth noting that the low income countries' schools, including South Africa have chronic and high rate of educator leave of absence (Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan & Van Rensburg, 2010; Obiero, Mwebi, Nyang'ara, 2017). On the contrary, this study revealed that the data in rural schools is incomplete and to a greater degree not trustworthy (Reddy, *et al*., 2010). Understandably, a vast amount of literature demonstrate that the high rate of educator absenteeism costs the state exorbitant amounts of money through salaries paid to incumbents on sick leave, substitute educators and the concomitant administrative costs (Reddy, *et al.,* 2010; Brooks, 2015; Musyoki, 2015; Obiero, *et al.,* 2017). Resultantly, educators who absent themselves regularly are incapable of providing quality and effective teaching and learning in the classroom which has a huge bearing on learner performance (Brooks, 2015). The legislative framework, section 17 (1) (m) states that an educator shall be guilty of misconduct if he or she without leave or valid reason, is absent from school (EEA, No. 76 of 1998). In addition, section 14 (1) (a) goes further to state that an educator employed in a permanent capacity who absents himself or herself from school for a period exceeding 14 consecutive days without permission from the principal will be deemed to be discharged or dismissed from his or her post (EEA, No. 76 of 1998).

Additionally, compounded with the maleficence of high and persistent educator absenteeism, is the issue of the prevalence of late-coming by educators. In a separate research, Maile and Olowoyo (2017) accentuate that late-coming to school is viewed as one of the critical problems that tormented many schools, and there is rarely any school that is not affected by this problem. It is also significant for various participants in the education sector to view late-coming to school by educators as a major variable that has the ability to hinder the success of effective teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal (Jumare, Maina & Ankoma-Sey, 2015). Sahito, Khawaja, Panhwar, Siddiqui and Saeed (2016) investigated the significance and impact of proper time management in the teaching profession in comparison with learner

attainment. The findings are consistent with Jumare, Maina and Ankoma-Sey's (2015) study which found that educator punctuality is perceived as the sacred soul of the school, and there can be no other fundamental resource than punctuality. As a consequence, if an educator comes late by a few minutes regularly, those minutes are recorded and computed to make up 7 hours, then the educator is caused to complete a leave form.

Servant leadership theoretical framework does not promote late-coming and absenteeism by educators. In essence, late-coming and absenteeism by educators is a foreign conduct that educators need to refrain from. Russell and Stone (2002) believe that the prime motivation for being an educator and a leader should be a desire to selflessly serve the learners, parents and the community. Sipe and Frick (2015) note that late-coming and absenteeism are in contrast with the virtues of honesty, integrity and uprightness which are the cornerstones of servant leadership in schools. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) conscientiously argue that time is one of the most fundamental resources that all educators and principals should utilise optimally in order achieve the goal of quality public education in multiple-deprived rural schools. Even though it cannot be disputed that educators are morally wrong by coming to school late and also unnecessarily absenting themselves from school, but the axiomatic expression 'that the buck stops with the school principal', finds resonance in this study. Similarly, Russell and Stone (2002) are theoretically in agreement that servant leadership has potential to change schools and societies on the grounds that it stimulates both personal and institutional transformation.

To conclude, servant leadership has not yet thrived in multiple-deprived rural schools because some educators have not imbued and internalised the values of servant leadership. This study does not need a rocket scientist to pronounce that multiple-deprived rural schools continue to be faced with a herculean challenge of late-coming and unjustified absenteeism which can clearly be categorised as a blatant abuse of leave. This, undoubtedly, hinders the honest enactment of servant leadership in these schools.

7.2.1.3 Servant leadership: A missing link in educational delivery in multiple-deprived rural schools

The findings from the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools demonstrated that servant leadership appeared to be an abstract concept to a certain population of educators. Additionally, this research found that some educators were not doing what they were supposed to do in terms of prioritising and doing justice to the curriculum delivery. The non-honouring of teaching periods, under-teaching, educator subject content knowledge deficit and lack of pedagogy or didactic skills, learner subject content knowledge deficiency and lack of accountability at the level of Post Level 1 educators were contributory factors to the proclivity of successive poor learner performance (outcomes). Some of those educators who honoured their teaching periods did not teach effectively, as a result, the learners ended up having scanty amount of written work and assessment tasks. This content knowledge deficiency led them to dodging classes and not honouring their teaching periods. This conundrum caused a greater harm in the education of the learners because of the fact that they had knowledge gaps which impeded them from performing well academically. This study found that the SMTs were not managing the curriculum implementation effectively and efficiently. The School Management Teams of these schools had, according to the evidence presented, to shoulder the blame because they were supposed to be instructional leaders who planned, managed and monitored curriculum delivery in the classroom.

Further, this seemed to suggest that there was something wrong with the selection process or the appointment of educators. There was no strict scrutiny in terms of rigorous interviews in order to get a suitable candidate. In certain instances some educators who occupied substantive vacant posts were not subjected to selection processes such as interviews because the Department of Education, especially the province and the district offices identify unemployed educators from the provincial database, issue them with permanent appointment letters and sent them to schools to assume duty. Currently, substitute educators' names are sent to schools and School Governing Bodies in a Proforma 1 form for interviews. This problem is compounded by the fact that no open vacant post bulletin has been released in the past five years. More importantly, it cannot be disputed that non-honouring of the teaching periods and under-teaching can be classified as misconduct and in addition, this renders the school dysfunctional. It also gives a school a very bad image in the community.

Essentially, the documentary evidence revealed that both secondary schools had more progressed learners in Grade 12 who had not met the promotion requirements in Grade 11 in the previous year of 2017. Zinqobele Secondary School had a total Grade 12 learner enrolment of 59 and 24 of those were progressed learners. That meant that only 35 learners were promoted in Grade 11 in 2017. Similarly, Siphosakhe Secondary School had a Grade 12 learner enrolment of 42 and a total of 21 learners were progressed in Grade 11 in 2017. This meant that only 21 learners were promoted from Grade 11 in December 2017, and other half constituted a cohort of progressed learners. These schools had a plan of implementing the National Department of Basic Education's policy on multiple examination opportunities, commonly known as modularisation programme. In that programme all the progressed Grade 12 learners were allowed to write only four or five subjects out of seven subjects in 2018 and the remaining two or three subjects would be written in June 2019. One study participant responded honestly and stated that:

> *Yes, for instance, last term I discovered that one educator had taught only 30% of what he was supposed to teach as per the CAPS policy. More especially, the Intermediate and Senior phase educators are struggling to cover the curriculum. Most of them are struggling to master the content/concepts that they are supposed teach. In some instances, the educators find it difficult to proceed with new topic when it is clear for them that learners have not mastered the first content topic either because they are lazy or they are always absent or disruptive in the classroom.*
>
> (Mr Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

In support of the proclivity of under-teaching, one study participant indicated that the chances of the non-honouring of teaching periods are limited in his school because educators are stationed in the classrooms. On the contrary, the findings seem to suggest that despite the fact that they are stationed in the classrooms but not enough teaching and learning take place behind closed doors or in that black box. As a result, this maleficence ultimately necessitates the conducting of extra classes or extra lessons in all the grades in the school. This is what he said:

> *Firstly, our learners come to our classrooms. We no longer have staffrooms. It is hard for educators to dodge classes. We also have period registers. The SMT also control educators' work. Notwithstanding all these above measures, I can also add that this is not enough because sometimes results prove otherwise. We also have*

extra classes in Mathematics in Grades 8, 9 and other critical subjects in Grades10 to 12.

(Mr Cele, educator at Zinqobele Secondary School)

The problem of not doing justice in curriculum delivery in the classroom was prevalent in many schools. This affected learners greatly because they had a lot of content knowledge gaps which could make it difficult for them to compete with townships and urban learners. This posed a danger because globalisation demanded that learners of the world had to work at the same level and also compete fairly on the international academic stage. Those were learners who were expected to compete for scarce skills jobs (professions) in the job market like artisans, doctors, Chartered Accountants, etc. This was documented in School Management Team meeting of Zinqobele Secondary School held on 8 April 2016 which deliberated extensively on the poor performance of Grade 10B in the common quarterly tests of that year. Due to that poor academic performance, the SMT ultimately resolved that those learners had to be given History as one of their subjects in an endevour to improve their performance. Even though that decision was implemented but the History educator lodged a complaint citing that that management decision was taken without prior consultation.

Furthermore, in another set of minutes of Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 28 March 2018, it was discovered that some educators had not taught an acceptable amount of work as compared to the total amount of work or subject topics planned for term one of the Annual Team Plans (ATPs) of the 2018 academic year. In that meeting, the school principal requested educators to indicate how exactly they intended to cover or complete the backlogs. Statistics showed that only 53% of the term one work had been covered in the classroom and the question was what had happened to the 47% of teaching and learning. In an endeavour to affirm the finding made above that the school management cannot be exonerated from this quagmire, I now substantiate that by referring to Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team minutes of the meeting which reported on the planned visit by the National Department of Education scheduled to take place from the 23th to 27th August 2016, the school principal voiced his concern that the broader picture that was painted in the school was that SMT only showed interest in their own subjects, contrary to the general expectation to manage the entire curriculum in the school. In addition, in another Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2018, the school principal reprimanded the

Departmental Heads for their failure to report in the past two weeks. His major concern was the monthly curriculum coverage that seemed to be ignored due to reasons either known to DHs themselves or individual educators.

The School Management Team members insisted that the March 2018 common quarterly tests mark lists (marksheets), all marked answer scripts, one question paper and memorandum per subject had to be submitted to the Departmental Heads for post moderation on the first day of the second term of the 2018 academic school calendar, which was the 10th of April 2018. According to the SMT of Zinqobele Secondary School, that would curb the tendencies of neglecting classes as educators used to do marking in the classrooms instead of teaching, thus losing the 47% of the teaching time. Obviously, that was one of the reasons why the Siphosakhe Secondary School Sciences and Mathematics Departmental meeting held on 21 April 2016 resolved that lesson plans and lesson preparations had always to be done for every lesson to be conducted. The Departmental Head even stressed that lesson plans had to have a time frame and a breakdown of what was going to be taught and on which day and date of the week. In an attempt to underscore the matter of the lack of the subject content knowledge on the part of subject educators, the Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting with the National Teachers' Union representatives held on 25 January 2018, recorded the school principal as having said that one educator obtained 30% in Grade 12 Accounting in 2016. That was attributed to her poor classroom management skills and obvious lack of subject content knowledge which was even witnessed by learners. He went on to report that when Grade 12 Accounting learners tried to ask the subject educator questions of clarity during her lesson presentations in the classroom, she openly told them that unfortunately she did not know the answers to their questions because she had done her specialisation (major subjects) in primary school education. To exacerbate the problem of failure to become servant educators (leaders), the minutes of the Zinqobele Secondary School Management Team meeting held on 7 June 2017 also revealed that some educators deliberately failed to submit their daily subject lesson preparations. The house discussed the matter at length and ultimately agreed that the Departmental Heads had to be tasked to confront those educators and also record the interventions before the matter could be escalated to the office of the school principal.

As indicated above, in the minutes of Siphosakhe Secondary School Sciences and Mathematics Departmental meeting, held on 25 January 2018, it was reported and recorded that more

progressed learners moved from Grade 11 at the end of 2017 to do Grade 12 in 2018 school academic year. In addition, the meeting recommended that all of them had to be caused to register for multiple-examination opportunities commonly known as 'modularisation' in order not to affect the overall passes percentage of the school at the end of 2018 academic year. As a result, they would write four or five subjects in the October / November 2018 National Senior Certificate examinations and also write the remaining two or three subjects in June 2019 academic year.

Similarly, at the School Management Team meeting of Sukumani Primary School held on 16 January 2016, the minutes recorded that this dire situation was also discussed. The school principal reported to the meeting that the Department of Education had numerous complaints that learners were not competent at the secondary school level which meant that they did not get good and firm foundation at the primary school level. He further stated that Mathematics skills in primary schools were very low. Moreover, in another set of minutes of the staff meeting held on 16 January 2018, it was stated that some subject educators had a tendency of not completing the Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) or syllabi on time. The principal pleaded with educators to respect or observe the notional or contact time. He also asked educators to be in class and teach at all the appropriate times.

The issue of under-teaching and non-honouring of the teaching periods cannot be overemphasised. The minutes of Mcambi Primary School staff meeting held on 21 April 2016, recorded that one Departmental Head pleaded with her colleagues to show honesty and integrity in executing their duties. She requested educators to continue teaching effectively even if the principal was absent from school and not only work when they saw the principal. Further, the minutes of Mcambi Primary School Management Team (SMT) meeting held on 21 May 2018 recorded that it was discussed that Mathematics content knowledge had to be shared by educators. The principal even indicated at that meeting that educators were not teaching the subject (Mathematics) properly because they did not know and understood it. This plainly meant that their content knowledge of Mathematics was shallow.

Essentially, these reviewed documents provided corroborative evidence which relates perfectly with the interview voices of the study participants. It has become clear that educators are not serving the community selflessly. They had the tendency of not honouring their teaching periods. Even those who honoured their teaching periods did not teach effectively. They practised what is

known as ‘functional absenteeism’ because they were always present at school but under-taught learners in the classroom. Only 47% of the teaching contact time is utilised by educators at the detriment of quality public education. Interestingly, some educators only teach when they see the school principal around. It was also worth noting that some educators go to class to do marking instead of teaching the children of the poor and marginalised communities. Consequently, this dishonesty impacts negatively on the enactment of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. The study participants revealed that as part of mitigating circumstances, they use period registers, which on the other hand seem not to be effective. Others have resorted to the dissolution of the staffrooms in order to ensure that learners are consistently occupied and taught every day.

A study conducted in South Africa by Modisaotsile (2012) demonstrates that there are numerous signs that indicate that there is a continuing crisis in education. Similarly, Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) contend that effective teaching and learning in schools is a major challenge in a number of countries of the world. Educators do not take their teaching profession seriously by ensuring that they teach learners to an expected standard which makes them succeed during their assessments and examinations and in life in general. Even Redding and Walberg (2012), note that educator enthusiasm is more critical than pep talks and melodramatics. In line with literature review presented earlier in Chapter Two, the above findings seem to suggest that some multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal are reported to be having poor learner outcomes, especially in science subjects (Ngema, 2016; Olasehinde, Williams, Yahaya & Owolabi, 2018). In their study, Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) found that there is a high failure rate of learners in Grade 7 in one school which recorded 0% pass rate since the year 2013. Additionally, Rice (2010) posits that the noticeable decline in learner achievements among those educators who are considered to be experienced in secondary schools suggests that they are not pouring out genuine content knowledge and skills required to put learners at the expected cognitive level. Likewise, it is increasingly pointed out that one of the most significant drivers of learner attainment is teacher quality (Azam & Kingdom, 2013). It cannot be disputed that possession of sufficient subject content knowledge (subject matter) is not adequate to lead to effective teaching and learning, the educator is also required to master the pedagogical subject content knowledge so as to avoid under-teaching and non-honouring of teaching periods (Sibuyi, 2012; Olasehinde, Williams, Yahaya & Owolabi, 2018). Astonishingly, this maleficence continues in defiance of the legal framework as espoused by Section 16, subsection (1) which stipulates that if it is alleged that an

educator is unfit for the duties attached to the educator's post or incapable of carrying out those duties efficiently, the employer may appoint in writing a person to inquire into the relevant allegations. If the allegations of incapacity have been proven to be true, the employer may transfer the educator to another post, reduce the educator's salary or grade or discharge the educator from service (EEA, No. 76 of 1998).

Similarly, Russell and Stone's (2002) servant leadership theory model reveals that a chronic crisis of leadership and curriculum management in multiple-deprived rural contexts is now a devastating factor worldwide. They further clarify that by positing that this manifests itself in a pervading incapacity of schools to cope with anticipation of various constituencies in education. More importantly, educators and principals should be mindful of the fact that they should, first and foremost be committed to their learners' brighter future and also their colleagues' professional achievements (Focht & Ponton, 2015). Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) share the same view with Russell and Stone (2002) by firstly noting that there are third world schools which can be described as dysfunctional and disadvantaged, and secondly, that good and effective school leadership is expected to challenge the status quo and also establish meaningful and positive changes as a vehicle of the improvement of learner attainment in the classroom. This view is also shared by Du Plessis (2014) who argues that the effectiveness of the multiple-deprived rural schools in breeding good learners is invariably dependent on good teaching and learning environment. It has become evident that ubuntu values cannot be phased out of the equation in the work environment. For that reason, Msila (2014) avers that underperforming primary and secondary schools ought to inject a certain set of ubuntu values so as to steer the school as an organisation to success. Khoza (2013) is in agreement with Msila (2014) and he shows appreciation that *ubuntu* leadership demands that educators become accountable for both poor learner outcomes and their unprofessional behaviours.

As expected, the literature on servant leadership recognises that it has the ability to improve school leadership skills in a myriad of school leadership realms, including governance, administration and curriculum management (Russell and Stone, 2002). Further, the proponents of servant leadership suggest that educators should have the new and requisite skills (teaching pedagogy) and appropriate subject content knowledge that assist them to be competent in the delivery of quality education in the classroom. It stands to reason, therefore, that origins of non-honouring of teaching periods and under-teaching are two-pronged, firstly, educators have not

accepted to become servant leaders and secondly, they lack subject content knowledge and pedagogical skills. In an attempt to overcome these challenges, servant school principals are advised to model good behaviour and also be visible by enacting 'Management by Walking Around' (MBWA) so that they can be able to observe whether effective teaching and learning do take place in their schools (Russell & Stone, 2002). Furthermore, Khoza (2012) stresses that if ubuntu values philosophy can be implemented, multiple deprived rural schools can function effectively and efficiently. Any deviation from *ubuntu* principles normally coerces the educator to go into limbo and ultimately wither (Khoza, 2003).

In this thesis, the four researched schools experienced the same problems relating to non-honouring of teaching periods and under-teaching. In addition, educators failed to master the subject content knowledge and they depicted pedagogical (methodological) skills deficiency. As a result, they failed to complete the Annual Teaching Plans (work schedules or syllabi). In light of these developments, servant leadership implementation suffered greatly. This is in line with Sipe and Frick's (2015) contention that under-teaching and non-honouring of teaching periods are against the characteristics of servant leadership traits such as ethics and trustworthiness. Notwithstanding the fact that this study advocates for harsher measures against the dereliction of duty, it does not rule out the possibility for voluntary dedication and self-introspection. As a consequence, Mihelic, *et al.,* (2010) believe that true educators demonstrate integrity and honesty and learn from their own and other's mistakes and engage in self-improvement and self-correction. The school management recognised that there was a huge problem which threatened the provision of effective teaching and learning and committed themselves to strengthening curriculum management for the benefit of learners and educators in their schools.

7.2.1.4 The gargantuan leopards and their enticing spots and the betrayal of a good course

This study has found that some male educators are not behaving like servant leaders who have the interest of the school at heart and are responsible enough to view or consider learners as their own children. This foreign relationship could be appropriately described as 'angels with horns and devils with wings'. Equally, these educators can also be viewed as 'leopards with their enticing spots'. Consequently, their failure to act in *loco parentis* presented them as utterly dangerous to work with learners and also obstructive and destructive to the future of such under-

age and innocent souls. The accompanying emotional and psychological harm to the wellbeing of the girl learners have a perilous impact on the academic performance of these learners in the classroom.

Obviously, the findings from secondary schools seem to suggest that some male educators are professional wolves in a sheep clothing (skin). Two secondary school participants indicated that educator-learner sexual relationships are rife in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. Undoubtedly, the concept of servant leadership is impeded by these heinous acts. This is a lucid indication that the concept of servant leadership, together with its inherent good values has never ever crossed their minds. This ethical and moral leadership approach is probably foreign to them. This scourge is exacerbated by the level of poverty in rural areas. Parents become defensive, negligent and lenient because they; together with their daughters (who are girl learners) receive monetary and / or material benefits from these so called educators who have inappropriate sexual relationships with their daughters who are learners by definition. Undoubtedly, this kind of foreign behaviours gave birth to trust deficit. Some parents and the broader community can no longer trust the educators entrusted with the innocent girl learners in multiple-deprived rural schools. Therefore, ethically, it cannot be disputed that these educators have betrayed the good course of this noble teaching profession. This is what one study participant had to say:

> *Educator-learner sexual relationship is happening because I still hear complaints from parents saying educators are falling in love with learners.*
>
> (Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Even though the Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School started by dismissing that educator-learner sexual relationships were taking place but she eventually agreed that she was aware of the sexual relationship which was reported to the school principal in the past few years and she then reported that:

> *We had such incident before and it was reported to the school principal. The school principal took the matter further. The report we got was that when the Department of Education contacted the parents, they seemed to support the relationship and the learner was above age and they ended up getting married.*
>
> (Miss Zondi, Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Similarly, the findings indicated that even at Siphosakhe Secondary School educator-learner sexual relationships were prevalent. At times that was initiated by girl learners themselves who behaved in a special way which attracted or caught the attention of the male educators. Like in the case of Zinqobele Secondary School Departmental Head, the educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School initially denied having knowledge of the inappropriate relationships between educators and learners but her statements clearly indicated that she knew that it was happening in her school. She said the following:

> *I have never encountered that in our school but it's a problem with girls. Mainly it happens with girls but as an educator I have to explain to learners the outcomes of engaging themselves in sexual relationships with educators. They throw themselves at them and at times they talk to their friends telling them that they love them.*

(Miss Zulu, educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

The educator of Sukumani Primary School was ambiguous in her response and this is what she said:

> *This is also treated as a serious misconduct. The Departmental Head reports it to the school principal and relevant measures are taken in accordance with the law.*

(Miss Buthelezi, educator at Sukumani Primary School)

This study revealed that the sensitivity of the educator-learner relationships causes the educators and principals to demonstrate utter silence. As a result, even though three of the four researched schools disclosed that they had knowledge of the educator-learner improper relationships happening in their schools, they were completely reluctant to mention that. Some of these schools do not keep documentary evidence in fear of the bad publicity. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2018 at Zinqobele Secondary School revealed that the matter of educator-learner intimate relationships was deliberated on at length and it was emphasised that that was aimed at cautioning both the novice and experienced educators against learner sexual abuse. The management committed themselves to investigating any allegations of educator-learner improper relationships and taking appropriate actions that would serve as a deterrent to others.

Consequently, these documents' data corroborate the interview findings presented above earlier. These findings make the researcher deduce that educator-learner sexual relationships are still taking place in multiple-deprived rural schools. This is exacerbated both by the rural living conditions characterised by squalor and the sharp decline in the moral fibre of society. Further, this phenomenon raises scepticisms as whether the examination marks that are awarded to girl learners are indeed authentic and credible. The utter silence by both educators and learners creates a fertile ground and perpetuates these heinous acts, and in turn, protects the perpetrators of learner sexual abuse. This study further found that that school principals find themselves between a rock and a hard place because when these incidents are reported to parents they tend to condone them and protect their so called 'sons in law'. Sex, money and examination marks have a capability to weaken the quality of education in multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

The study participants' perspectives were consistent with the huge amount of available literature on educator-learner sexual relationships. The Promotion of Access to Information Act, no. 2 of 2000 affirms that the South African government system prior to 27 April 1994 was notorious of a secretive and unresponsive culture in schools which usually led to unabated abuse of power compounded with human rights violations. (South Africa (Republic), 2000). Despite the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998, South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 and the South African Council of Educators' Code of Professional Ethics which prohibit sexual relationships with learners from any school, with or without consent, educators are still falling in love with learners and are also abusing them sexually (SACE, 2016). Approximately 10% of all learners in Grades 8 to 11 admitted to having had inappropriate sexual relationships with their educators (Busby, 2012; Simuforosa, 2015). The SACE (2016) reports that the number of cases of educator-learner sexual relationships is growing at a shocking rate and requires urgent intervention by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Education. Contrary to the dominant view of placing male educators at the centre of improper relationships with learners, Shakeshaft's (2010) research revealed that female educators often had a tendency of falling in love with handsome school boys and invite them to their offices and houses to have sexual intercourse with them. Similarly, Akaab (2011) posits that the learners who become victims of sexual harassment can equally be either males or females. This is further affirmed by Geddes, Tyson and McGreal (2012) who argue that the principal factor influencing the high prevalence of female sexual abusers of school boys is the problem of under-reporting.

Contrary to the South African context, in some states in the United States of America, an educator does have 'legal capacity to have a sexual relationship with a learner due to the protection of the 'fundamental rights to privacy' (Busby, 2012). Resultantly, in South Africa, an educator who is found guilty of having an improper sexual relationship with a learner, regardless of the learner's gender, is deregistered with SACE and also dismissed from work by the Department of Education (SACE, 2016). More importantly, the literature emphasises that most learners who are victims of educator-learner improper relationships cannot concentrate properly in the classroom and their education is disturbed and their educational goals are shattered (Geddes, Tyson & McGreal, 2012; SACE, 2016; Yusuph, 2016).

The theoretical frameworks that undergird this study do not show any correlation between what is really taking place in multiple-deprived rural schools and what is actually supposed to be happening. Apparently, the educator-learner sexual relationships are utterly unwarranted in the realm of the teaching profession. Actually, what parents and learners want and what schools need are principals, Departmental Heads and educators who are servant leaders and truly demonstrate integrity, honesty trust and courage to face and vanquish this challenge which intermittently raises its ugly head and has a potential to damage the character of an educator and the image of the school (Russell & Stone, 2002). Additionally, all educators who are servant leaders have an obligation to demonstrate great concern for learners and exercise integrity in order to establish trust within the organisation and desist from cutting corners (Russell & Stone, 2002; Focht & Ponton, 2015). The expectation from parents is that educators as servant leaders would care more for learners than their own personal and selfish interests (Focht & Ponton, 2015).

Russell and Stone (2002) explain the trust deficit among learners, educators and also parents. They argue that trust is the keenness of the learner to be vulnerable to the actions of the educator based on the expectation that the educator will perform a particular action significant to the trustor (learner), irrespective of the capability to monitor or control the educator's egocentrism. Gomez (2013) shows great concern and emphasises that the significance of awareness and self-awareness enhances both educators and learners' understanding of ethics and values. The other immense responsibility for servant school principals and educators is the healing process for all the learners who have been exposed to sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse in the hands of the educators (Patterson, 2003; Mihelic, Lipicnik & Tekavcic, 2010; Spears, 2010; Gomez, 2013). More importantly, the school management needs to develop a mastery of skilled

and empathetic listening, which in turn, will be followed by appropriate investigation and imposing of sanction which is often a dismissal (Gomez, 2013; PAM, 2016).

On humanistic grounds, Khoza (2013) claims that the adoption of probity as an element of ubuntu in schools can assist educators to be honest and upright and also to conduct themselves in a way that is beyond reproach. In that way, educators can learn to respect learners' fundamental right a secured life and future. Ankers (1986) pursues the same line of argument and affirms that probity enhances mutual trust and confidence in the ethics of the organisation. Cordeiro (2003) further argues that educator-learner sexual relationships cause the erosion of organisational and societal ubuntu values and norms, thus perpetuating the rot in the form of learner sexual abuses. In addition, in an effort to avert this maleficence, good personal and professional virtues have the ability to guide educators' behaviours and engender care, respect and good morals.

To conclude, this study found that educators are taking advantage of learners because of the highest level of poverty in multiple-deprived rural communities. The 'marks for sex' phenomenon is rife in schools because it takes place behind closed doors and is also under-reported. This abhorrence is further exacerbated by moral decay on the part of girl learners who use various tricks in order to end up being in bed with male educators who are affectionately called 'blessers'. Undoubtedly, this is against the spirit of the Constitution, Act, no. 108 of 1996 and the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996. In legal terms it is tantamount to 'statutory rape' and warrants a dismissal and a court conviction. Expectedly, educators are supposed to be trusted and demonstrate conscientiousness in the process of working with learners (Woolderink, 2010).

7.2.1.5 The Post Provisioning Model (PPM) and Post Provisioning Norm –PPN)

These findings seem to suggest that all the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools are faced with a huge challenge of low post provisioning norm (PPN). This phenomenon is caused by low enrolment in both primary and secondary schools. Mostly, the causal factor is that these schools are situated in deep rural areas with sparsely populated communities. This PPN phenomenon complicates things for educators because they end up having more teaching periods per week. It is not surprising that all the two researched secondary schools were not performing above 65% in Grade 12 results as per requirement by the national and provincial Department of

Education in KwaZulu-Natal. Schools are not managed in the manner in which they are supposed to be managed. The school principals and Departmental Heads are overstretched; as a result, they spend more than ninety percent (90%) of their time teaching in the classroom at the expense of school leadership, administration and management. As a consequence, the willingness and attempts to diligently serve the school community and parents is done a hard blow or adversely affected by prevailing human resource circumstances. School principals are no longer the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of their schools as the departmental officials often refer to them. The Department of Education treats them like any other employee on the shop floor of the plant (school as an organisation). To put it plainly, the Post Provisioning Model (PPM) and Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) in their current form make servant leadership a mirage in multiple-deprived rural school contexts.

The Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School was at pain when explaining how the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) poses challenges which hinder the provision of quality education as a basic service to all learners of the multiple-deprived rural schools. She sadly stated that the total enrolment of her school was 347 and the 2018 staff establishment or PPN was only 14. This is how she chose her words:

> *Educators are allocated subjects according to their specialisations. It does happen that one finds herself having to carry a heavy duty load due to being the only one with that learning area (subject) which is strenuous indeed. The Department of Education had then instructed schools to cut down on some streams to only one so that educators can be distributed evenly. This, in itself poses a challenge as each stream has very few people who specialised in it which will lead to the other educators teaching subjects they have no knowledge of. In fact cutting down on streams is equivalent to setting the school for failure as the DoE does not act promptly in relocating and replacing educators.*
>
> (Miss Zondi, Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School)

Similarly, the educator of Mcambi Primary School stated that her school was not different from other disadvantaged multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. A lot of imaginable things were happening in her school which led to their professional work environment being characterised as full of hardship and contrary to any attempt to improve and maintain learner

performance. Her account was a clear demonstration of the postulation of going through a rough patch in relation to teaching and learning, leadership and management. She down spiritedly stated that:

> *PPN is a big problem in our school. In the Senior Phase there are many subjects and educators are compelled to teach all the subjects including those which are not their specialisation. As a result, they fail to complete the ATP's. Secondly, some educators do not have Mathematics as their major subject but they teach it in the Senior Phase (Grade 7), and learner performance in Maths is very poor. Educators teach what is easier for them. At times they request other colleagues to help them with other topics. The Foundation Phase is better because all educators do Maths at Tertiary level.*
>
> (Mrs Zincume, educator of Mcambi Primary School)

Furthermore, the Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School weighed in this narrative and explained how her school has suffered due the challenges emanating from the PPN phenomenon. She surprisingly reported that her school's total learner enrolment is 500 whereas, the PPN is only 13. This is what she had to say:

> *PPN is a global problem that faces schools in terms of the manpower or human resource e.g. educators). The SMT is forced to have a full teaching load while they are supposed to take other responsibilities in the running of the school. When educators are declared surplus to the staff establishment the learners are left without educators in some classes. In my school for instance, there is no class with an enrolment of less than 55 learners. To overcome such challenges we simply distribute work amongst ourselves which leads to taking a bit of high load of subjects. We have no other alternative but to propel the wagon forward.*
>
> (Mrs Bhengu, Departmental Head of Sukumani Primary School)

The documents reviewed revealed that the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) was one of the hindrances which frustrated all the good intentions to implement servant leadership practices in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. All the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools

had a major challenge of the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) and secondly, the two secondary schools were T65 schools which meant that they experienced a problem of poor Grade 12 learner performance (outcomes). The three sets of minutes of Siphosakhe Secondary School Governing Body meetings of 22 November 2016, 04 December 2017 and 01 February 2018 indicate that the issue of the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) was discussed. It was reported that the PPN of the school was seven (7) from 2016 to 2018. The PL1 educators were five (5) plus one Departmental Head and one principal. I, as a researcher was dumbfounded because the school starts from Grade 8 up to Grade 12 and it has two subject streams, namely, Commerce and Science. In another meeting mentioned above which was attended by the Chief Education Specialist (CES) Circuit Management, he was quoted as having said: "Abakhulu bathe kufanele bahambele izikole ezincane bezwe izinkinga zazo ngenxa yemiphumela okungaholela ekutheni lezozikole zivalwe". He went further to say that: "Inkinga ye-PPN iphoqa ukuthi kube ne-subject stream esisodwa, ekubeni izingane kazifani".

As a result, the Departmental Head for Mathematics and Sciences, Mr Lindani Mthunzi of Siphosakhe Secondary School had a teaching duty load of 22 periods per week which made curriculum management a huge and cumbersome exercise for him and his department. The minutes of the School Management Team (SMT) dated 24 January 2018 recorded that this Departmental Head for Mathematics and Sciences, Mr Lindani Mthunzi was allocated six different subjects to offer in different grades, namely, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Natural Sciences and Technology. Surprisingly, in the same SMT meeting the school principal Mrs Nozipho Mbatha was allocated a duty load to teach four different subjects in four different grades, namely, Life Orientation Grades 8 to 12, Economics Grade 12, Accounting Grades 10 to 12 and Business Studies Grades 10 and 11. Similarly, the documents revealed that the principal of Mcambi Primary School, Mr Innocent Zakhele Shabalala was allocated a duty load of two subjects in different grades, namely, Mathematics in Grades 6 and 7 and Natural Sciences in Grade 6. The difference in the case of the principal of Sukumani Primary School, Mr Siyavuma Mkhize who is recorded to have been allocated four periods per week to teach Technology in Grade 7.

The minutes of Mr Lindani Mthunzi's Mathematics and Sciences Departmental meeting held on 18 January 2018 revealed that he monitored educators' subject and resource files (with lesson plans, daily preparations, Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs), continuous assessment (CASS)

records, etc) only twice per month. Further, these records (minutes) of his departmental meetings disclosed that he checked the samples of learners' written work in their exercise books per subject once per annual academic term, (three months), which means just shortly before they wrote their term-ending (quarterly) tests or examinations.

Consequently, the documented evidence corroborated the findings obtained through semi-structured interview data from the four researched schools. The documents reviewed bore a clear testimony of some of the challenges of the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) experienced by all the four researched schools. The teaching duty loads carried by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are astonishingly high. It stands to reason therefore, that the PPN makes the principals; Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 educators' professional work of ensuring effective teaching and learning in schools a very cumbersome exercise. Similarly, the PPN hindered the enactment of servant leadership because participants carried heavy teaching loads. Additionally, the SMT's were also expected to manage the curriculum. In an attempt to overcome this challenge they allocated more teaching periods to themselves and also reduced the subject streams to only two, namely, Sciences and Commerce.

Relevant to this study, Du Plessis (2017) contends that due to the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN), there is a great deal of conflict regarding the educator workload which relates to their duties and responsibilities. According to Du Plessis (2017), the phenomenon of PPN creates a lot of unhappiness and dissatisfaction among educators because they end up being assigned subjects whose content knowledge and pedagogy they do not have. This model forces school principals and Departmental Heads to have a huge teaching load on top of their leadership and management tasks.

This perspective is also maintained by Ntuli (2012) who argues that the Post-Provisioning Model (PPM) does not take into consideration the distribution of suitably qualified educators. As a consequence, some of the substantive vacant posts in multiple-deprived school contexts are filled by under-qualified and unqualified educators, thus creating a mismatch in terms of curriculum requirements. The great unfairness which impacts negatively on the provision of quality education across all grades is that the national policy on the Post-Provisioning Norm weights Grades 5 and 7 less than the other grades in the school. This forces the KwaZulu-Natal province to make corrections before distributing posts to all schools in the province (Gustafsson, 2016).

The school post provisioning norm was at variance with the spirit of servant leadership. Theoretically, the purpose of servant leadership is to serve the entire school community including learners and educators. Servant leadership has the ability to influence positive organisational culture which in turn, shapes the School Management Team and educators' attitudes and behaviours (Russell & Stone, 2002). One of the reasons why rural school principals fail to serve colleagues and learners properly is that they are overloaded and need more support so as to serve the school community in a way best suited for learners. According to the legal framework, it cannot be disputed that there is nothing that school principals can do to abolish the PPN. In contrast, the school principals can only influence educators and determine outcomes of their behaviours and tasks (Russell & Stone, 2002). Essentially, to underscore the above Russell and Stone's (2002) assertion, Gomez (2013) contends that servant school principals can rely on their personal values to effect great impact on the culture and performance of the school as an organisation.

In summary, this study demonstrated that multiple-deprived rural schools are greatly affected by the Post Provisioning Model (PPM) of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the post provisioning norm (PPN) of their schools. This despised phenomenon of PPN puts a strain both on the human resources and financial resources of the school. Additionally, it has contributed immensely to the dysfunctionality of some multiple-deprived rural schools and the constant decline in learner outcomes, more especially, in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12. As a result, that is contrary to the spirit of servant leadership which advocates for improved service delivery in the classroom.

7.2.1.6 Servant leadership: A discarded concept

The educator of Zinqobele Secondary School disclosed that corruption occurs in the selection processes especially promotion posts in schools and Circuit Offices. This is what he said:

> *The only corruption I know of is that of promotional posts. Most of the schools do not perform well because they are led by people who do not deserve but were promoted through nepotism and favouritism.*
>
> (Mr Cele, educator of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The above point of view was further accentuated by the Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School who sounded very much concerned about that rot which was taking place in schools and the Department of Education in general. This is how she explained this phenomenon:

> *To answer the question about the selling of Post Level 1 and promotional posts, it is true, this is happening in different levels of management; from SGBs to Circuit Managers I witnessed an incident where a Circuit Manager wanted R7000-00 from my sister. Other cases are not of selling posts but are of abuse of power whereby officials who occupy high ranks in the Department of Education give posts to their friends and families. This is very bad. It causes unnecessary unemployment and poverty and leads to people committing crime in order to live. The unions also have a contribution in such cases. They, too, give posts to their friends just because they are active in politics. They do not consider whether those people are capable of doing the work. Most of those people are the cause of poor learner performance in schools.*
>
> (Miss Mpanza, Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School)

In addition to fraud and corruption of selling Post Level 1 and Promotional posts taking place in schools and offices of the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, the findings of this study also revealed that even learner performance report cards were sold to learners in order to make extra cash by some unscrupulous and self-serving educators. Similarly, the Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School also admitted that she was aware of one incident of fraud which took place in her school a few years ago. This was undoubtedly an incident which had the ability to immensely tarnish the image of the school, and in turn, cause parents to lose confidence in educators, and the school in general. This is how she explained it:

> *A few years ago one educator was found to have sold an examination report card to a learner. This incident was reported by a learner's parent who had been monitoring his child's performance for the whole year. What made him suspicious was that the learner had failed quarterly tests in March, June and September and unexpectedly passed the final examination in December of that year. Out of suspicion, the parent came to school with two report cards with different results or*

marks and the matter was investigated and the educator was found guilty of making a fraudulent report card and he was reported to the Department of Education.

(Miss Zondi, Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The issues of fraud and corruption have turned multiple-deprived rural schools malfeasances infested organisations. Educators wanted to make money at all costs. Nobody can issue a school report card to someone who is going to benefit a huge sum of money from an insurance company without expecting anything in return. These acts are totally at variance with the spirit and principles of servant leadership. The incident of Zinqobele Secondary School was not an isolated case. This was rife in secondary schools. In that matter, the principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School had this to say:

I know of one case where I found out that one educator had signed on my behalf to provide a report card to a learner. She was providing a report card to a parent that was claiming from an insurance company. She forged my signature. The learner was not part of the school. It was a learner not known to us. I was phoned by a manager of the insurance company at Empangeni. When I got there to my shock there was a report card of my school and the learner was not there at school. I think she might have been pushed by one of the parent whose child had died and she wanted to claim from the insurance company.

(Mrs Mbatha, principal of Siphosakhe Secondary School)

The principal of Mcambi Primary School disclosed that his school was also not immune from such malpractices and agreed that at times educators are found to have committed some assessment and examination malpractices. The manipulation of learners' marks constitutes fraud and is classified as a dismissal offence. Assessment tasks (School Based Assessment tasks) or SBA constitutes a certain percentage towards the learner's final mark. For a example, in the General Education and Training (GET) Band: senior phase, grades 7, 8 and 9 Mathematics, SBA counts for 40% and the examination mark counts for 60% in the final examination in December. In addition, in Foundation Phase, Grades 1, 2 and 3 the School Based Assessment Tasks constitute 100% at the end of the academic year. In the Intermediate Phase, Grades 4, 5, and 6

the SBA counts for 75% whereas the examination marks makes up 25% at the end of the school academic year, namely, in December. Lastly, in the Further Education and Training (FET) Band, Grades 10, 11 and 12 the SBA mark constitutes 25% whereas, the examination mark constitutes 75% towards the final examination mark in December each year. This illustrates the significance of assessment tasks and examination marks in the promotion and progression of learners across the Basic Education Level in both primary and secondary schools. To accentuate this view, this is what he said:

> *Yes, a small portion of the educators are found to be engaged in some malpractices just because they lack control and supervision. As I am controlling the instructional practices and not relying on the delegated individuals, I see the rate of malpractices diminishing.*

(Mr Zakhele Shabalala, principal of Mcambi Primary School)

In order to triangulate the interview findings, I requested and analysed minutes of meetings and reports of the participating schools. The School Management Team minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2018 at Mcambi Primary School recorded that the analysis of results was presented and analysed by all SMT members who were present at that meeting. It was pronounced that the Grade 4 results were good. The school principal did not believe what was presented and he sounded sceptical about the authenticity and reliability of the marks that were presented. He failed to suppress his emotions and remarked that the results were good but the question was, were they really results, and were all the Grade 4 learners good in such a way that they deserved those results. In addition, in another School Management Team meeting of the same school held on 18 June 2018, one Departmental Head spoke at length about corruption and fraud in learner assessment. She implored other SMT members to be fair in what they were doing at the SMT level. The school principal weighed in the discussion and remarked that, that was one of the reasons he requested that question papers had to be submitted to him. He went further to state that people had their agendas. He further said that SMT members and educators had to avoid copying gbad behaviours.

The interview findings correlate with the documentary review data obtained from the four researched schools. This study deduced that schools are immune from fraud and corruption malpractices. There are SGBs, principals and departmental officials who have become obsessed

about making money through the selling of posts and report cards. Some educators manipulate learners' assessment and examination marks in order to project a good image about themselves. Additionally, the level of nepotism and cronyism are rife in schools and higher offices of the Department of Education. This demonstrates that some educators and officials are not in this department to serve the community by they are there to serve their own interests. Essentially, this lucidly indicates that servant leadership in non-existent and has become a 'discarded concept'. Fraud and corruption destroy the moral fibre in schools. The true values of humanity such as ethics, morals, altruism and magnanimity have become obsolete. It is worth mentioning that the turning of learners' report cards into commodity destroys the future of learners and perpetuates under-development and sluggish economy which cannot address South African triple challenges such as poverty, unemployment and inequality. The form of corruption where teaching and promotion posts are given price tags has an ability to destroy schools and the education system in general. This foreign culture is a recipe for dysfunctionality and under development of school, which in turn, causes poor learner performance.

This study revealed that there was a paucity of literature written on the issue of fake school learner examination report cards or selling of report card. Instead, there was plenty of literature on 'marks for sex in the education system. News 24 published a news article on 16 October 2000, titled 'Fake report cards 'rife' in schools in which they reported that some South African learners were buying their path to matric with fake or fraudulent report cards. The report explained that that problem was more prevalent when Grade 11 learners wanted to be promoted to Grade 12 and also the Grade 7 learners who wanted to be promoted to Grade 8.

The findings of the research conducted by Yusuph (2016) also link the issue of fake report cards or fake examination marks to sexual corruption in the education sector, especially schools. The reviewed literature refers to learner sexual abuse and exploitation by educators as extortion and patriarchal bargaining (Dorph & Sjogren, 2014; Yusuph, 2016). In his or her study, Akaab (2011, p.1) reports that he or she recorded one of his or her learners having said the following: "I will not sleep with you, you can fail me 100 times, I will continue to resist. I will not sell my body for marks". Sex for marks invariably occurs between female learners and male educators (Dorph & Sjogren, 2014).

Furthermore, the literature reports on a deeply entrenched corruption involving the selling of Post level 1 and promotion posts in the education sector. In a study conducted by Du Plessis and

Cain (2017) one of the findings was that favouritism relating to promotion posts was rife in schools which, in turn, resulted in conflict within the school. The Ministerial Task Team which investigated the selling of posts in South Africa reported that there was sufficient evidence that there was improper and unfair influence in the appointment and / or promotion of educators in schools and offices of the Department of Education (Republic of South Africa, 2016). Resultantly, corruption, and nepotism (cronyism) lead to the appointment of incapable school principals and educators, solely because of the 'jobs for cash' saga (Department of Education: Ministerial Task Team, 2015). Further, the report revealed that at times educator unions are involved in influencing the outcomes of the interviews for promotion posts. Mhlongo (2017) postulates the same position and explains explicitly that educator unions shape that interview processes and determine the outcome of the selection process. It cannot be disputed that ubuntu principles seek to inculcate fairness, integrity, openness and transparency. Consequently, Msila (2014) unequivocally contends that organisation leadership that enacts ubuntu as a basis for its management and administration ensures that a brand new culture of inclusiveness or collectivism is promoted in multiple-deprived rural schools.

This study found that there is no congruence between the findings and the two theoretical frameworks utilised to underpin this research. Matters of fraud and corruption do resonate with the concept of servant leadership. According to Russell and Stone (2002), once a school principal or educator dissociates himself or herself from the virtues of credibility, they either advertently or inadvertently become prone to temptations of committing fraud and corruption. In addition, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to lead by example and develop ethical influence to persuade colleagues to follow them in new endeavours of creating fraud and corruption free environment in their institutions. Fraud and corruption destroy the moral and ethical fibre of schools and society in general. Essentially, Russell and Stone (2002) further emphasise that integrity, honesty and trust form the integral constituents of good school leadership. In the African humanistic or *ubuntu* leadership theory it is emphasised that school principals and educators have a primary duty and responsibility to care about learners and ought to make every effort to serve them, and serve them with honesty, integrity and distinction (Khoza, 2013). Essentially, ubuntu philosophy has an ability to bring about the restoration of the dignity of school principals and educators who are currently perceived to be involved in an avalanche of unprofessional conducts including fraud and corruption (Mbhele, 2015).

To conclude this theme, some study participants were aware that fraud and corruption were taking place in schools and different offices of the Department of Education. The cases of fraud comprised of selling of report cards and manufacturing of formal tasks assessment and examination marks. In addition, issues of corruption centered more prominently around the selling of educator teaching posts and promotion posts. It is worth noting that some study participants were afraid of responding and providing information relating corruption in schools, especially the selling of posts. The data that I received was given to me after the date of the interviews. Even when the information was given, they sounded very hesitant to cooperate with me as a researcher. It therefore became clear that they wanted to keep this information secretly under their feet. The most lamentable and risky part of their utter silence was that they acted like accomplices because the Promotion of Access to Information Act, no. 2 of 2000 and section 32, sub-section (1), paragraph (b) of the Constitution, Act, no. 108 of 1996 compel them to report such information to the police or trusted and honest authorities in the Department of Education if that information is needed for the purpose of protecting learners' rights (Republic of South Africa, 2000; 1996).

7.2.1.7 Carrying of dangerous weapons and drug abuse

The data highlighted that schools are not safe due to the possession of dangerous weapons by learners and drug abuse. The main intoxicating substance used was dagga. This was exacerbated by the Constitutional Court ruling which legalised the private use of dagga such as smoking. The reality was that learners were taking advantage of and misinterpreting that court ruling to make schools drug infested areas and drug market places. The carrying of dangerous weapons makes schools unsafe for both learners and educators and war zones which are really not conducive to effective teaching and learning. Undoubtedly, these challenges threaten the thriving and sustainability of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. The other finding pointed to the fact that learners, especially girls had established sophisticated ways of bringing drugs into the classroom, such as cooking eggs mixed with dagga and brought them to school under the guise of lunch box snacks. One study participant had this to say:

> *Our school experienced that problem and a learner nearly lost his life after being stabbed which led to the victim being admitted to hospital and discharged after a*

month. This nearly caused faction fights whereby some learners wanted to avenge the stabbing. Secondly, the issue of illegal substance abuse, dagga to be exact, is still a concern especially among the matriculants. Shockingly, it was recently discovered that Grade 11 girls bring cooked eggs mixed with dagga in their lunch boxes to school as if it is just snack. The learners who were known to be performing well have dropped drastically and their attendance has deteriorated.

(Miss Zondi, Departmental Head of Zinqobele Secondary School)

The above sentiments were also articulated by another educator who felt that the carrying of dangerous weapons in schools had an ability to hinder the provision of quality education to learners in multiple-deprived rural schools. This is how she put it:

Carrying weapons and smoking illegal substances lead the school to be plagued by violence, crime and disruptive classroom behaviours which result in very poor school learner performance. To manage such behaviours, a system of pro- active and constructive discipline should be implemented where learners would experience an educative and corrective approach in which they learn to exercise self control, respect for others and accept the consequences of their actions.

(Miss Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School)

The possession of dangerous weapons is a problem that affects both secondary and primary schools in multiple-deprived rural contexts. It stands to reason therefore that the moral decay has no boundaries. This seems to suggest that family structures at home have also broken down. This affirms the axiom that 'a school is a microcosm of society'. Some parents do not understand that they are also educators on primary basis and that educators are only there to serve as educators on secondary basis to inculcate educational knowledge, values, attitudes and skills. This undoubtedly hampers the enactment of servant leadership in schools because educators operate under tremendous fear. One study participant reported that:

When we discover that there is a learner that is carrying a dangerous weapon we confiscate that dangerous weapon and keep it safely. Secondly, we invite both the learner and the parent to a disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary committee or

tribunal checks what the school code of conduct for learners say about dangerous objects on school premises. Normally, the sanction is suspension.

(Mr Mkhize, principal of Sukumani Primary School)

The schools made their minutes of meetings available to me as a researcher for scrutiny. The minutes of the School Management Team of Zinqobele Secondary School held on 27 January 2017 revealed that schools were not safe. These institutions of learning had become gangsters' paradise. Learners were carrying dangerous weapons and they also abused drugs. The Grade 10A learners were identified as the main culprits in the issue of smoking. The boys' toilets had become the market place for the drug dealers. It was pointed out that the merchants used the opportunity to sell illegal items in the boys' toilets during break times. One SMT member suggested that some male educators had to be tasked to visit the boys' toilets during break times in order to invade the boys' privacy and distract the drug merchants.

Undoubtedly, most of the foreign behaviours by learners in schools are as a result of a faulty home upbringing or an upbringing that had gone wrong. The carrying of dangerous weapons and the smoking of dagga changed their behaviours in schools dramatically. As a result, the meeting of Grade 10 learners' parents of Siphosakhe Secondary School held on 5 June 2017 recorded that the issues of the prevalence of learner misconduct was discussed at length and this is how the secretary of the meeting recorded the first educator who spoke to parents at the meeting and this is how he or she put it: '*uthisha ubikele abazali ukuthi bakhathazekile ngabantwana babo indlela abaziphatha ngayo. Uthisha akayilutho kubantwana, abanqeni ukuthi uthi ubhizi (umatasa) ufundisa nabo ngapha bayamemezana. Abanye bayahleka. Ngaleyondlela, uthisha usala eyisithutha.'* The second educator was recorded in the minutes to have said this to parents: 'inhlonipho iphelile kubafundi, badlala ama-cellphones e-klasini, bathukane phambi kukathisha.' Due to the length of the reports presented to Grade 10 learners' parents at their meeting, I cannot exhaust all the pertinent issues raised in that meeting; I am tempted to document the third educator who also made her presentation to parents. This is how the secretary of the meeting captured it: '*lababafundi banezinga eliphezulu lomjolo kosisi nobhuti*. One parent is reported to have commented that: '*kulokhu osekukhulunywe ngothisha, kumele kutholakale ikhambi lokuthi*

singenzenjani ukuxazulula lenkinga. Uma umuntu engasafuni ukufunda akahlale ekhaya, angaphazamisi abanye abasazimisele ngokufunda.'

The above documents review data are congruent with the participants' perspectives in relation to the carrying of dangerous weapons and possession of drugs by learners. Three of the four researched schools indicated that possession of dangerous weapons and drug abuse are rife. These weapons are used to trigger fights which eventually lead to faction fights and the closure of schools. The magnitude of this problem is very immense because in one school, one boy ended up fighting for his life in hospital. It also transpired that the learners who carry weapons are disruptive in the classroom, and that behaviour affects learner attainment greatly. Dagga is the main drug that is used by learners. The worse part of it is that is also used by girl learners and they mix it together with their lunch food like cooked eggs. Undoubtedly, these challenges do not make the situation conducive for the enactment of servant leadership in these schools. Educators are trained to deal with drugs and dangerous weapons. However, they find themselves neglecting teaching and learning in order to pay attention to incidents of violence, ill discipline and drug abuse. To put it more plainly, the possession of dangerous weapons and drugs in schools are contributory factors which cause despondency, uncertainty and insecurity for educators. For that reason, these are obstacles which need to be removed without any inch of tolerance and leniency. Further, these challenges increase the level of absenteeism and decline both in the quantity and quality of learner outcomes.

What is promising is that schools do everything that is humanely possible to decisively deal with such learners through disciplinary measures including suspension. In addition, the weapons are confiscated and kept safely as exhibits during the disciplinary hearings. The school managers make use of the code of conduct for learners when taking decisions, which is a commendable exercise.

The above viewpoints are underscored by Cherry Creek School District (2013) which states that the carrying and use of dangerous weapons by learners in schools is detrimental to the safety and success or future of learners, educators and the non-educators. This is further supported by Richmond School (2015) which emphasises that the availability of weapons on the school premises creates an unacceptable danger which may result in injuries and death and also create an unnecessary climate which has the ability to undermine the core function of the school, namely, effective teaching and learning. Even though the literature reports that there are various

weapons which are often brought into the school premises by learners, however, Cassellins (2017) observes that the most common dangerous weapon which is often found in learners' possession is the knife. He further reports that his study recorded 13 cases of the possession of handgun and 14 counts of possession of long gun.

The literature further notes the prevalence of the use of intoxicating substance within the school premises. This finding conforms to Sugut and Mugasia (2014) and Mothibi's (2014) studies which report that drug abuse amongst secondary school learners in South Africa is a huge national concern. Similarly, in their study, Tshitangano and Tosin (2016) argue that the use of substances such as cigarettes, cannabis (marijuana or dagga) and other drugs in schools is a great contributory factor to a high rate of late-coming, absenteeism, bunking of classes, depression, loss of concentration and dropout by affected learners. According to Ncontsa and Shumba (2013), educators unnecessarily spend more time dealing with disciplinary cases instead of ensuring that there is the provision of quality education. They further add that such an environment hinders educators from completing the syllabus (Annual Teaching Plans) (ATP) and in turn, lead to poor school academic performance (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013).

The theoretical understanding of servant leadership does not acquiesce with the interview and documents review findings. Theoretically speaking, Russell and Stone (2002) advocate that to avert these problems, servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be pioneers, who are brave to run the risks, create virgin paths, shape contemporary approaches to old and recurring problems and also demonstrate strong values and convictions that drive their actions. In essence, the school management and governing body need to formulate school policies so as to deal decisively with the dangerous weapons and drugs in schools. The ability to eliminate the problems requires them to think beyond the day-to-day prevailing and startling realities (Gomez, 2013). In addition, for many school principals, this is a characteristic which demands of schools discipline and consistent application of school rules (Gomez, 2013). In support of this contention, Russell and Stone (2002) argue that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to be initiators and demonstrate their willingness and ability to be extraordinary change agents.

The findings from the data presentation and discussion demonstrated that all the researched schools were faced with difficult but surmountable challenges ranging from educator union dominance and unjustifiable militancy, educator-learner sexual relationships, non-honouring of

teaching periods and under-teaching, poor learner outcomes, fraud and corruption, late-coming and absenteeism by educators, post provisioning norm and carrying of dangerous weapons and drug use, and the list is endless. It became evident that school principals were willing to intervene and address some of these problems. However, at times, their strategies did not bear fruits. Despite the call by Kouzes and Posner (2010) that school principals are expected to exemplify to colleagues how they should feel, think and act in the work environment, educators appear not to be heeding that call. Surprisingly, the matters related to educator-learner sexual relationships, fraud and corruption appeared to be the holly cows which they reluctantly commented about. Furthermore, these challenges rendered schools dysfunctional and led to poor learner performance. This is further underscored by Du Plessis (2014) by contending that rural settings are often characterised by a cocktail of factors which impact negatively on the delivery of quality public education.

7.3 Chapter summary

In this section, the study findings sought from the twelve participants through the utilisation of semi-structured interviews, the experiences and perceptions about the challenges of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. Similarly, documents were analysed, presented and discussed in detail in line with the interview questions posed to participants and critical questions listed in Chapter One. Further, I also infused the literature review presented in Chapter Two and lastly, the two theoretical frameworks which constituted the basis for this study and located in Chapter Three in order to either corroborate or refute the study findings. To recapitulate succinctly, Chapters Five, Six and Seven focused on data presentation and discussion. These chapters painted a lucid picture that even though study participants stated that they understood the concept and also implemented servant leadership practices in their leadership, administration and management, including teaching, but it became evident that it was not enacted satisfactorily. However, Wong and Page (2003) contradictorily argue that many school leaders marvel at servant leadership but there is a disjuncture between their expressed interest and behaviours emanating from the fact that they are not keen to address an array of evils of obsession of power and arrogance. Hence, a conglomeration of challenges which had an ability to impede the honest enactment of servant leadership dimensions in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Undoubtedly, this caused immensurable harm to the culture of teaching and

learning and school climate. In an attempt to overcome some of these challenges, school principals committed themselves to preaching the gospel of servant leadership. Astoundingly, not enough stringent measures were taken to confront some of the ills which beset their schools.

In the subsequent chapter, I present an evaluative analysis of the key themes emerging from the findings presented in the previous three chapters.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION OF KEY THEMES AND EMINENT TRENDS EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters were dedicated to the descriptive analysis and discussion of the research findings. Chapter Eight is devoted to the evaluative presentation and discussion of the key themes which emerged from the data that was responding directly to the research questions. Further, this section endeavours to create a synergy among critical questions, reviewed literature and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study.

8.2 The following key themes emerged

The key themes which emerged from this thesis were the following: servant leadership as a social compact, visionary school leadership (fourth industrial revolution in education), sacrosanctity of teaching and learning and dysfunctional schools, professional learning communities (PLC's), legislative centralism and mandate, extrinsic motivation, unions and social dominance theory, learners as statutory rape victims, rampant fraud and corruption, servant leadership and its fall from grace and schools and centres of unsafety and insecurity.

8.2.1 Servant leadership as a social compact

The consistent key theme in the entirety of this research was that multiple-deprived rural school participants viewed servant leadership as a binding social compact which is characterised by traits of putting colleagues, learners and parents first as major clientele and also going beyond the call of duty in the execution of leadership, management and teaching tasks (White Paper on the Transformation Service Delivery, 1997; Woodward, 2010). One study participant, named Innocent Zakhele Shabalala of Mcambi Primary School explicitly expressed himself by stating that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators get inspired by what they do and in the process, go beyond the call of duty. According to Ambali, Suleiman, Baker, Hashim and Tariq (2011), if a school principal effectively performs his or her roles and responsibilities as is customary with eloquent characteristics of a servant leader which are paramount serving the needs of the colleagues, it often leads to relentless commitment of those who are led. Further,

social contract between schools and society is normally a shared reality and it is built and rebuilt each time when the expectations of the school or society change (Woodward, 2010). In essence, servant leadership recognises that parents, colleague educators and learners are important pillars in an endevour to provide quality public education in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. A cocktail of the participants' perspectives on the conceptualisation of servant leadership is that when parents bring their children to school to be taught, the school enters into a social contract with them built of the principles of servant leadership. The parents place some expectations on the shoulders of school principal and educators. If those expectations such the development of learners in totality and the achievement of good academic outcomes are realised or achieved, that social compact is weakened and in turn, curtailed or changed.

Equally, Spears (1998) sheds light on the significance of the school community like educators, learners and parents by stating that they have to be trusted, loved, believed in and viewed as assets as opposed to objects to be utilised and competed with or criticised. In the same vein, Sipe and Frick (2015) argue that servant leadership emerges from a school principal, Departmental Head or educator whose prime motivation is the desire to serve others. Additionally, the study participants unanimously agreed that servant school principals, Department Heads and educators focus on building relationships and serve with the aim of empowering influencing colleagues to learn from him or her and good things for the school and its people (Cerit, 2010). Further, they felt that servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators commit themselves to serving others, get inspired by what they do and go beyond the call of duty (Mutia & Muthamia, 2016). Servant leadership is a kind of school leadership approach which requires the school principal, Departmental Head and educator to be meticulously able to place their finger on the pulse of the school community's needs and expectations in order to listen empathetically and attempt to satisfy those needs through the use of quality public education as an instrument of achieving the goals and aspirations of the led.

Moreover, the hindrances that were cited by study participants were that not all school principals, Departmental Heads and educators displayed the characteristics of being servant leaders who understand the social contract between the community and themselves. This was contrary to the norms and values of servant leadership as a philosophy that multiple-deprived rural schools are in dire need of in the 21st century education. Regrettably, there were views which sought to suggest that some participants had attempted to enact servant leadership attributes in their

schools by serving colleagues, learners, parents and community with the intention to inspire them selflessly serve and also lead others and discovered that they were labelled as weak or soft and as being unsure of what they intend to achieve, which in turn, contributes to the lowering of standards in terms of leadership and learner outcomes.

Notably, the ocean of reviewed literature seemed to suggest that the relationships between the school and parents or society are determined by the dominant culture where the school as an organisation is situated because they are culture-bound (Ngunjiri, 2009; Brubaker, 2013; Anglaaere, 2017). Normally, the nature of these relationships determines the level of dedication and commitment of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators. Correspondingly, Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) argue that in fulfilling their social compact through servant leadership, school principals and their colleagues must altruistically serve colleagues, learners, parents and society. Likewise, Ambali, Suleiman, Baker, Hashim and Tariq's (2011) views are consistent with the participants' perspectives that servant leaders do not focus on their self-interests or what satisfies their egoism but they are interested in making a difference in the normal lives of their colleagues, learners and parents and impacting the school for the better. They seemed to indicate that they think more about others and think less about themselves (Ambali, *et. al.,* 2011). Additionally, the views of participants seemed to point to the reality that school servant leaders must be exemplary, willing to serve their colleagues, learners and parents and display positive attitude towards them. Correspondingly, Sipe and Frick (2015) hold a firm view that servant leaders who are school principals, Departmental Heads and educators should consider servant leadership philosophy and the desire to serve people and serve justly and selflessly as a calling.

Likewise, Russell and Stone (2002) frame the servant leadership-driven social compact as a leadership that places 'service' as its core. In agreement with Russell and Stone (2002), Astroth, Goodwin and Hodnett (2011) state that in a servant-led multiple-deprived rural school, teaching, leadership and management exist for people as much as the people exist for teaching, leadership and management. Servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are never preoccupied with the accumulation or amassing of wealth or material possessions or power (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002; Astroth, 2011). The study findings indicated that a school principal, Departmental Head or educator who serves first with the purpose of empowering colleagues, satisfying his or her colleagues and organisation's needs and

influencing them to copy from him or her to do good things for the school is a servant leader. Hence, Anglaaere (2017) equates putting people first and going beyond the call of duty to the narrative that those servant school leaders' actions and behaviours should be congruent with their clearly observed moral and ethical values.

However, it became evident that the four case study schools engaged in various activities as an attempt to demonstrate their eagerness to put their colleagues, learners and parents first as essential customers and also go beyond the call of duty (go an extra mile). Further, all the study participants evinced lucid and sound comprehension or conceptualisations of servant leadership as an approach to school leadership, management and teaching tasks. The tasks which sought to give life or soul to servant leadership understanding through the implementation of servant leadership domains were morning, afternoon, weekends and holiday extra classes, adopt a learner campaign, provision of clothes and food parcels to destitute learners and visiting families to check their learners' family backgrounds and provide them with support which addresses their specific needs as opposed to generic support or interventions. As expected, the social compact or contract that they entered into or signed with learners, colleagues and parents was characterised by consultation, listening, trust and honesty. As a result, all school principals, Departmental Heads and educators who purport to be servant leaders stand out as good, ethical, altruistic and moral leaders. Hence, Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2014) contend that servant leadership style can be likened to a democratic school leadership approach.

Russell and Stone (2002) concur with the participants' perceptions when stating that if servant leadership varies from other leadership styles, then the school community should be in a position to observe specialties or traits and behaviours in such school managers which are distinctive. For that reason, they are called to serve first, and then lead and more importantly, walk the talk in their schools as organisations. The fact that two out of four research schools displayed service commitment charters in their offices served a clear commitment to servant leadership attributes and a social compact. The study participants' conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts find resonance with Greenleaf (1977) and Russell and Stone (2002) who are of the view that going an extra mile and entering into a social or educational contract demands increased service to the led, a holistic approach to teaching, leadership and management, promotion of a sense of community and power sharing in decision making. In light of the fact that this study has demonstrated that the general conceptualisation of

servant leadership in education includes a 'social compact', 'putting learners and colleagues first' and 'going beyond the call of duty', therefore these three concepts should be used for the extension or development of servant leadership theory domains.

8.2.2 Visionary leadership

Associated with the aforementioned participants' conceptualisations of servant leadership, the other theme that featured frequently in the study in all the four researched multiple-deprived rural schools was a clear school vision. The school vision is one of the servant leadership practices that school servant leaders have to enact in order to have effective multiple-deprived rural schools (Russell & Stone, 2002; Wise, Stutchbury & Cooke, 2016). As a consequence, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to formulate a vision statement and devise strategies, motivate and inspire their colleagues, creating trust and amassing courage (Ambali, Suleiman, Bakar, Hashim & Tariq, 2011). Further, Anglaaere (2017) argues that schools as organisations cannot exist without a clear frame of reference pertaining vision, goals and school community aspirations.

The findings of this study indicated that all the four researched schools had vision statements which communicated varied messages about the direction and future of schools as organisations. The study participants conceived the vision as the statement of intent (purpose) which is utilised to communicate the high level goals of the school's future as an organisation. This resonates well with Greenleaf's (1977) wisdom that a vision is a big dream that the school principal, Departmental Head or educator can approach but never certainly achieve. He further adds that it is a phenomenon presently out of reach and the school leader needs to strive for in order to become. In concurring with Greenleaf (1977), Msila (2014) asserts that the school managers should energise and excite their colleagues and learners by exemplifying what it can become. It is worth mentioning that the vision statements of the researched schools were a product of consultation. Interestingly, this collaborative effort is one that assisted in creating a sense of ownership among educators, learners and parents (Tuckey, Bakker & Dollard, 2012). Goodchild and Holly (1989) share the same view and state that if any school principal wants to create capacity to succeed, he or she must involve the hearts and minds of educators, learners and parents who are going to execute and deliver the strategic plan. Equally, the question of

communication was addressed appropriately because the four case study schools displayed the vision and mission statements in their offices and, as they indicated communicated to learners at the assembly.

Similarly, the four case study schools understood the importance of the vision. In their opinion, they felt that it served as a driving force which propelled both educators and learners to work very hard in order to achieve the goals of the school and in turn, provide quality education and achieve improved learner outcomes. Likewise, Astroth, Goodwin and Hodnett (2011) weighed in with their view on visionary leadership that servant-led schools are more often than not mission-driven. In one school, the vision assisted and directed educators to ensure that they integrated Information Communication Technology (ICT) into their lessons in the classroom. Correspondingly, according to Ekaputri (2016), schools are existing in an Informational age era and, as a result, can be utilised as the teaching and learning media. Congruently, the participants said that they downloaded information from the internet for things they did not understand or not sure of. This assisted them to teach learners the correct concepts.

The reality is that South Africa is a developing country and is lagging behind when compared to first world (developed) countries like Japan, Australia, United States of America, Germany France, etc in terms of Information Communication Technology (ICT). This is an important move because learners and educators are now living in an era of the fourth industrial revolution which demands major innovations in the manner in which learners and educators live, communicate and work in globally. Saeed, Ahmed and Malik (2017) agree that Information Technology (IT) innovation has changed the manner in which educators and learners live, work and speak both within and outside the school. Equally, Sukumani Primary School participants held a strong view that they needed to prepare their learners not only to pass Grade 7 and proceed to do Grade 8 in various secondary schools but they also instilled values of education so that they could take education seriously, and avoid being dropouts but endevour to be passionate, confident and competent both in South Africa and internationally.

This study, therefore deduced that the schools realised that South Africa was gradually becoming a valueless society which has lost its moral compass in the past ten years which were characterised by state capture and various other forms of maleficence. In contrast, the school vision embodies core values of the society and is a cornerstone for actions that will facilitate school improvement (Wise, Stutchbury & Cooke, 2016). One study participant said that she

taught educators in her phase (department) to familiarise themselves with the norms and values of the community where the school is situated so as to create a sense of collaboration, coexistence and belonging. Further, Wise, Stutchbury and Cooke (2016) believe that the school vision is basically a value statement. This gives credence to Greenleaf's (1977) assertion that the school servant leaders who state the vision must elicit trust and more often than not, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators do not enkindle trust unless they are able to demonstrate confidence and competence and also have core values. Unfortunately, it is worth mentioning that the multiple-deprived rural schools which operate without strategic plans such as vision, mission, goals and values clearly lack commitment of quality leadership and management, which is detrimental to the provision of quality public education (Bhatta, Raghavendra, Kumar & Clarice, 2012).

Viewed from a servant leadership theory perspective, these study findings seemed to suggest that multiple-deprived rural schools have begun to be sources of inspiration through the formulation of their vision and mission statements. In that respect, Russell and Stone (2002) contend that the cardinal role of a servant school leader is creating a strategic vision for the school as an organisation. Philosophically, this again, is described by White (2000) as a phenomenon which goes into the heart of the kind of society schools want to exist within and the kind of education system which will mirror the core values of the society in question. A few decades ago, it was hard to find any multiple-deprived rural school with a vision and mission statement. School principals led and managed schools through intuition without any rudder which guided both educators and learners when discharging their roles and responsibilities of managing and teaching. This is one of the major reasons why Brown and Mitchell (2010) believes that within the school environment, the principal needs to set the tone through the vision and mission statement and organisational goals. Most of the vision statements expressed a desire to provide quality education which seemed to lacking in most multiple-deprived rural school contexts. As a consequence, a school vision should not be a mere slogan but it must have life and meaning and must be demonstrated in the manner in which principals lead and manage schools and the manner in which educators teach learners in the classroom (Islam Konok, 2006).

Even though they had not yet come closer to becoming those ideal schools but great strides had been made in order to turn their institutions into effective schools. The four case study schools understood that there are serving rural communities who need to be enlightened in terms of the

importance of education and the direction that education in line with the National Development Plan (2011) should be taking. As a consequence, they made the school vision one of the apex priorities. In essence, any school without a vision is directionless and cannot produce learners who can excel in their in academic work and become future assets that can contribute immensely in the growth of the economy of South Africa in general and KwaZulu-Natal in particular. Added to that advantage, is the fact that a school vision unites educators in the school and inspires greatness (Russell & Stone, 2002). Hence, Serrat (2009) argues that servant leadership has a capacity to move educators to a higher level in terms of creating awareness about their core duties and responsibilities in the service of the community. In addition, to achieve success, the school principal has to translate the vision into a mission, strategy, realistic goals and expectations for managers, educators and learners (Wise, Stutchbury & Cooke, 2016; Coetzer, Bussin & Geldenhuys, 2017). More importantly, a school vision is worthless if it lacks the effort to translate and execute it for the benefit of the entire organisation (Coetzer, Bussin & Geldenhuys, 2017). Similarly, Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) aptly believe that such knowledge is required in South Africa's continuing struggle to transform many multiple-deprived rural schools into effective learning organisations.

8.2.3 The sacrosanctity of teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural schools

Another theme that appeared prominent in this study in all the four case study schools was the participants' desire to provide quality education in their schools which, in the public opinion, were viewed as dysfunctional because of lack of adequate human and material resources and poor learner outcomes especially in secondary schools. In addition, Taneri and Engin-Demir (2011) report that the majority of parents appear not be satisfied with the nature of the quality of education in multiple-deprived rural schools and they cite that the quality of teaching and learning in rural schools cannot be easily compared with township and urban schools. In light of this explicit realisation, Du Plessis (2014) argues that the socio-economic and education realities obtaining in multiple-deprived rural schools place learners in rural contexts at a tremendous disadvantage. However, there was an understanding that teaching is a core function of all educators including the school principals and Departmental Heads and had to be ranked supreme in all decisions that are taken by the school. Hence, all the principals of the four case study schools were subject educators. It was interesting to note that they had a feel of what kind of

learners were being taught in terms of the academic capability and behaviours. This depicted them as servant leaders who demonstrated exemplary leadership attributes.

The study participants held a perception that by trying to provide quality education through quality teaching and learning in the classroom, they would be able to achieve the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement's (CAPS) aims. These aims seek to equip learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country ((Department of Education –CAPS, 2011). In addition, these learners must be able to identify and solve problems, work individually and as a team, organise and manage themselves responsibly, collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information, communicate effectively, use science and technology effectively and critically in a manner that protects the environment and the health of others and, lastly, demonstrate an understanding of the world as set of related systems (Department of Education-CAPS, 2011). In support of this view, Peleg (2012) avers that teaching and learning are cardinal aims of any multiple-deprived rural school and the level of performance of any schooling system depends on the quality of its educators. Hence, the educator quality and educator effectiveness have an illustrious effect on the life expectancy earnings of learners (Armstrong, 2015).

According to Haseena and Mohammed (2015), quality is very crucial in education and it is associated with standards and excellence. No school can survive without the ability to provide quality teaching and learning and produce quality results. It could not be disputed that the improvement of teaching and learning was only possible on the basis of concerted effort by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). Further, notwithstanding Horng and Loeb's (2010) contention that the quality of teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural schools, mostly, can only be marginally influenced by school principals, it was worth noting that the four participant school principals tried hard to ensure quality education in their schools through various programmes or extra tuition and personal involvement in the classroom. Various scholars such as Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul and Armstrong (2011) assert servant leaders should enact instructional leadership which stresses the role of school principals as managers of curriculum delivery and coverage in the classroom. Contrary to the attempts by participant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to strive towards quality teaching and learning, access to proper quality rural education continues to

be a major problem (Taneri & Engin-Demir, 2011), hence, a persistent and loud call for the implementation of servant leadership domains (Russell & Stone, 2002). Essentially, to enhance quality in teaching and learning, the school principals, Departmental Heads and educators need to pay sufficient attention in servant leadership practices and turn, report regularly on the quality and quantity of curriculum coverage (Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul & Armstrong, 2011).

The literature has shown that curriculum planning is considered to be the foundation of all school management activities (Karnataka, 2012). However, any lack of proper and effective planning creates obstacles which affect the quality of teaching and learning (Ololube, 2013). Likewise, both secondary and primary school participants' perspectives were that no quality teaching and learning can be achieved without proper planning. These findings seemed to suggest that leadership and management planning help the school to allocate human, material and financial resources equitably in order to function effectively (Mpolokeng, 2011; Ololube, 2013; Chukwumah, 2015). In agreeing with this assertion, Mpolokeng (2011) notes that planning is normally a starting point of all the organisational management activities or tasks. It is indeed, a normal practice that before an educator can go to class and teach it is critically important that he or she does proper planning processes, such as designing the Annual Teaching Plan (Programme), lesson plan, lesson preparation, subject assessment plan, subject improvement plan, personal timetable including the organisation of the subject file (Karnataka, 2012). In reality, it is not rare to find a school with educators who have no knowledge of how to assemble or organise a subject file which signals poor school leadership and the lowering of vital academic standards (Chukwumah, 2015). For that reason, they are not conversant with all the above mentioned contents of the subject file. The four researched schools regarded instructional leadership as one of their core responsibilities. Servant leadership is the type of leadership which prioritises the management of teaching and learning. This weakness is one of the major findings that are normally indicated by the Circuit Managers and District Officials after a school inspection which involves school basic functionality, curriculum delivery and management. It was therefore worth noting that schools are beginning to pay adequate attention to planning

This is in line with Karnataka's (2012) contention that school management is viewed as a social process which entails group effort, intends achieving pre-determined organisational goals and is needed at all levels. In corroborating Karnataka's (2012) perspectives, Sipe and Frick (2015)

note that a servant school principal sees to it that the talents and various resources of each team member are utilised optimally. As a consequence, team planning qualifies to be one of servant leadership domain. A servant leader should be a good planner and ensures that all the teaching and learning activities are planned properly in advance.

Similarly, some of the study participants felt that parental involvement was also significant for the success of the provision of quality education. They reported that they had regular consultative meetings with parents when some learners showed some barriers to learning or poor performance. In reality, the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 empowers parents to have a strong voice in the education of their children. This view is further supported by Dursic and Bunijevac (2017) who attest to the fact that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators play vital roles in the educational attainment of learners. Zinqobele Secondary School participants' perceptions on parental involvement were that both learners and parents needed to be involved in the culture of teaching and learning campaigns. Moreover, motivational speakers were also allowed to play a vital role in the education of multiple-deprived rural school learners. This is in line with the South African mantra that 'education is a society issue.' This view was supported by other schools which held a general view that parents completed the educational triangle philosophy of the three-legged pot which promotes the collaboration and cooperation among educators, learners and parents.

Empirical evidence reveals that educators in multiple-deprived rural schools strive to aid the parents recognise the significance of their roles and responsibilities (Compton, 2016). The researchers further acknowledge that learners are often more successful in multiple-deprived rural schools where their parents are actively involved in their education (Compton, 2016; Page, 2017). Notwithstanding the benefits that accrue from active parental involvement and cooperation, there is still evidence that points to the fact that parental visibility and commitment are inadequate especially in secondary schools and that affects learner performance negatively (Vincent & Neis, 2011; Newchurch, 2017). According to Okeke (2014), multiple-deprived rural servant school principals must involve parents in curriculum matters in order to strengthen the home-school cosy relationship (Okeke, 2014). The concept of servant leadership provides a theoretical base for comprehending the sacrosanctity of teaching in general and the provision of quality education in particular. Russell and Stone (2002) posit that it is imperative for the school principal to serve as an educator in order to create a learning organisation. Greenleaf (1977)

maintains that if a better school community is to be established the servant leader has to enhance the capacity to serve and practice as a servant of educators, learners and parents.

Based on the general agreement by almost all study participants in the four case study schools, planning and parental involvement qualify to be part of servant leadership dimensions or practices as a form of theory extension or theory development.

8.2.4 Educator professional development in multiple-deprived rural schools

Linked to the aforementioned servant leadership practices, the fourth major theme that was brought to light in the study by all the four case study schools was educator professional empowerment programmes. Corroboratively, Armstrong (2015) argues that they are a significant resource in education and it is vital to comprehend how best to utilise their skills. Likewise, Mukeredzi (2013) weighs in this discourse and asserts that the utilisation of educators with limited professional empowerment has invariably been linked to lower-quality teaching and learning and poor learner attainment. Educator professional development is one of the servant leadership dimensions which are critical in the endeavour to ensure effective schools and to provide good quality teaching and learning. It cannot be disputed that effective educator empowerment should be viewed as a continuing part of life of the organisation and the principal has to be able to benefit from the programmes (Wiehahn & du Plessis, 2018). This view is consistent with Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) and Advisory (2012) who believe that an appropriate educator professional development is invariably a product of internal (job-embedded) and external activities that enhances educators' leadership capacity, subject content knowledge, subject pedagogical skills and aid them to improve their instructional practices in a manner that supports pupils' learning. On the backdrop of the general perceptions that multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal are not performing well in terms of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and the Annual National Assessment (ANA) results, it is believed that multiple-deprived rural schools lacked the professional capacity to serve and deliver in the classroom (SANTS, 2016).

The study participants eloquently communicated that their schools had various educator development programmes. The critical analysis of these views indicated that some schools did not have well-structured and balanced empowerment programmes which catered for various

aspects of leadership, management and teaching. There are schools which placed more emphasis of leave measures at the expense of subject content knowledge, pedagogy and classroom management. These, in my opinion, could directly address problems which are faced in the classroom. One participant alluded to the fact that their workshops happen when they were holding staff meetings and daily briefings were also used to capacitate one another. In my opinion, this model or *modus operandi* had some shortcomings because the staff meetings focussed on a cocktail of issues which made it difficult to address matters of educator professional development sufficiently to the satisfaction of all participants or attendees in that meeting. Only one school by the name of Mcambi Primary School stood out for having staff development programmes every Thursday afternoon between 14H00 and 16H00. This school had a well structured educator development programme which catered for various topics of interest, ranging from leadership, management, ethics, human relations, teaching, assessment and many more.

This study also found that all the participants in the four researched schools were professionally qualified and some of them held senior university degrees. There were also few of them who were registered with universities pursuing senior degrees. However, this does not mean that all educators in these four case study schools well professional qualified. Consistent with this finding, it is well documented that educator qualification certifies that a planned and systematic course of study was undertaken and successfully completed based on either formal or informal study and work experience (South African Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015). Armstrong (2015) cautions scholars and researchers stating that any profession which advertently or inadvertently attracts low quality educators is catastrophic for the public education performance. The principal of Mcambi Primary School was registered for a PhD degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School was doing his Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Management at Regent Business School, while the educator of Sukumani Primary School was doing her Honours degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In addition, the Departmental Head of Mathematics and Sciences at Siphosakhe Secondary School held two Honours degrees. One study participant who is an educator at Zinqobele Secondary School advanced an argument that it is a misconception to say that schools in rural areas do not have highly and suitably qualified educators. Even though some educators in multiple-deprived rural schools are highly qualified but KwaZulu-Natal province still accounts for a huge number of unqualified and under-qualified educators who lack competency and skills

(SANTS, 2016). This is supported by the Department of Basic Education's (2015) report to the Portfolio Committee on Education which states that most rural communities were faced with inequalities such as vast inequalities, poor infrastructure, inadequate resources and a shortage of suitably qualified educators. Similarly, Deacon (2012) states that in most countries educator development programmes are normally viewed as failing to meet the ever increasing expectations of educators, not to mention school principals and the community.

However, these qualifications and educator professional development programmes had not yet paid dividends in terms of being translated into improved learner outcomes. This finding seems to suggest that not only qualifications can lead to the delivery of quality education in the classroom, but issues of experience and willingness to serve count a great deal. To underscore this finding, Bertram, Mthiyane and Mukeredzi (2013) opine that the South African educator qualification landscape is very complex because of the inhumane apartheid legacy where educators of different races were offered different educator education in relation to quality and duration of the courses.

The body of research corroborates the study participants' perspectives that all educators need to obtain qualifications before they can be granted permission to enter the teaching profession and teach learners, by the South African Council for Educators (SACE, 2000; Armstrong, 2015). A study by Compton (2016) found that educator empowerment often results in a positive educational and social change by assisting educators to improve on the practices they utilise to engage learners' parents in schools in education of their children. Likewise, Taneri and Engin-Demir (2011) commend educators because of the that fact that some study participants were furthering their studies to obtain Post Graduate diploma in Management and leadership, Honours Degrees and Doctor of Philosophy by stating that experienced educators and novice educators receiving high quality educator empowerment improves learner outcomes. Literature in Horng and Loeb's (2010) study indicates that effective school managers strategically utilise educator empowerment as a way to reward and retain good educators. The effective educators are allocated funding or financial resources in order to engage them in professional development opportunities which aid them to fulfil their ambitious teaching and empowerment of their educators.

According to the theoretical underpinning, educator professional development forms a central part of excellence in school leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002). Lambert (2002) advises that

multiple-deprived rural schools should establish communities of learners and leaders who subscribe to the notion of life-long learning. This is one of the ways of promoting staff retention. The study conducted by du Plessis (2014) concluded that the shortage of suitably qualified educators in multiple-deprived rural contexts is simply because educators do not want to stay in deep rural areas owing to social, cultural and professional isolation. In essence, what was done by Mcambi Primary School to schedule their professional development programmes for the entire academic year was consistent with Walter and Briggs' (2012) views that collaborative continuous professional development is an approach that has been proven to be effective in multiple-deprived rural schools. In the same vein, Petrov, Bolden and Gosling (2006) demonstrate the value of ubuntu philosophy by depicting that collectivism pays dividends if leadership is distributed or shared with colleague educators rather than allowing it to reside with one person who is the school principal.

To accentuate Mcambi Primary School's methodology, Russell and Stone (2002) state that educator development programmes emphasise teamwork and reflect vital values of love and the element of equality. This is what was missing in the three case study schools which conducted empowerment programmes on *ad hoc* basis. This study deduced that such unstructured or unplanned professional programmes fell short of satisfying the leadership, subject content knowledge and subject methodological needs. There is always a reverberating call that ample time and physical and financial resources have to be allotted to professional empowerment activities (Wiehahn & du Plessis, 2018). However, literature suggests that South African school principals are often not exposed to the professional empowerment that reflects what takes place in the contemporary schooling environment (Rowland, 2017). However, the study participants felt that servant leadership is suitable for multiple-deprived rural contexts because it is among other things, characterised by a commitment to the growth of people such as educators and non-educators and the valuing of people as assets in an attempt to build a community of practice. Hence, Astroth, Goodwin and Hodnett (2011) assert that servant school leaders take great pride in observing their colleague educators perpetually growing professionally.

8.2.5 Legislative centrality and mandate in multiple-deprived rural school leadership

The fifth major theme that recurred in the study and literature is the administration of educational law in order to correct the deviant behaviours by educators in multiple-deprived rural schools. Various pieces of legislation demand compliance and increased productivity in schools (SASA, no. 84 of 1996; EEA, no. 78 of 1998). This study found that participants had an understanding of the significant role that educational law plays in leadership, management and teaching and learning in their schools. Educators who work in a *laissez faire* environment will never develop in the teaching profession because they get acclimatised in an environment of lawlessness. As a consequence, this study affirmed the notion that various pieces of legislation or educational law serve as tools of trade which assist school principals, Departmental Heads and educators to give direction and maintain labour peace.

It became evident that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators use the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998 when allocating duties and responsibilities especially the teaching loads to their colleagues. They were conversant of the fact that this Act stipulates the number of teaching periods that needs to be assigned to each staff member as per his or her post level, eg. Principal, Departmental Head and PL1 educator. This Act makes a clear distinction between a secondary school and a primary school principal in terms of the teaching loads. The principal of a primary school is supposed to have between 10% and 90% depending on the post level on which he or she is appointed to, whereas the principal of a secondary school is supposed to carry a teaching load of between 5% and 60% depending on which post level appointed to (EEA, no. 76 of 1998; PAM, 2016). Likewise, the schools relied on the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 in ensuring that corporal punishment was not administered by educators. This study found that corporal punishment was still administered in multiple-deprived rural schools. One study participant of Sukumani Primary School unequivocally stated that she used SASA, no. 84 of 1996 assist educators in her Department/Phase to desist from administering corporal punishment to learners. SASA no. 84 of 1996 also appeared instrumental in according the importance of parental involvement and cooperation. Some educators went to an extent of visiting learners' homes to meet parents and discuss issues of barriers to learning experienced by learners.

The growing body of literature on school legislation affirms that school principals' knowledge of educational law and pertinent legal decision-making are critical to provide good feedback for

successful multiple-deprived rural schools (Doctor, 2013). Educational law is required in many respects in terms of school leadership and management, ranging from educator and learner disciplinary processes, teaching and learning, leave matters, to name but a few (Doctor, 2013). Correspondingly, some study participants highlighted that they used the school code of conduct when addressing issues of absenteeism and late-coming by learners. In addition, the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education was implemented by the way of engaging in screening, identification, assessment and support of learners with barriers to learning. The only shortcoming was that this came mainly from primary schools. Likewise, the EEA, no. 76 of 1998 was used to caution educators around the question of serious misconduct as contained in Section 17 of the same Act. Arising from that finding, Jusso (2015) concedes that it is imperative that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators have a basic understanding of educational law. Coupled with this view, one study participant reported that he tried to do his work properly solely because he knew that SASA, no. 84 of 1996 recognises schools as a legal persona. As a consequence, they can sue people and they can also be sued by anyone.

In light of the available empirical evidence, it has become clear that servant leaders are not weak leaders. They have an obligation to implement the educational law in order to achieve the educational goals. Linked to servant leadership theory, Wong and Page (2003) assert that good school principals utilise a multiplicity of social powers, they use coercive power if they are faced with immature and irresponsible educators. Sipe and Frick (2015) maintain that servant leadership has always devised procedures congruous with values of service. Agreeably, Ross, Matteson and Exposito (2014) affirm that servant leadership is not supposed to be passive in school edict or leadership approach. Similarly, Doctor (2013) concludes that in the arena of education, the servant school principal, Departmental Head and educator should be cognisant of the educational legislation and their concomitant obligation to uphold it. In ubuntu philosophy, educational law instils ethical behaviour demonstrated through honesty and selfless service to the school community (Khoza, 2013). Appropriately, this study deduced that the administration of the education law is the operational aspect or function of the school principal, Departmental Head and educator (Doctor, 2013; Jusso, 2015). In light of that discourse, the administration of the educational law in school leadership, management and teaching and learning is suitably justified to be one of the servant leadership practices or dimensions as a form of theory extension or theory development. In justifying this study's contention, Penxa (2018) states that educational laws do not implement themselves but they need school principals, Departmental Heads and

educators to implement them with one purpose of institutionalising strong leadership, corporate culture and effective teaching and learning.

8.2.6 Rewarding excellence as a form of extrinsic motivation

Out of a barrage of themes that emerged from this study, one of the salient issues that were reported by all the four researched schools was the necessity to recognise and award excellence and the role it played in instilling both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and in turn, improved productivity and learner outcomes. Corroboratively, Nyakundi (2012) concludes that educators in multiple-deprived rural school like to see that their principal cares about their hard work and appreciate it, thus motivating them to increase their effectiveness, efficiency and productivity. Observably, history has shown that rural education has always been characterised as being linked to incapacity, mediocrity and dysfunctionality (Mpolokeng, 2011; Mukeredzi, 2013; Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2015). For that reason, the servant leadership practice of the recognition and rewarding of educators who performed well had an ability to boost their morale. The evidence indicated that these schools acknowledged that they were not doing well academically; as a result, they wanted to raise the bar. It was interesting to learn that these schools rewarded the customers indiscriminately in the sense that both educators and learners were considered for this purpose.

This study deduced that there was a lack of the culture of teaching and learning in some schools because learners were demotivated. In essence, the mere fact that even teaching as a core business of educators was in the process, adversely affected, seemed to suggest that even educators were demotivated. This view is congruent with Nyakundi's (2012) contention that while educator motivation is critical in teaching and learning process, an untold number of educators are still not highly motivated in multiple-deprived rural schools. Likewise, in a study conducted by Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) it was found that in a plethora of multiple-deprived rural schools the culture of teaching and learning is considered to be either very weak or astoundingly non-existent. As a consequence, in an attempt to introduce innovation and creativity, school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are tasked to inspire their colleague educators and learners by rewarding them for good performance.

It became evident during the interviews that not only trophies, medals and certificates were awarded to educators and learners but the School Management also had a proclivity of offering words of appreciation to learners and educators who demonstrated the servant leadership traits by being hard workers and also honest in their teaching and learning tasks. In corroborating this evidence, Advisory (2012) and Wiehahn and du Plessis (2018) assert that school leaders have to spend their energies aiding environments which nurture effective provision of quality education. Arising from that argument, Ross, Matteson and Exposito (2014) underscore the notion that educators and learners wish to be rewarded so that they can develop the required sense of belonging.

The research has shown that as educators are recognised and appreciated, there can always be tremendous changes in their self-esteem, quality, productivity and the extent of effort they put in executing the task at hand (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). In the recent study by Nyakundi (2012) and Saeed and Zyngier (2012) the purpose of motivation through rewarding excellence was to promote the provision of quality teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural schools. Further, a study conducted by Saeed and Zyngier (2012) was consistent with this theme on rewarding good educator performance which was prominent in this study as he concludes that it is very significant for educators to comprehend various types of extrinsic motivation and their concomitant benefits as school managers cannot always rely on intrinsic motivation for the promotion of teaching and learning. Contradictorily, Ross, Matteson and Exposito (2014) as lonely voices, contend that school principals should continuously reward educators and learners' good performance based on intrinsic core values than mere extrinsic motivation. However, in rebutting Ross, Matteson and Exposito's (2014) point of view, Armstrong (2015) maintains that educator incentives have often been implemented is South Africa with the purpose of ultimately improving learner outcomes. Viewed from the servant leadership theory, servant leadership is often inspirational and works towards the promotion of the culture of honesty, integrity and trust and also care for colleagues, underpinned by mutual respect (Ross, 2014). Similarly, Russell and Stone (2002) claim that the servant school principal serves by ensuring the availability of material and financial resources, sufficient time and attention and valuable information and the higher organisational purposes which attach meaning to school work. Khoza (2012) affirms that if ubuntu philosophy can be introduced and implemented in abundance, multiple-deprived rural schools can be turned into effective learning organisations which depict selfless service to educators and learners and customers.

8.2.7 Educator union militancy and dominance

The other main theme that emerged prominently in this research was the educator union militancy and dominance. Unsurprisingly, Livingstone (2012) contends that educator union has always been one of the controversial issues in the realm of education and that it has been persistent for many decades. Contrary to the servant leadership theory which seeks to serve others with humility, trust and integrity before assuming a leadership position (Hunter, 2004, Spears, 1998, Sipe & Frick, 2015), the dominance is a philosophy which dictates that powerful associations should consistently strive for more power and dominance with the sole purpose of maintaining the status quo, which in turn directly benefits them as unions (Virley, 2013). Likewise, Palm (2017, p.10) corroboratively states that even in the early days of the Marxist tradition "disagreements or differentiations about trade union strategies, roles and purposes can be found". In reality, this behaviour is an anomaly in the sense that trade unions, from their inception, were formed to fight against bureaucratic dominance which manifested itself in a form of subordination and submission entrenched by hierarchical structures (Virley, 2013). This presented school principals with a dichotomy that adversely affected the leadership and management of these multiple-deprived rural schools. Arising from this aforesaid conundrum, multiple-deprived rural schools are highly unionised, a reality which often weakens the interior decision-making processes in these schools (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2015).

This theme further illustrated that school principals had lost it and the unions were calling the shots in some schools. To put it more plainly, some school principals really functioned like 'lame ducks' because their powers and authority were invariably usurped by educator unions (Mhlongo, 2017). They were no way closer to the reality where they could speak 'truth to power'. Consistent with this finding, the study conducted by Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) concluded that educator unions in the Republic of South Africa appeared to be very powerful and more often than not, made schools ungovernable through their innumerable and unreasonable demands. For example, principals were bullied to unprocedurally and illegally close schools and allow educators to attend mass meetings. In light of these incidents, Russell and Stone (2002) caution all leaders that inasmuch as power continues to dominate leaders' philosophy about leadership; they will never advance towards a higher standard of leadership.

Similarly, the toxic relationships between educator unions and school principals caused a school leadership paralysis. This further contaminated the human relations between different educator unions within the school and the principals. This factionalism added salt into the wound. On one hand, one group supported the school principal and, on the other hand, the other faction attempted to establish a parallel administration structure to compete with the school principal by clandestinely challenging his or her authority or decisions. Additionally, they had a leaning to defend educators were misbehaving or showing signs of incapacity in relation to learner outcomes. However, the principal of Mcambi Primary school demonstrated bravery and some novel leadership acumen or astuteness. He was confronted by educator unions on many occasions because of being independent-minded and a law-abiding leader. On one occasion (13 May 2015) they accused him of not closing the school because there was an educator strike action and his school was operational and educators were teaching and learners were learning. He explained to them that he needed a formal communication from the union and further stated that the school governing body through its chairperson had resolved to close the school for the safety of learners. Contradictorily, the literature on educator strike reveals that learners who are exposed to educator strikes during the primary school level habitually suffer negative learning attainment effects (Jaume & Willen, 2017). In support of Jaume and Willen (2017), Baron (2018) observes that learner performance in Mathematics and Science normally declines in low-performing schools as repercussions of industrial strikes. On another occasion (22 November 2017), the union visited his school and also accused him of forbidding their members from attending mass meetings which had recently taken place. The logbook of Mcambi Primary School indicates that the principal told them that he had followed the educational law and did not want to compromise his integrity as a servant leader.

There is a corpus of scholarship which relates to this issue, Peleg (2012) corroboratively argues that a school principal may possess only a limited number of leadership styles, but he or she adapts them optimally to suit or respond to the situation he or she encounters at any given time. The Mcambi Primary School principal's behaviour demonstrated the scarce leadership tenacity and astuteness especially in multiple-deprive rural contexts. Viewed from a servant leadership theory perspective, Greenleaf (1977), Russell and Stone (2002) posit that every leader must place service at the centre, even though power is usually associated with leadership, it should have one legitimate utilisation: service. In addition, educator union leaders should be informed by *ubuntu* values and in turn, master the skills, knowledge, consciousness and processes needed for

maintaining communal relationships in schools (Nussbaum, 2003). In essence, this is what educator unions as social partners should be doing in order to achieve the broader vision and goals of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. In contrast, instead of supporting the effective and efficient provision of quality public education, they were dominating the education space by putting politics first at the expense of service.

8.2.8 Learners as statutory rape victims in the hands of educators

This study also found that learners especially females were subjected to and experienced sexual abuse masqueraded as sexual relationships. This meant that educators failed to act in '*loco parentis*', instead, they appeared to be leopards that used their spots to entice learners into sexual relationships. A study conducted by Akaab (2011) found that the nature of sexual abuse experienced by learners in schools involving sexual intercourse recorded 18% while fondling and kissing stood at 15%. Some educators were sexually exploiting female learners and taking advantage of their poverty stricken family backgrounds. It is therefore obvious that the multiple-deprived rural schools are the hardest hit by this scourge of unwarranted phenomenon. The servant leadership literature maintains that in a normal and just educational environment, a servant educator is always worthy of genuine respect, inspires confidence and trust of parents and stakeholders in education (Sipe & Frick, 2015). This study also found that some parents were aware of those inappropriate or unpalatable educator learner relationships and used to complain to other educators who were not intimately involved with learners. This was not surprising because servant leadership dictates that most parents would like to see their children being taught by an educator who is perceived to be credible, trustworthy, honest, upright and ethical and understands his or her role and responsibility as a parent on secondary basis (Sipe & Frick, 2015).

Further, the principal of Zinqobele Secondary School found himself between a rock and a hard place. One male educator had a sexual relationship with a girl learner in the school. When the principal escalated the matter to the Circuit Office and District Office, the learner's parents supported the relationship and defended the educator whom they regarded as their son-in-law. The school reported that the Department of Education thwarted any attempts to get the perpetrator charged for violating the girl learner's right through sexual abuse on the basis that the learner was above 18 years of age. As a consequence, the educator and the learner ended up

taking wedding vows. The general societal expectation is that every learner has a fundamental right to be protected from sexual, emotional and physical abuse (Scouts South Africa, 2013).

Similarly, in Siphosakhe Secondary School it was reported that apart from learners who were approached by male educators and lured into accepting sexual relationships, some girl learners were not innocent in the sense that they were the ones who used certain tricks to draw the attention of male educators, something which graduated into sexual relationships. This study also deduced that some of these learners played themselves into the cosy hands of male educators in an attempt to get good test and examination marks which is referred to as 'sextortion' (Akaab, 2011; Dorph, & Sjogren, 2014; Yusuph, 2016). Others did it in order to gain both material and monetary benefits. Likewise, in a study conduct by Dorph and Sjogren (2014), one of the findings was that some school learners blindly consider the sexual relationship with educators as transactional sex that suggests consent. Unsurprisingly, this patriarchal bargaining destroys the moral fibre of society and turn female learners into educational dwarfs who lack knowledge and skills but solely rely on making sexual favours in order to succeed academically in the educational realm.

In reality, the educators in question chose to stoop so low and allowed their acts to contaminate the teaching profession. What was expected of them was to demonstrate the maturity and professionalism by not taking advantage of the gullibility and the adolescent stage of learners. The best and humane thing they should have done was to call them into order and discipline them accordingly. Further, this matter should also have been reported to learners' parents so as to intervene and rebuke them for showing lack of morals and family values. Astonishingly, this was not limited to secondary schools only as one Sukumani Primary School educator indicated that if such unpalatable relationships were discovered in her school it was reported to the school principal and perpetrators were dealt with in line with the educational law. Yusuph (2016) cautions all educators by stating that 'sextortion' must be avoided because it is an abuse of power and authority by educators. This study is in no way trying to suggest that victims of sexual abuse are girls only. The literature reveals that learners who are victims of sexual abuse can be either girls or boys (Akaab, 2011).

Viewed from ubuntu theory perspective, it takes a village to raise a child. As a result, educators are part of society and should support the morally upbringing of learners through collective leadership (Khoza, 1994). Bolden (2004) corroborating Khoza's (1994) views also found that the

motivation for collective leadership is to establish a culture undergird by a high level of care and integrity. Ankers (1986) adds that when educators think of ethics, they need not just think as educators focusing on institutional ethics, but as citizens of a broader society. Without any shadow of doubt, this can make them play a positive role in raising learners as parents on secondary basis in schools.

8.2.9 Rampant fraud and corruption in multiple-deprived rural schools

Another central theme that emerged from the findings was the rampant fraud and corruption in multiple deprived rural schools. Some of the leaders were involved in the scandal or corruption of selling promotional posts for Departmental Heads, deputy principals, principals and Circuit Managers. Nepotism and favouritism were the order of the day (du Plessis & Cain, 2017). The participants were aware that some teaching posts were given to friends and family members at the expense of merits or capability. According to one study participant from Zinqobele Secondary School, favouritism and nepotism were a major reason behind dysfunctional schools. The Departmental Head of Mcambi Primary School reported shocking information which involved bribery in the process of appointing Level 1 educators and in the promotion posts. She implicated School Governing Body, educator unions and Circuit Managers in these dirty dealings. This was consistent with the Ministerial Task Team report which revealed that in certain cases there was collusion between educator union leaders and Circuit Managers or District Directors (Republic of South Africa, 2016). One study participant was directly affected because this corruption also affected her own sister who was requested to pay R7000-00 in order to get a Post Level 1 post. Similarly, the Ministerial Task Team found that there were countless claims of bribe money being paid to sway the outcomes of the interview processes (Republic of South Africa, 2016; Mhlongo, 2017). The literature further reports that some female educators have a leaning (proclivity) of falling in love with good looking school boys and often send them to their offices and cottages to enjoy sexual intercourse with them (Shakeshaft, 2013). Such boys often received material and financial benefits including good examination marks.

In addition, the other form of fraud was the selling of examination report cards. Zinqobele Secondary School experienced that problem where one educator gave a female learner a December examination report card with ‘pass’ whereas the school or class manager had given

her a report card with 'fail'. That learner ended up having two different examination report cards with different results, namely, 'promoted' and 'not promoted'. The parent discovered that and became suspicious. The parent having many unanswered questions, visited the school to enquire and learnt that the second examination report card was given to the child fraudulently. The School Management reported the matter to the Department of Education. Similarly, another educator of Siphosakhe Secondary School gave a fraudulent examination report card to a community member who did not have a child in that school. This collusion or complicity in the process of fraud and corruption was committed because the community member had lost a child and wanted to claim money from Insurance Company in Empamgeni. They wanted to disguise their fraud and corruption as if the deceased was still a learner at Siphosakhe Secondary School. The Insurance Company called the school principal telephonically and requested her to visit their offices. When the school principal arrived at the Insurance Company's offices she was shocked to learn of that fraud and corruption and she denied having such learner in her school. The culprit educator had forged the school principal's signature and also unlawfully used the school stamp on a fraudulent document.

Furthermore, to a certain degree, some educators used to award fraudulent Continuous Assessment marks and examination marks to learners that they had not worked for. The principal of Mcambi Primary School's observation was that, that practice diminished when he started to become hands-on in terms of checking and controlling learners and educators' work. Astonishingly, educators are expected to act in *loco parentis* and abide by the SACE Code of professional ethics (SACE, 2016). This was a form of corruption which involved 'marks for sex' meaning sex and extortion known as 'sextortion' (Yusuph, 2016). In a study conducted by Akaab (2011) it was reported that the majority of learners accounting for 62.05% indicated that they passed examination papers in the subjects whose educators they had had sexual intercourse with. In most cases, this happened between girl learners and male educators (Dorph & Sjogren, 2014).

Linked to servant leadership theory, this study posits that educators, learners and parents cannot 'buy into' a school principal that is corrupt and has a questionable character (Russell & Stone, 2002). In essence, integrity, honesty, trust, ethics and credibility are essential and integral features of any servant school leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002). Similarly, such malpractices are devoid of *Ubuntu* values (Khoza, 1994). Igbuzor (2011) adds that for a school principal, Departmental Head or educator to work effectively and ethically in a deeply corrupt society, he

or she needs to institutionalise some mechanisms for probity and accountability. Apparently, the scale of fraud and corruption in multiple-deprived rural schools necessitates the inclusion of accountability and consequence management as servant leadership dimensions as part of servant leadership theory extension or theory development. For that reason, accountability and consequence management make certain that school leaders and educators who are tasked to utilise and manage material and financial resources account for them to their colleagues, parents, learners and community and their clients on how they have utilised them in a way that benefits customers effectively and efficiently by applying value for money in procurement processes (Penxa, 2018). Hence, accountability and consequence management can never be understated.

8.2.10 Late-coming and absenteeism by educators in multiple-deprived rural schools

Linked to the above adversities, one more theme that arose out of the findings was late-coming and absenteeism by educators. These challenges set a bad example for learners because there was a greater possibility for them to copy those behaviours from educators. Further, the learners could easily slip into a pool of gullibility and have the mentality that 'the tree said to the wood chopper the axe is one of us'. This could denote that whatever wrong learners were doing, educators were doing them too. Indeed, the evidence indicated that educators were abusing their normal sick leave days. This was consistent with Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan and Van Rensburg's (2010) research finding that the level of leave taking is very high in multiple-deprived rural schools where socio-environmental condition such as abject poverty is the highest. There were days where learners were left unattended because their educators were absent from school. This caused an immense damage in terms of academic progress for learners. There were educators who enjoyed being physically absent from school and also those who practised functional absenteeism by being present at school but absent from the classroom. Contrary to what appears to be a norm in multiple-deprived rural contexts, the literature reveals that the rate of educator leave of absence in the high income countries is between 2.6% and 5.8% (Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan & Van Rensburg, 2010). Rife absenteeism compelled Mcambi Secondary School to engage in an unlawful act of outsourcing teaching services by appointing people from outside to serve as substitute educators for absent permanent educators. Those so-called substitute educators were paid R50-00 per day by the absent permanent incumbent. That decision exposed young primary school learners to high risk because

those so-called substitute educators were not trained and not screened for criminal records, namely ‘vetting processes.

Moreover, the study findings deduced that the level of late-coming was also a major concern for school principal and Department Heads. For that reason, the above quotation indicates the deep rootedness of this unconventional phenomenon. There were educators who used to arrive late at school in the morning and there were also those who used to arrive late in classroom when it was their teaching period. One educator advanced just a lousy justification that she used to transport her husband to the rank in the morning before coming to school. This seemed to suggest that other educators were arriving late to school in the morning because they were undermining the authority of the school management for reasons only known to them. This study found that some of the culprits were demotivated and had a low morale. To emphasise the gravity and sensitivity of late-coming in multiple-deprived rural schools, Maile and Olowoyo (2017) argue that late-coming is often considered to be a violation of the policy of punctuality.

Siphosakhe Secondary School experienced this challenge of late-coming by educators; as a result, they used the relief timetable to occupy the classes that were unattended to or unoccupied due to late-coming by educators. This is one of the reasons why Brooks (2015) concludes that late-coming causes other educators to be overwhelmed with having to withstand the workloads of colleagues who consistently come late to school or absent themselves. It is not surprising because Musyoki (2015) reports that some educators have a proclivity of reporting for duty late, depart early from school, extend tea breaks and lunch including toilet breaks, attend to personal matters during working hours, forge sickness and extend the time taken to collect the tools of trade like chalk, textbooks, etc and unplanned absence from school.

It could not be disputed that some learners copied those unbecoming behaviours by educators, hence, the saying that ‘the tree said to the wood cutter the axe is one of us’. This made it difficult for educators to discipline learners who committed the same offences as their educators. In addition, both educator absenteeism and late-coming paint a picture of weak school leadership which was supposed to root out all the foreign tendencies which adversely affected learner attainment in both primary and secondary schools in multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Musyoki (2015) agrees that when an educator is absent from school the

inevitable result is an immense loss of teaching and learning time in the classroom. The principals have a duty and responsibility to ensure that late-coming does not take place in schools by developing appropriate strategies to curb lateness (Jumare, Maina & Ankoma-Sey, 2015). Undoubtedly, this calls for administration of accountability and consequence management. In addition, both accountability and consequence management should form part of servant leadership dimension as theory extension. Hence, Musyoki (2015) contends that consistent supervision of educators reduces the rate of absenteeism. Befittingly, the body of empirical research indicates that getting accountability and consequence management issues right is core to improving school leadership, teaching and learning especially for the poorest of the poor (The World Bank, 2011). Likewise, Penxa (2018) argues that school principals are required to report, expound and justify associated consequences and undertake corrective actions or measures.

8.2.11 Servant leadership: A missing link in educational delivery in multiple-deprived rural schools

This study also found under-teaching and failure to honour the teaching periods as one of the eminent themes that emerged during the data presentation and discussion of findings. This is consistent with du Plessis' (2014) study finding that multiple-deprived rural schools were beset with a multiplicity of challenges which negatively affect the provision of quality education. This study revealed that some educators were only teaching 30% of the syllabi or Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). In agreeing with the above finding, Modisaotsile (2012) reports that educators in black multiple-deprived rural schools teach an average of 3.5 hours per day, whereas, former Model C schools teach about 6.5 hours per day. In Mcambi Primary School the educators who failed to master the subject concepts that they were expected to teach were in the Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase. Undoubtedly, an educator who does not understand the subject content himself or herself cannot honour teaching periods and cannot teach all the topics in the Annual Teaching Plan as expected. Sibuyi (2012) states that an educator is required to know and understand the subject content perfectly well. In addition, in a study conducted by Sibuyi (2012) one of the findings was that educators failed to teach quadratic functions in Mathematics which impacted negatively on learner outcomes in the subject. In a study conducted by Ngema (2016) it was found that the majority of Mathematics and Science educators' level of

education was limited to a mere teaching diploma in those subjects. Moreover, Olasehinde-Williams, Yahaya and Owolabi (2018) contend that educators normally teach only what they understand and in the ways they understand it. As a consequence, the importance of appointing high quality educators in the teaching and learning activity cannot be over-emphasised (Olasehinde-Williams, *et al.*, (2018).

At Zinqobele Secondary School the School Management Team decided to abolish the staffroom system so that all educators could be stationed in classrooms as class managers. However, under-teaching continued. The school was only able to reduce the failure to honour teaching periods. This seemed to suggest that learners in multiple-deprived rural schools used to sit for their examinations not ready to write because they had not been sufficiently prepared for such examination papers. The painful part of these unprofessional acts was the poor learner performance across all the grades which hit hard at the level of Grade 12. One Grade 12 educator got 30% in the 2017 National Senior Certificate Examination (NSC) and according to the school principal; this was due to the lack of subject content knowledge. The same educator refused to answer learners' questions during her lesson presentation and she told them that her knowledge of the subject content was limited. In essence, experience in the teaching profession is highly valued when compared to other professions (Kosgei, Mise, Odera & Ayugi, 2013).

The literature reveals that educator quality continues to be a significant determinant in learner attainment in multiple-deprived rural contexts (Azam & Kingdom, 2013). Zuzovsky (2008) opines that learners who are taught by educators who have senior or second degree perform better than learners who are taught by educators with first degree or less or outshine learners who are taught by educators who have not specialised in the subject they teach. In corroborating Zuzovsky's (2008) research finding, Rice (2010) avers that multiple-deprived rural schools are often doubly disadvantaged in relation to educator teaching experience: they account for an immense number of inexperienced educators in critical subjects like Mathematics, Sciences and Accounting and perform poorly when compared to experienced counterparts in former model C and township schools. In addition, contemporary studies indicate that multiple-deprived rural schools in South Africa are performing poorly owing to insufficient utilisation of teaching time (notional or contact time) (Maile & Olowoyo, 2017). Similarly, the World Bank (2011, p.3) concurs that "time on task – the classroom time that teachers actually devote to teaching and learning activities – is low".

This study concludes that a greater number of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators find it hard to embrace the phenomenon of servant leadership because they fail to understand how a school principal, Departmental Head or educator can be a servant; that is, it seems to be an oxymoron (Russell & Stone, 2002, p.145; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002); Wong & Page, 2003). Hence, they wanted to do as they pleased because they were controlled by egocentrism. In contrast, servant leadership puts service as one of its first priorities (Focht & Ponton, 2015). In essence, any school principal, Departmental Head or educator appreciates the value of servant leadership and ubuntu philosophy cannot condone any acts of non-honouring of teaching periods and under-teaching. These are foundational to the servant leader's traits, namely putting colleagues and learners' interests before their own (Focht & Ponton, 2015). To state it plainly, a servant school principal, Departmental Head or educator worthy of respect, stimulates trust and confidence and determines quality standards for learner outcomes (Sipe & Frick, 2015).

Unsurprisingly, it has been noted that feeble accountability and consequence management systems undergird the failure of efficient and effective delivery of service such as quality education (The World Bank, 2011). Similarly, Penxa (2018) advises that school principals should hold their colleagues accountable for learner outcomes and implement consequence management when the need arises. In that spirit of selfless service, accountability and consequence management deserve to part of servant leadership practices in a form of servant leadership theory extension or theory development. In reality, *ubuntu* leadership theory encourages school leaders and educators to accept accountability something which clearly lacks in most multiple-deprived rural schools (Khoza, 2013).

8.2.12 Strategies to enhance servant leadership in schools

Moreover, one of the lessons learnt from this study was that some educators especially the newly appointed educators had never been exposed to servant leadership or Batho Pele Principles. Some study participants reported that they only heard their school principals mentioning that there is something called Batho Pele which is supposed to be implemented in all public institutions including schools. This was just a beast to the novice educators and remained like a closed book. Even the most experienced educators stated that they only attended one workshop since 1998; more than 20 years ago, yet, Batho Pele is the government policy. To put it plainly,

some educators had no knowledge of servant leadership / Batho Pele. In trying to answer the fourth critical question, the study participants voiced out that there would like to see the Department of Education conducting Batho Pele workshops in order for school to improve service delivery like quality education in multiple-deprived rural contexts. This was lucid demonstration that there was no 'consistency' in promoting government policies which sought to improve service delivery, especially, curriculum delivery in the classroom. Astonishingly, this happened against the backdrop that there is a minister and Members of Executive Council occupying the office at different levels and times.

8.4 Putting the study findings under the microscope and elucidating the theoretical development of servant leadership

In this section, I examine the findings in order to determine whether this study agrees or disagrees with other researches. In addition, I highlight its contributions to servant leadership scholarship including theoretical development.

Moreover, based on the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Three, this piece of research seems to agree with other researches. The empirical evidence demonstrates that the functions and performance spheres of a servant school leader may assist to create serving organisations that leave behind legacies in individual educators and the community throughout their existence (Coetzer, Bussin & Geldenhuys, 2017). This relationship was also highlighted by Tanno and Banner (2018, p.1) who assert that "non-servant leadership senior school leaders lacking business ethics have caused negative outcomes". This study found that some educators had a proclivity of submitting learners' examination marks without marked answer scripts and such cases used to be referred to the School Examination and Assessment Committee (Miss F. Buthelezi, educator of Sukumani Primary School. Likewise, the findings showed that most school principals are mostly enacting autocratic leadership followed by laissez-faire (Iileka, 2017). The literature reports that servant leadership is a unique style of leadership which has an ability to bring about change and to motivate colleagues (Tureman, 2013). Equally, there is a general view that servant leadership is grounded in universal ethical values such as empathy, honesty, trust, humility, healing, listening,

empowerment of colleagues, stewardship, foresight, conceptualisation, vision, integrity, building community and service (Bowman, 2005; Smith, 2005).

Furthermore, servant leadership "is not leadership from selfish ambition or has anything pertaining to self at all, but instead, it is a leadership that focuses on serving those who are around a leader to accomplish the necessary tasks" (Tureman, 2013, p.9). The scholarship reveals that, the lack of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts and the enactment of other leadership styles is a contributory factor to many potential pitfalls such as pride, arrogance, selfishness, cruelty and misuse of power can contribute to the downfall of a leader (Tidball, 2012). One of the study participants, Mrs Bongi Luthuli of Sukumani Primary School reported that when educators try to communicate with parents about learners' underperformance, the response is: "what are educators doing because that is their work of which they are paid for" That resulted in educators saying: "Come what may, *azimane zilime ziyetsheni*"

More surprisingly, Miss Zama Zulu of Siphosakhe Secondary School added that some educators prey on girl learners who throw themselves to them, at times due to poverty faced by the community. This is an alien attitude and culture which cause wide and perilous chasms between educators and parents. Undoubtedly, this flies in the face of servant leadership virtues such as trust, honesty and integrity. That is one of the reasons why Keith (2011) adds that in order to make the world a better place, principals, departmental heads and educators should become servant leaders and transform their schools into servant-institutions. Theoretically, in corroborating these research findings, Nzimakwe (2014) is of the opinion that servant leadership and *Ubuntu* leadership cause school principals, departmental heads and educators to compassionate, make professional life more humane to colleagues and care for disadvantaged poorest of the poor, sick and bereaved learners and community members.

More importantly, this study found that little research on servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts has been conducted. As a consequence, the purpose of this study was to add to the existing body of knowledge or empirical evidence or limited scholarship (new insights) about the phenomenon of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts. Hence, this research sought to fill a 'gap' in school principals, departmental heads and educators' understanding or knowledge of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. Additionally, the findings of this study may influence the policy makers such as the Department

of Basic Education and the South African Council for Educators (SACE) to restructure their Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) programmes to include servant leadership (Batho Pele) so as to develop a service-oriented public service, e.g. educators in the education sector. Owing to the urgency and importance of servant leadership philosophy, these findings may be a sufficient motivation for an increase in the funding of CPTD programmes to benefit, largely, multiple-deprived rural schools.

Furthermore, this study sought to theorise servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural school contexts. This was done by way of establishing the significance of servant leadership theory extension or theory development by adding: social compact, putting colleague educators and learners first, going beyond the call of duty, planning, teamwork, administration of educational law and accountability and consequence management as new servant leadership practices or traits in order to transform multiple-deprived rural schools in effective learning organisations. In essence, all the servant leadership challenges that were cited in Chapters Seven and Eight signified the failure to embrace accountability, consequence management and socially acceptable behaviours (Mirvis, De Jongh, Googins, Quinn & Van Velsor, 2010). One of the lessons that were learnt and shared by Mr Lindani Mthunzi, a departmental head of Siphosakhe Secondary School was that some school leaders had a misconception about servant leadership. As a result, they expected their colleague educators and SMT members to bow down to them so as to show that they are servant leaders in the institution.

8.5 Chapter summary

This penultimate chapter of the thesis endeavoured to attune the cardinal themes which emerged from the study findings with the existing empirical research and the two theoretical frameworks. To remind the reader, the prime themes that emerged from the research are the following: servant leadership as a social compact underpinned by putting colleagues and learners first and going beyond the call of duty (going an extra mile), visionary leadership, sacrosanctity of teaching and learning, educator professional development, legislative centrality and mandate, rewarding excellence as a form of extrinsic motivation, educator union militancy and their social dominance, rampant fraud and corruption, persistent late-coming and absenteeism by educators and servant leadership as a missing link in educational delivery in multiple-deprived rural schools.

The preceding chapter presents the study summary, fundamental conclusions, recommendations and implications for future study.

CHAPTER NINE

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

9.1 Introduction

The previous research chapter engaged in the evaluative analysis of the key themes that emerged from this study on "exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal". Drawing from the key findings and salient themes presented in the antecedent chapters, conclusions, recommendations and implications for future study on the enactment of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools were determined.

As South Africa was characterised as a colonial and apartheid state with a government which only catered for the wellbeing of the minority at the expense of the majority of South Africans, therefore it is imperative that a new and values-based system of leadership, namely servant leadership is required to address the imbalances of the past (Manala, 2014). Many multiple-deprived rural schools were an epitome of an unproductive and failing education system (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). In this study I argue that public service delivery in general and the provision of quality education in particular is both skewed and poor, and for that reason, some multiple-deprived rural schools do not serve the objectives for which they were designed; which denotes that education in South Africa is perilously unsatisfactory **(**Maringe & Moletsane, 2015**).** In concurring with this view, du Plessis (2014) adds that the socio-economic realities of multiple-deprived rural contexts put the majority of learners at a huge disadvantage in terms suitable human capital, physical infrastructure, teaching and learning resources and learner outcome. The literature reveals that there is an interconnection between the quality of education and multiple-deprivation in rural schools of KwaZulu-Natal (Cook, Rutt & Sims, 2014). Similarly, Wong and Dave (2007) aver that financial and human costs of poor, immoral and unethical school leadership are beginning to escalate beyond human imagination. Consequently, the current South African political and educational dispensation calls for a paradigm shift in terms of school leadership, management and teaching tasks.

Moreover, this study has demonstrated that servant leadership is a more modern and appropriate leadership style for multiple-deprived rural schools. This is a leadership approach which is more

aligned to *Ubuntu* philosophy and also transformational in nature (Brubaker, 2013). It has a potential to meet the 21st century educational demands in terms of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) characterised by paperless classrooms, coding and robotics technology, and in turn, improved quality education delivery (Butler-Adam, 2018). The servant leadership approach seeks to serve educators, learners and parents before showing a desire to assume a leadership position (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002).

9.2 Taking a walk down the memory lane: This study at a glance

Chapter One was an introduction and background to the study on 'Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A case of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal'. The study revealed that former President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela understood the challenges that the South African society in general and multiple-deprived rural schools in particular, were facing during the apartheid era. As a consequence, in demonstrating leadership, he delivered a Rubicon speech in February 1990 which sought to set the tone for the South African future leadership, namely, servant leadership. He declared his willingness to serve all South Africans and make his own humble and selfless contribution in addressing the ills of the apartheid education system. It was reported that a myriad of calls that were invariably made in educational transformation in South Africa centred on the necessity to transform leadership and management styles of schools (Msila, 2008). I therefore posit that multiple-deprived rural schools have reached a stage where they need to explicitly state that never again should their children be exposed to leaders and educators who are cheque collectors and who lack true values, morals and ethics to serve the nation instead of serving their narrow self-interests.

To underscore the above assertion, the South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996 spells out that the public service should be characterised by respect, norms, values, democratic and just school leadership principles. Further, the study painted a picture that multiple-deprived rural schools are characterised by high levels of politics or educator unionism which render these schools dysfunctional and cause some of the schools to provide poor quality of education (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2015). Meanwhile, this country has a goal to improve the quality of education and one of the strategies utilised is that principals must lead and manage the curriculum; educators should be at school, punctual, prepared and in the classrooms teaching and learners learning (Reddy, Prinsloo, Netshitangani, Moletsane, Juan & van Rensburg, 2010). In

generating and analysing data, the study was guided by four key research questions mentioned in Chapter One and Five respectively.

In Chapter Two I surveyed a considerable amount of related literature on servant leadership as a phenomenon under microscope. This research drew from the readily available corpus of scholarship which has contributed immensely to the development and promotion of servant leadership in circumstances of multiple-deprivation. The approach to the presentation of literature review adopted a funnel-shaped style, commencing with international literature, followed by African continental literature and concluded with South African literature of servant leadership. This chapter re-enforces the first critical research question which intended to illuminate candid conceptualisations or understandings of servant leadership by participants as a reality being investigated. I deduced that servant leadership dictates that a school principal, Departmental Head or educator should be a servant first before contrary to general notion of becoming a leader first (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002). I reported that colleague educators, learners and parents, while in the process of being served, should become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely to themselves to become servant leaders themselves, and as a consequence, the least privileged should benefit and not be further deprived (Greenleaf, 1977).

In the African (continental) literature it evident that there is an avalanche of factors which militate against the radical promotion and flourishing of servant leadership style such as educator unionism, corruption, violence, unpalatable educator-learner relationship and poor learner outcomes (Anglaaere, 2017). In the South African context, servant leadership is encapsulated in the policy known as 'Batho Pele' which guides the improvement of service delivery such as public education. The Chief Justice of the South African Constitutional Court, Mogoeng Mogoeng was at pain when administering the oath of office to the Deputy President and ministers and he wisely stated that the people who assume leadership positions should have credibility, integrity and some character to write about. He further added that people should not assume leadership positions in order to immorally amass wealth and behave as if society owes them something, instead, they should become servants of South Africa (Mogoeng, 2018).

Chapter Three explained the theoretical framework, namely servant leadership and *Ubuntu* leadership underpinning this study. The utilisation of two theoretical frameworks was for triangulation purposes and was consistent with Brubaker's (2013) assertion that servant

leadership and ubuntu leadership are interconnected due to the high value ascribed to them. Servant leadership as a primary theoretical framework was underpinned by Russell and Stone's (2002) Model of leadership. This theoretical framework chapter further illuminated the appropriate answers to three critical questions, namely, one, two and four. To put it plainly, servant leadership theory provided adequate understanding about conceptualisations, practices and the suggested strategies for enhancing it in multiple-deprived rural schools. This study demonstrated that servant leadership is 'fit-for-purpose' because a servant leader displays keenness to serve the marginalised community (Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora, 2008). This is consistent with the environment of multiple deprivations which continue to plague disadvantaged rural schools. In the same vein, all the professional malpractices that were reported by study participants in Chapter Seven can be addressed through embracing and enacting servant leadership. Hence, servant leadership places much priority on service as opposed to leading.

Likewise, *Ubuntu* leadership as a secondary or complementary theoretical framework was undergird by Khoza's (2003; 2013) Model of leadership. This study unequivocally indicated that ubuntu philosophy cannot be divorced from any leadership dimensions that are implemented in schools. This African humanism perspective strengthens the culture of mutual respect, trust and collectivism (Meylahn & Musiyambiri, 2017). Hence, incorporating attuned leadership in school management holds a good promise of ethics, corporate culture and governance in multiple-deprived rural schools (Khoza, 1994; Nkomo, 2006; Letseka, 2014). *Ubuntu* leadership has been projected in this study as a strategy that can counter an untold number of moral deviations revealed by study participants such as bribery, educator-learner sexual relationship, late-coming, absenteeism, non-honouring of teaching periods and under-teaching, to name but a few, which featured prominently in Chapters Two and Seven (Adeyemi, 2010; Etica, 2017).

In Chapter Four I presented and discussed the research design and methodology. This study was located in an interpretive paradigm in order to pave the way for me to listen to study participants and then interpret their meanings, perspectives and feelings on servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts (Maree, 2007). With the aid of a qualitative research approach, this study utilised the case study design because it can employ a multiplicity of data generation methods or techniques in a single study (Robinson, 2007). Some schools declined their participation in the study while others pulled out at the last minute which caused untold confusion and frustrations on my part. Both semi-structured interviews and documents review were utilised to generate

data. A total of twelve conveniently sampled study participants from two secondary schools and two primary schools were interviewed through semi-structured interviews as primary data generation (Mugera, 2013). In addition, minutes, reports and staff development records were scrutinised so as to corroborate or triangulate the participants' voices and also make sense of their views. In this regard, a documents analysis schedule was utilised to guide the analysis of the contents of the documents. The documents shed light on some of the issues that were not raised sharply in the interviews. These interviews were digitally recorded with a digital recorder and with the aid of interview schedule. In essence, data generation was guided by the four key research questions which were ultimately answered through a myriad of themes and sub-themes in Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight. The data from interviews and documents review were analysed through content analysis employing De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011) Model of content analysis with six steps.

The three subsequent chapters, namely, Chapters Five, Six and Seven were dedicated to the descriptive analysis and discussion of data. Chapter Five presented and discussed the study participants' conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. This chapter was guided by the main research question: 'How is servant leadership conceptualised by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in school management, administration and teaching in multiple-deprived rural school contexts?' This chapter was split into two sub-themes, namely, putting colleague educators and learners first and going beyond the call of duty as associated with servant leadership and ubuntu leadership philosophies. Theoretically, this study found that a servant leader needs to enter into a social compact with colleague educators, learners and parents and also see to it that it is fulfilled. The social contract entails the enactment of servant leadership domains and more importantly, quality education and improved learner outcomes.

Chapter Six presented and discussed semi-structured interview and documents review data which illuminated various servant leadership practices enacted by some school leaders and educators in schools. This section was presented and discussed through the second critical question: 'How is servant leadership enacted by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in managing teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural school contexts? The data was partitioned into six interrelated servant leadership dimensions corroborated by servant leadership theory. The implementation of servant leadership domains was an illustration that

some school principals, Departmental Heads and educators had adequate understanding of the importance of servant leadership as an approach to school leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools.

Chapter Seven became the third and concluding section on the data presentation, analysis and discussion. Likewise, semi-structured interviews and documents review data were utilised to answer the third key research question: 'What challenges are encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in the implementation of servant leadership and what strategies do they employ in resolving them in multiple-deprived rural school contexts? In this regard, the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings centred on seven themes which were viewed as servant leadership challenges in multiple-deprived rural schools of KwaZulu-Natal. These challenges were an eye opener in terms of demonstrating that leading and managing multiple-deprived rural schools can never be equated to a bed of roses. Surprisingly, it became evident that the interviewed school principals had accepted the notion that: 'black school principal, you are on your own!' (Zulu, 2016). Further, this study gleaned some lessons from study participants on how they overcame the concomitant obstacles in an endeavour to enact servant leadership practices in leadership, management and teaching in their schools. It became crystal clear that such schools needed an ethical and moral servant leadership backbone in order to be effective organisations that genuinely served the interests of their clientele, namely learners and parents.

In addition, Chapter Eight presented and evaluatively discussed the key themes and eminent trends that emerged from the findings. Linked to Chapters Five, Six and Seven, the eighth chapter was a careful theoretical synthesis of the pertinent research themes and provided new concepts in an endeavour to contribute to servant leadership theory extension. Likewise, this chapter attempted to provide answers to the fourth critical question: 'What do participants believe should be done to enhance servant leadership practices of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators as they lead, manage and teach in multiple-deprived communities? In responding to this key research question the study participants indicated that some of their colleague educators and School Management Teams lacked adequate understanding of servant leadership style. As result, they felt that they needed to be empowered in order to join the group of the converted and take the school servant leadership to greater heights. In corroborating this view, Chetty (2017) agrees that School Management Teams and

educators should be workshop on the phenomenon of servant leadership in order to develop trust and relationship with their colleagues and customers. This capacity building would create a realisation that the true motivation of servant school leadership is to actually serve first, not to lead (Greenleaf, 1977; Russell & Stone, 2002).

Chapter Nine provides an evaluative presentation of the study summary, conclusions, recommendations and the implications for future research. Further, it concludes that some school principals, Departmental Heads and educators from the four researched schools associated servant leadership with a social compact and the notion of going beyond the call of duty in terms of teaching in the classroom and managing multiple-deprived rural schools. The pertinent themes which resonated well with the reviewed literature and theoretical frameworks were the sacrosanctity of the school vision, significance of quality teaching and learning, prioritisation of educator professional development, rewarding excellence, implementation of educational laws and policies and putting in place measures to curb educator late-coming and absenteeism, educator union's negative influence, failure to honour periods and under-teaching, unpalatable relationships and fraud and corruption. It also transpired that some educators were working against the tide but school principals managed to suppress that through the administration of the educational law. In essence, this chapter provided a synthesis of the pertinent points presented in the previous chapters taking into consideration the manner in which these themes attempted to answer the four critical questions.

9.3 Conclusions

The participants' narratives arising from their interview voices and documentary analysis made it possible for me as a researcher to arrive at the following conclusions.

9.3.1 Conceptualisations of servant leadership

The study participants had a cocktail of diverse perspectives as their conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. What was more striking was that they associated servant leadership with the noble notion of putting or serving 'colleague educators, learners and parents first' before leading them. This study further argues that a servant school principal, Departmental Head and educator should be able to accept responsibility for their everyday performance. Theoretically, Chetty's (2017) conceptualisation of servant leadership is

that it involves thinking beyond today's needs and extending it to an accomplishable future. Notwithstanding the participants' lucid conceptualisations of servant leadership, there was no binding moral obligation to selflessly and ethically serve the South African society. Moreover, this study concludes that a servant school principal, Departmental Head and educators should never celebrate mediocrity but should himself or herself be determined to go beyond the call of duty in discharging their duties and responsibilities of leadership, management and teaching. Similarly, they must accept multi-skilled workers of the mind who are educators, social workers, nurses, magistrates, security guards, etc. This is further underscored by Chetty (2017) who contends that putting colleagues, learners and parents first is a positive way of promoting servant leadership in any school. In addition, Ambali, Suleiman, Bakar, Hashim and Tariq (2011) conclude that servant leadership domain have been predominantly recommended for multiple-deprived rural contexts.

Theoretically, what emerged prominently was that school leaders have to enter into a social compact with the colleague educators, learners and parents in order to feel legally obliged to improve education delivery in the classroom. To underscore this statement, Wieczorek and Manard (2018) conclude that multiple-deprived rural school principals are not mere bureaucratic managers of school buildings, but revered and important members of society who are expected to embrace being visible, a source of enlightenment and beacon of hope. For that reason, Khoza (2012) argues that educators and principals should not place themselves above others but strive to be at their service. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that serving colleagues, learners and parents with a sense of propriety and accountability is a plain extension of ubuntu (Khoza, 2012). As a consequence, principals, Departmental Heads and educators should be held accountable for any break of the 'social compact' with their clientele. This theme sufficiently answered the first key research question which relates to the conceptualisations of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools.

9.3.2 School vision

The four case study schools had their vision and mission statements which were collectively developed by various stakeholders and sufficiently communicated to relevant stakeholders but what was lacking was the translation of such vision and mission statements into concrete

deliverables, meaning the implementation part of these tools was not witnessed by me as a researcher in other schools. Some vision statements remained abstract to educators, learners and parents who are supposed to be internalising and implementing it. This was a clear indication that not enough was done to convert and translate them in school service delivery commitment charter and school service delivery improvement plans as part of deliverables. Russell and Stone (2002) argue that school principals, Departmental Heads and educators are stewards or agents of the school as an organisation. What was interesting was the fact that all the four researched schools had their vision statements displayed in the foyer. On a sad note, only one school out of four had a service commitment charter which was a clear weakness on the part of management. Mcambi Primary School showed some strides in ensuring that they breathed life into their vision. This was demonstrated through Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills transfer to their learners. This school was mindful of the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and era of Artificial Intelligence (AI) which have an ability to technologically invade the global village or society. This theme addressed the second critical question on the servant leadership practices.

9.3.3 Teaching as a core business of the school

Despite a clear understanding that teaching is the core-function of all educators irrespective of the post level, the quality of teaching and learning (education) was still a major challenge in all of the conveniently sampled schools. This was demonstrated by the quality of learner outcomes in both primary and secondary schools. On a good note, all the four school principals that were interviewed were also subject educators which demonstrated servant leadership and exemplary leadership. These school principals walked the talk and had a feel of what it was like to be at the coal face in the classroom. This seemed to indicate that these participants held ‘double sharpened sword’ in their hands in the sense that their accountability was ‘two fold’ namely as school principals and subject educators. This was further underscored by Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) in their study finding that some multiple-deprived rural schools servant leadership is characterised by commitment to serve, accountability and leading by doing.

However, the failure of these schools to meet the expected standards of the quality of education meant that they failed to adequately meet the requirements of the learner that is envisaged by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) of 2011. This is inconsistent with the policy which dictates that all learners should have equal access to quality public education (du

Plessis, 2014). In responding to this challenge, Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) argue that multiple-deprived rural schools should appoint suitably qualified educators who have knowledge and skills of effective teaching. In agreeing with this finding, Butler-Adam (2018) points out that to succeed as an educator and learner in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) mathematics and language and comprehension of how the world operates are significant. This theme also illuminated the importance of team planning and parental involvement in ensuring effective teaching and learning. As consequence, this study theoretically argues that team planning and parent involvement should become servant leadership dimensions. This view is shared by Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) when opining that it is beneficial to promote teamwork or team spirit because all educators work towards improved learner performance.

9.3.4 Educator professional development in multiple-deprived rural contexts

This revealed that all the four researched schools made some attempts to develop their educators professionally. This demonstrated that they understood that professional development cannot be substituted with anything else because of the ever changing curricular needs and leadership changes in the 21st century. My greatest concern was that some of these sampled schools did not have structured educator development programmes but this was only done on *ad hoc* basis. It also transpired that although two secondary schools paid much attention on leave measures, the two primary schools had a myriad of diverse topics selected for the professional development of educators. Mcambi Primary placed a lot of significance on educator empowerment and they had both a structured programme and fixed days and times for implementation purposes. In addition, Sukumani Primary School's programme went as far as accommodating aspects in inclusive education and they had a programme of supporting learners with barriers to learning. The evidence provided by study participants and documents review has persuaded me to conclude that in some of the case study schools educator professional development was not done in a manner that could certainly yield the desired fruits.

9.3.5 Administration of the education law

The 21st century learner has more fundamental human rights which at times work against the real purpose of being at school, namely teaching and learning. This study deduced that educational law is indispensable in the industry of education especially in this era of the constitution

democracy and the Bill of Rights. As a result, this study concludes that without the education law professional malpractices can go unabated and certainly there can be no labour peace in schools as learning organisations. It stands to reason therefore that a servant leader is a school principal, Departmental Head or educator who has a clear knowledge and understanding of various pieces of educational legislation so as to lead and manage schools properly. All the decisions that they take must be legally defensible. Wong and Page (2003) posit that after extensive consultation, servant school principals, Departmental Heads and educators do not have to be apologetic about or even hesitant of taking unpopular decisions. Similarly, servant leadership should not be equated to egocentric motives to please colleagues in order to ascend to leadership positions (Ambali, Suleiman, Bakar, Hashim & Tariq, 2011).

Some study participants use educational law to understand their duties and responsibilities while on the other hand, others use it to deal with deviant behaviours by their colleagues. The participants' responses which suggest a heavy reliance on Section 10 of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 compelled me to conclude that some schools still administer corporal punishment in multiple-deprived rural schools. Secondly, their heavy dependence on Section 17 of the Employment of educators Act No. 76 of 1998 led me to conclude that not all educators in multiple-deprived rural schools conduct themselves ethically, morally and professional which necessitate the implementation of this section of the act. In corroborating this conclusion, Mcambi Primary School principal had this to say: "*Legislation serves as my shield if I get attacked by militant teachers within the school who like to oppose my leadership which demands accountability".* This is consistent with Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane's (2015) contention that multiple-deprived rural schools have to be their own liberators from unprofessional tendencies. Further, the assurance in educational law is that it evolves to satisfy the needs of transforming the school environment (Jusso, 2015). As a consequence, a servant leader should administer the educational law because that is ethical and moral in nature. Theoretically, this study further concludes that educational law has to become one of servant leadership domains.

9.3.6 Rewarding excellence

I learnt that all the four case study schools implemented the servant leadership practice of rewarding educators and learners for excellent performance. This helped to promote positive competition among both subject educators and learners themselves. I also learnt that some

educators were congratulated for good academic performance in front of their colleagues as form of appreciating good work. This form of motivation was an attempt to increase commitment and dedication in academic activities and in turn, put learner outcomes on an upward trajectory. The mere fact that at Zinqobele Secondary School learners (best achievers) were called and awarded at the assembly quarterly was a clear indication that 'a person does not have to light the candle and keep it under the table'. The findings of this study made me conclude that, notwithstanding the good gesture of awarding excellence but very few educators benefited because of overall academic performance of these schools especially when benchmarked with National Senior Certificate (Grade 12) examinations. Nevertheless, this form of motivation had some positive impact in some way.

9.3.7 Union militancy and dominance

From the evidence presented by study participants the finding seemed to suggest that the role that organised labour played in schools was not constructive at all and it was contrary to the spirit of servant leadership. This study found that school principals in multiple-deprived rural contexts were bullied into taking illegal decisions because they wanted to demonstrate their position and political power. The principals of Siyavuma Primary School, Mcambi Primary School and Zinqobele Secondary School shared their first-hand experiences with the phenomena of union militancy and educational dominance. Their bullying tactics caused paralysis in the relationship between unions and school managers. As a consequence, the saying that 'if two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers the most' finds expression. In concurrence with this conclusion, Nussbaum (2003) asserts that some African union leaders have betrayed the philosophical and humanitarian principles on which African culture is based. According to du Plessis (2014), multiple-deprived rural school principals face a multiplicity of challenges almost every day. Therefore, this study concludes that the toxic or venomous relationship between educator unions and school leadership had a negative impact on learner performance in these schools. Unfortunately, they came to Mcambi Primary School on different occasions and demanded that the school be closed so that educators could join their planned activities. Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) contend that school principals should be knowledgeable about what educational law permits and do not permit educator unions to do. In the same study participants corroborated my study finding when they reported that it is not difficult for an educator union to make the school ungovernable (Chikoko, *et al.*, 2015). Out of the four school

principals, the Mcambi Primary School principal demonstrated an extraordinary courage to meet them toe-to-toe in an attempt to put the interest of learners first before his own and that of his colleagues. Undoubtedly, this was a clear evidence of servant leadership.

9.3.8 Late- coming and absenteeism by educators

Late-coming and absenteeism were presented as snags to the implementation of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools. My fear as a researcher was that learners' gullible nature could cause them to copy these bad tendencies from educators, hence, the saying that 'the tree said to the wood chopper (cutter), the axe is one of us'. These deviant behaviours could make it extremely difficult for law abiding educators to discipline learners who chose to emulate these foreign tendencies because learners could voice out that they copied them from educators. It is an absolute truth that educators have great influence on professional classroom practices in schools (Kosgei, Mise, Odera & Ayugi, 2013). Furthermore, the empirical studies show that educator late-coming and absenteeism affect performance of learners negatively (Ngema, 2016). It cannot be disputed that persistent late-coming and regular absenteeism were some of the factors which promoted laissez faire leadership and school dysfunctionality which contrary to the pursuit of servant leadership as a panacea to a myriad of social and educational ills in multiple-deprived rural schools. The Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998, Section 17, Subsection (1) paragraph (m) states explicitly that "an educator shall be guilty of misconduct if the educator without leave or valid reason, is absent from office or duty. As a consequence, this study concludes that the rate of late-coming and absenteeism was high and posed a huge threat to the provision of quality public education in multiple-deprived rural schools.

9.3.9 Failure to honour teaching periods and under-teaching

It emerged in this study through the evidence from participants that some educators did not display qualities of servant leadership. Their actions did not in any way support the improvement of the basic functionality of the multiple-deprived rural contexts. The failure to honour teaching periods and under-teaching were rife, thus defeating the purpose of being at school. The failure to honour teaching periods was a signal of 'functional absenteeism' where an educator comes to school for a malicious compliance and remain in the staffroom and does not go to class to teach. Some of the reasons cited by participants were that some educators lacked the subject content knowledge and pedagogical skills for the subjects assigned to them. Mupa and Chinooneka

(2015) report that learners fail, if educators lack specialised didactical and pedagogical skills and if teaching and learning resources are often under-utilised. Likewise, the issue of qualifications and experience were ranked supreme after the content knowledge and methodological deficiency. The literature indicates that the success of any rural school education depends largely on productive classroom experiences between learners and subject educators (The World Bank, 2011). It is worth noting that good leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools is needed to ensure that educators attend to their classes industriously and learners take the significance of education seriously (Modisaotsile, 2012).

According to Modisaotsile (2012), the quality of teaching and learning in multiple-deprived rural schools remains very poor and there has not been any improvement in the output rate. On a more precarious note, the educators in question buried the learners alive by giving them a scanty amount of written work which invariably ill-equipped them for School Based Continuous Assessment and examinations. This finding was consistent with du Plessis' (2014) assertion that multiple-deprived rural school battle to recruit good and suitable educators because of the lack of financial resources. The author adds that the lack of suitable qualified educators is because educators are not willing to stay in rural areas owing to social and professional alienation (du Plessis, 2014). Educator (credentials) qualifications play an important role in improving learner performance. To delve into this matter further, Azam and Kingdom (2013) found that a Masters degree in a subject has a significant impact in the improvement of learners' results. The participants' perspectives about these challenges convinced me to arrive at these conclusions, firstly, that educators were not suitably qualified to teach the subjects allocated to them. Secondly, some educators committed these forms of misconduct deliberately because they wanted to pull the school academic performance down in what they term in street language as 'fixing the school principal'. Redding and Walberg (2012) extend a word of advice when stating that learner motivation is strongly influenced by the manner in which schools operate and in turn, affects the schools' performance in relation to learning outcomes.

9.3.10 Educator-learner sexual relationships

The findings from this study conclude that the laws meant to protect the learners have not yet started to make a positive impact in nipping the scourge of educator-learner sexual relationships from the bud. SACE (2016) reports that classroom-based sexual predators have started to exploit social networks such as Facebook as advanced and unsupervised modes of communication to

initiate and develop improper sexual relationships with learners. For this reason, I argue that learners in multiple-deprived rural schools are not safe. Learner sexual molestation in multiple-deprived rural settings sometimes involves sexual favours in exchange of good marks (Simuforosa, 2015). Older learners who are victims are often accused of not being in control and there is a mentality that they got what they wanted (Geddes, Tyson & McGreal, 2012). To put it plainly, the study concludes that educator-learner sexual relationships are rife in KwaZulu-Natal schools and that distracts learners from their goal of achieving improved learner outcomes. Modisaotsile's (2012) study found that one of the educator behaviours that hinder good learner performance in multiple-deprived rural schools is unlawful sexual involvement with defenceless learners. In actual fact parents are taken for a ride by people who are supposed to be earning trust and respect from them. These acts of improper conduct are a demonstration that servant leadership is not practiced in some multiple-deprived rural schools.

9.3.11 Fraud and corruption

This research learnt of a cocktail of malpractices which have continued to beset the multiple-deprived rural schools. In addition to the above, unprofessional practices such as fraud and corruption characterised the image of the multiple-deprived rural schools. The Employment of Educators' Act No. 76 of 1998, Section 17, Subsection (1) paragraph (g) cautions school principals and educators not to engage themselves in any issue of misconduct because they can be charged for that. Some educators were selling fraudulent report cards to learners and parents. The school principals, School Governing Bodies, educator unions and office-based officials were selling promotion posts and Post Level 1 post at a huge price. There was also a sharp decline in the level of ethics and morals because the phenomenon of 'sex for marks' was also rife in these schools. In that vein, I conclude that some of the marks that were awarded to learners were not authentic. Secondly, school principals were not managing to curb these cases of sexual misconduct because all culprits were getting away with 'murder'. The major grey area in relation to this conundrum was that school principals and School Governing Bodies were not escalating these cases to SACE as per legal statute. The SACE Code of Professional Ethics (2002) stipulates that educators are prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual relationship with learners from any school in South Africa. This contention is based on the fact that one of the responsibilities of the South African Council for Educators (2000, p.3) is "to set, maintain and

protect ethical and professional standards for educators" in the teaching fraternity. This, in reality has not benefited some learners in multiple-deprived rural schools. Kgatle (2018) sums it up correctly when he says that corruption is a very complex problem whereby its agents are similar to viruses which mutate and adapt to every new environment.

9.4 Recommendations

This section presents and expounds the recommendations which emanated from the critical questions, findings and conclusions of the study.

9.4.1 Recommendation One

Multiple-deprived rural schools are often neglected in terms of the provision of adequate support by the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal which in turn, condones perpetual under-development and disadvantage. Despite the fact that some study participants had clear conceptualisations of servant leadership, however, it was reported that only the old and experienced educators were exposed to servant leadership or Batho Pele workshops. As a consequence, some educators used to hear about it when mentioned at some meetings or seeing it displayed in offices of various departments. This study therefore recommends that servant leadership or Batho Pele should be consistently promoted through workshops to all educators, especially the young and newly appointed educators. Secondly, the concept of servant leadership needs to be broadened in line with the 21st century leadership demands which place issues of hard and soft skills at the centre of any successful school leadership.

9.4.2 Recommendation Two

Another theme that featured prominently in this research was the significance of the school vision in multiple-deprived rural schools. Likewise, the literature reviewed in Chapter Two demonstrated that is one of the indispensable servant leadership in any effective school leadership. In this study I learnt that vision statements were available in all the researched schools, however, the implementation part of them was a major challenge. For that reason, this study recommends that school vision statement should be turned into a living document. Procedurally, it should be reviewed on a regular basis in line with the changes that are taking place in education and when a newly elected School Governing Body takes office. The study

further suggests that, in line with servant leadership (Batho Pele) the school vision should be translated in school goals, values, service commitment charter and service delivery improvement plan in order to ensure that it has life and promotes ethical, moral, honest, trustworthy and credible school leadership which provides focus, direction and insight.

9.4.3 Recommendation Three

The evidence presented through semi-structured interviews and documents review led me to conclude that other school principals in the multiple-deprived rural schools of KwaZulu-Natal should 'take a leaf (page) out of the four case study school principals' books'. If all the school principals can become subject educators they can have first-hand experience of how learners behave in the classroom. Quality education requires increased commitment and dedication to an ideal of improving learner performance and creating a brighter future for the rural children of the poorest of the poor. In an endeavour to enhance effective teaching and learning educators have to actively involve parents in decision making. Similarly, school managers and educators should promote team planning so as to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning. Further, this study notes the hardships that school leaders are subjected to on daily basis. As a result, it recommends that school principals should not be part of the school Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) because they carry a Herculean responsibility of leading and managing schools effectively and efficiently. Even though this study appreciates the fact that school principals should have a 'feel' of what is happening inside the 'black box' (classroom) but they should do that only in a form of capacity building, mentoring and modelling of good practices, not because they are compelled by legislation. To achieve the kind of quality education that is envisaged by all South Africans as encapsulated in the National Development Plan of 2011, this study further recommends that school principals should not have a teaching workload so that they can focus on curriculum management as a core business.

9.4.4 Recommendation Four

The research has show that the rationale behind some of the schools performing at the level that could be termed as 'average' was because of educator empowerment initiatives. In essence, educators should not be exposed to a once-off kind of professional development but theirs must be a 'continuing professional development. It is also critically important that school principals, Deputy Principals, Departmental Heads and educators are encouraged to register senior degrees in universities in order for them to remain relevant in this highly demanding profession. The mere fact that all the interviewed school principals were holding senior degrees

showed that they are leading by example and practise what they teach. For the educator professional development to be effective, schools must consider what Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) refer to as 'organic learning' where experienced educators are twinned with newly appointed novice educators. The finding that educators at Mcambi Primary School used to remain at school after 14H00 until 16H00 and were cooperative was one of the their strong points that they needed to build on. As this study has indicated that some schools did this on *ad hoc* basis and there no structured educator development programmes, I therefore recommend that all schools must draw up well structured and implementable empowerment programmes and such programmes should be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the school principals and the SMTs. Secondly, this study further recommends that staff development programmes should be separated from ordinary staff meetings.

9.4.5 Recommendation Five

One of the findings of this study was that school principals and educators need to have some knowledge of the educational law in order to take legally defensible decisions. It was worth noting that all the schools that were sampled to participate in this study were indeed implementing various pieces of legislation. What was of great concern though was the limited scope of educational law that they subjected themselves to. This study therefore recommends that school principals and educators should utilise all the relevant pieces of legislation that are at their disposal. This study was able to deduce that some schools are still using corporal punishment which was abolished in 1996. This was learnt during the interview of Sukumani Primary School Departmental Head. SASA, No. 84 of 1996, Section 10, subsections (1) and (2) state that "no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to learners. Subsection (2) further states that any educator who is found to have contravened this section shall be "guilty of an offence and liable of a conviction and a sentence which could be imposed for assault". As a result, I further recommend that all educators should be workshopped on various pieces of legislation starting with the South African Constitution as the supreme law of the country. This can also lead to a decline in terms of the deviant behaviours learnt in Chapter Seven of this study.

9.4.6 Recommendation Six

Educators and learners should not only be awarded with certificates and trophies but the management can be innovative and introduce other tokens of appreciation like coffee mugs with school logo with a motto, learners' name, surname, grade, year, photo and a caption which says: 'best achiever in academic performance'. The one for educators can even indicate the percentage obtained in that subject. Secondly, things like T-shirts and calculators can also be used to reward learners for good performance. If an educator achieved 100% for three consecutive years he or she should be funded by the school or Department of Education to spend a weekend away from home in a good hotel. Sacrificing school financial resources is a signal that the school values educators' sacrifices and contributions and it is part of servant leadership and asset-based leadership.

9.4.7 Recommendation Seven

This study has also highlighted that school principals experienced various forms of intimidation from educator unions which were deliberate attempts to curtail or usurp their powers and weaken their authority. One of the lessons learnt from this study was that educator unions wanted school principals to dance to their tune by abandoning servant leadership values and collude with them in destabilising schools only for selfish gains. It cannot be disputed that educator unions were formed to protect and defend their members from unjust administrative practices and salary negotiations at the level of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) and Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) but they are partners or stakeholders in education in general, which suggests that they need to ensure that there is proper school leadership and management and effective teaching and learning in the classroom as well. Based on the above finding, this study recommends that both the national and provincial leadership structures of the educator unions should develop programmes to capacitate branch leadership on legislative mandate and roles and responsibilities. Further, branch leaders should work collaboratively with school principals in ensuring that multiple-deprived rural schools are run effectively and that schools become centres of excellence in terms of educator and learner performances. In other words, they must have a shared vision to transform schools into learning organisations.

9.4.8 Recommendation Eight

The other themes which became salient in this study were late-coming and absenteeism by educators which continued unabated in all the four researched schools. There were no stringent measures that were taken by the school management in an attempt to stop these unlawful tendencies. The study learnt that some educators arrived late to school and advanced just frivolous reasons. The entire study has demonstrated that an educator cannot be regarded as a servant leader without the traits of honesty, integrity and trustworthiness (Russell & Stone, 2002). This study recommends that school principals utilise late arrival and early departure registers so as to be able to track the prevalence of both late-arrival and early departure daily, weeks and monthly.

The phenomenon of educator absenteeism had a negative impact on the smooth running of the school because learners lost valuable amount of the teaching time. In addition, the innocent souls were left to their own devices which was extremely risky because learners could stab each other if they were kept unsupervised. This study found that absenteeism was a major contributory factor in the dysfunctionality of the multiple-deprived rural schools. Normally, if learners continuously experience educator absenteeism they tend to report that to their parents, who in turn, remove their children from such schools and transfer them to effective schools. There is a common saying that 'parents and learners vote with their feet', meaning that they physically move from one school to another looking for schools with strong leadership qualities such as servant leadership. In light of that information, it is critical to state that 'learner migration' is rife in multiple-deprived rural schools. Based on *Ubuntu*, educators must learn that learners are at the epicentre of their profession and that they are what they are because of learners and that learners are what they are because of educators (Khoza, 2012). In other words, the relationship is reciprocal. As a consequence, this study recommends that educators are workshopped on the leave policy using Employment of Educators Act number 76 of 1998, Basic Conditions of Employment, No. 75 of 1997, Labour relations Act, No. 66 of 1995, PAM 2016 and HRM Circular no. 15 of 2011. Further, the school principal must utilise a leave control template with four terms and a leave register in order to manage educators' leave effectively. Further, the proper and daily management and control of the timebook can help a great deal in this aspect.

9.4.9 Recommendation Nine

The research has shown that some educators were not doing what they were expected to do in terms of their contractual obligations. The phenomena of failure to honour teaching periods and under-teaching have found roots in multiple-deprived rural schools. This is utterly contrary to the dictates of servant leadership which demands honesty, integrity, trust and respect from school managers and educators. In essence, ineffective teaching and learning results in poor quality education which perpetuates poverty, inequality and unemployment in multiple-deprived rural community. The constant decline in learner performance has both financial and legal implications (Mthembu, 2015). An educator can be subjected to disciplinary hearing and charged for incapacity. The legislation stipulates that the educator should be trained or mentored, transferred to another post, demoted or dismissed from work if he or she continues to under-perform. The importance of education and its resultant fruits cannot be under-estimated. The South African government believes that teaching is a complex activity that is premised upon the acquisition, integration and application of different types of knowledge practices or learning and skills (Republic of South Africa, 2015). Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) posit that the alumni (former Grade 12 learners) can be very helpful in terms of providing regular free lessons to learners across all grades. This study recommends management-by-walking-around, classroom walkthroughs and fully fledged regular announced and unannounced class visits to monitor curriculum delivery in the classroom. This can assist in curbing the normal practice whereby educators present lessons in IsiZulu in the classroom which leads to failure by learners to master English concepts. Additionally, Khoza (2012) posits that both educators and principals should be held accountable for service delivery in the classroom. As a result, this study further recommends that there must be accountability and consequence management as new servant leadership traits as theory extension.

9.4.10 Recommendation Ten

Another theme that emerged prominently as a challenge to servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools was the educator-learner sexual relationships which were getting out of hand. Further, this study deduced that multiple-deprived rural school learners walk in the valley of fear and death everyday because they are exposed to these heinous acts. The school boys and girls are not the only people who engaged in sexual relationships. This study has revealed that educators are also culprits in the sense that they also have sexual relationships with learners

which is not in line with servant leadership. Some school principals tended to turn a blind eye to the circulating rumours of inappropriate relationships taking place in their schools while others found themselves between a rock and a hard place. Not enough support was received from parents and the Department of Education was not helpful getting rid of sexual predators among its educators either (Coetzee, 2012). The implication of learners having sexual intercourse with old educators is that this can sometimes lead to sexually transmitted diseases. Such a situation can destroy the future of the learner. One of the lessons learnt from this study was the phenomenon of 'marks for sex'. This was evidenced by the level of fraudulent or questionable assessment and examination marks allocation and the selling of examination report cards as discussed under the eleventh conclusion of this study.

In line with this recommendation, Kgatle (2018) states that the unabated abuse of power, rampant corruption and lack of public accountability call for a unique approach to school leadership, governance and management. Based on the evidence of the reported cases of unpalatable relationships between educators and learners, this study recommends that principals and educators should be workshopped on the SACE Code of Professional Ethics, PAM 2016 and Collective Agreement 3 of 2018. This Collective Agreement 3 of 2018 provides steps that are taken by ELRC arbitrators in cases of disciplinary action against educators charged with sexual misconduct in respect of learners.

9.5 Implications for future research

This study adopted a qualitative approach and a case study design in the exploration of servant leadership perspectives and experiences of school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. For ethical and credibility purposes, I declared, right from the inception that due to the size of the sample, the results of this study cannot be representative of the entire school population in KwaZulu-Natal. However, the findings of this study can be used to promote servant leadership in all the multiple-deprived rural schools in this province. Similarly, the findings of this study were a 'mix bag' of both the positive and negative stories from the twelve study participants. It then transpired that although servant leadership was known and understood by some educators in these schools, there was a plethora of factors which worked against the tide and sought to defeat and ultimately burry the

spirit of servant leadership in the four case study schools. Further, this thesis found that the challenges which threatened the existence and promotion of servant leadership carried more weight, thus causing a conundrum and dichotomy.

Ethically, I found it proper to admit that this study could not exhaust all the servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and challenges because of the limited number of words required for this thesis coupled with the small size sample (12 participants). Consequently, further research is recommended for this study in order to extend or develop both the conceptualisations and dimensions or practices of servant leadership as theory.

This study found that 'going beyond the call of duty' or going an extra mile' is associated with servant leadership. Indeed some educators in all the four researched schools embraced this view because they did confine or restrict themselves to professional matters of the school only but they even practiced as nurses and social workers at times. At Sukumani Primary School it was reported that educators visited learners' homes with the aim of trying to assist learners with barriers to learning. Likewise, one of the lessons learnt was that one school principal used his car to transport learners who were not well to the clinic as a sign of being a servant leader. In addition, it transpired that educators in secondary school were engaged in extra tuition classes in the morning, afternoon, weekends and holidays with the sole aim of improving academic learner performance. These educators were not paid for working overtime but it was just a sacrifice which can only expect from a servant leader. At Mcambi Primary School educators used to remain at school from 14H00 to 16H00 every Thursday in order to conduct educator development programmes. They complained though that they had families to look after in the afternoon but wanted to be empowered so that they improve their knowledge and skills of teaching in the classroom. Consequently, the concept of 'going beyond the call of duty' needs to be further researched.

Further, as part of servant leadership conceptualisation, this study found that a servant leader has to enter into a social compact with the parent and the learner. The truth is that when a parent brings his or her child to school the expectation is that the child must be developed holistically including the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values and that the child must pass or be promoted to the next grade at the end of each year. This study found that educators used set targets that they wanted to achieve 100% pass in their individual subjects and the school had its own target of 100% pass percentage. This is a contract between the school as an organisation and

a parent or learner as a client or customer. In essence, it the educator or school fails to fulfil this promise the parent has right either challenge that legally or take his or her child to another school. According to this study's conceptualisation of servant leadership, this contract must be binding on both sides and the school must deliver on its promise. This issue of a social compact between the school and the parent or leaner requires further research as part of servant leadership theory extension.

Talking to educators during the semi-structured interviews, this study found that the school principals need to plan properly as the heads of the school at an executive level and the educators need to engage in planning either individually or as a team. The school principal has to do strategic planning before the previous year ends, namely around October/ November so that when the new academic year begins everything is in place. Similarly, the subject educator has to plan for his or her lessons before going to class and teach. Some of the study participants attached great value and significance to the issue of planning and or team planning. As consequence, this study argues that planning as a form of servant leadership practice requires further research as part of servant leadership theory extension.

This study also found that schools wanted to work with parents cooperatively. As a consequence, the findings of this study recognise the significant role that parents can play in contributing to the academic success of their children. This therefore, affirms the spirit of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools.. Furthermore, the participants reported that enhanced cooperation by convening phase meetings to report on learners' academic performance and also dealing with learner misconduct. However, there were also concerns that some parents were not supportive which left educators at crossroads not knowing what to do. Two study participants were of the view that some parents were not supportive in their endeavour to educate their children. It was also reported that some parents come in huge numbers to attend meetings only if it was stated that they were going to get parcels. This seemed to suggest that some parents were found guilty of the dereliction of their core-duties and responsibilities of good parenting. Similarly, schools have to develop policies on parental involvement so parents can be aware of the dos and don'ts in dealing with schools. Such policies must specify that parents have an obligation to assist their children with homework. If in any case, a learner fails to complete his or her homework the parent must be brought in to provide reasons for his or her child's failure to do his or her homework. Consequently, this study looked at strengthening parental involvement

as a school principal's core-duty as well as one of servant leadership theory practice extension. For that reason, this research report argues that a further study on parental involvement as servant leadership practice is recommended.

Further, it was found that educators had limited knowledge of educational legislation. This was not surprising because not all educators had educational law as part of their courses or modules at the level of university. This does not seem to suggest that educational law was not implemented because interviews indicated that some pieces of education legislation were implemented. However, the dissatisfaction was caused by the fact that at most, only the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 and the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 were utilised in leading and managing multiple-deprived rural schools. The finding indicates the EEA, NO. 76 of 1998 was used in order to understand the distribution of the teaching loads and also caution educators against issues of misconduct as stipulated in section 17. On the other hand, the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 was used to caution educators against the use of corporal punishment and the status of the learner in education. Only the principal of Mcambi Primary School demonstrated relevant knowledge of legislation as compared to other participants. This selective application of legislation tended to limit the school principal's decision making processes in relation to the administration of the educational law. In corroborating this finding, Jerome (2007) agrees that educational law is very complicated. This scholar further characterises it as convoluted and sporadically cryptic and incomprehensible vagaries of educational law (Jerome, 2007). As a result, it is imperative for school principals to be capacitated on the implementation of educational law. In addition, based on the findings presented in Chapters Six and Eight, this study concludes that the administration of the educational law should be utilised as one of the servant leadership domains as an attempt to present servant leadership theory extension.

Moreover, this study also found that schools were in crisis in the sense that there was a proclivity of under-teaching and non-honouring of teaching periods which, in turn, destroyed the culture of teaching and learning. The evidence presented through semi-structured interviews and documents review had some implications for the efficiency and effectiveness of these schools in terms of the delivery of quality public education. Learners were left unattended in the classrooms. Undoubtedly, this exposed learners to various sorts of dangers in the sense that they could quarrel, fight and mortally (fatally) stab each other. Of equal importance was the matter of

under-teaching which robbed learners of their constitutional right to quality education. As a result, learners had scanty amount of written work which was a causal factor in the decline of learner outcomes. Further, the implication of rural poor and uncompetitive education is poor learner attainment and increased learner migration. As a consequence, parents have to foot the bill and transport their children to far-away township schools. By illustrating these challenges which negate the spirit of servant leadership, this study argues that some educators have lost their moral compass. The general logic is that educators come to school to teach and ensure that learners learn. This finding brings to mind an avalanche of cases of ill-discipline emanating from the phenomenon of the non-honouring of teaching period. This lucidly implies that is a need for educators to sign performance contracts. Such performance contracts can strengthen the area of accountability and consequence management. In light of that evidence, this study contends that accountability and consequence management need to become new servant leadership dimensions. Moreover, further research that links accountability and consequence management with servant leadership is urgently required. This attempt of servant leadership theory extension is in line with Chetty's (2017) findings that there has been limited empirical research on scholars who have successfully developed or extended the models of and attributes of servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts.

9. 6 Chapter summary

This Chapter presented and discussed the summary of chapters, conclusions, recommendations and the implications for further research. These were informed by four key research questions, interview data; documents review data, two theoretical lenses, namely, servant leadership and *Ubuntu* leadership and review of related literature. The summary of chapters sought to enlighten the reader about the sequence and contents of various chapters. It also illuminated how the critical questions were answered by the study findings. The conclusions illustrated the successful enactment of servant leadership together with concomitant challenges encountered by school principals, Departmental Heads and educators in multiple-deprived rural schools. The recommendations presented above were intended to capacitate school managers in leading and managing schools effectively and ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Further, the implications for further study highlighted some gaps which can be addressed through further research.

Equally, the implications for future research illuminated the new servant leadership dimensions or concepts which need to be developed though research and added to the list of servant leadership traits as theory extension such as going beyond the call of duty, social compact, planning or team planning, parental involvement, administration of educational law and accountability and consequence management. Theoretically, principals who demonstrate their values through actions and in words are able to instil those values into the school culture, thus initiating organisational change (Smith, 2005). More importantly, the fourth critical question led me to understanding that participants are in dire need of being capacitated in servant leadership for them to transform and turn their schools around. The clear comprehension and enactment of *Ubuntu* and servant leadership can lead to a situation where most schools in multiple-deprived rural contexts can achieve some type of success in a multi-disciplinary manner (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2015).

Arising from the evidence gleaned from the field, this study concludes that servant leadership is a contemporary 'currency in the market' that rural schools must embrace. Further, it is deemed necessary to state that this was a small-scale study which involved four schools and twelve conveniently sampled participants. Considering the great importance and relevance of servant leadership in all geographical locations and contexts in KwaZulu-Natal, a large-scale study is required in township and urban schools in order to explore and inculcate the culture and spirit of servanthood. Theoretically, this study found that servant leadership is under-researched, conceptualised and theorized in South Africa, especially in education.

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APPENDICES

C. Confirmation of candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
D. Permission letter to the KZN Department of Education to conduct the study in their schools

C. Permission letter from the KZN Department of Education

D. Permission letter to school principals and School Governing Body Chairpersons

E. Permission letter to school principal as study participants

F. Permission letter to school Departmental Heads as study participants

G. Permission letter to school educators as study participants.

H. Interview schedule for all the study participants

I. Documents review schedule

J. Language clearance certificate

Appendix A

(Confirmation of Candidature)

Faculty of Humanities - Postgraduate

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa • Tel: +27 11 717 3021 • Fax: +27 11 717 4037 • E-mail: Hale.Modau@wits.ac.za

PERSON NUMBER: 1508600

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu
Cc Dr Siphiwe Eric Mthiyane

21 February 2017

Dear Mr Mthembu

CONFIRMATION OF CANDIDATURE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

I am pleased to inform you that the Graduate Studies Committee in Education has approved your research proposal entitled: ***'Exploring servant leadership in challenging and multiple-deprived rural contexts: A case of four schools in Ilembe District, KwaZulu-Natal'***. You have been admitted to candidature noted by the second examiner.

Correction must be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor.

I confirm that Dr Siphiwe Eric Mthiyane has been appointed as your supervisor.

Your attention is drawn to the Senate's requirement that all higher degree candidates submit brief written reports on their progress to the Faculty Office once a year.

Please note that higher degree candidates are required to renew their registration in January each year. Please keep us informed of any changes of address during the year.

Kind Regards,

Hale Modau (Mrs)
Senior Faculty Officer
Faculty of Humanities: Education
Wits University
Hale.Modau@wits.ac.za
Tel: 011 717 3021

Appendix B

(Permission letter to the KZN Department of Education)

P. O. Box 3940

SUNDUMBILI

4491

20 June 2017

The Director General (KZN Head of Department of Education): Dr E. V. Nzama

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Private Bag X9137

PIETERMARITZBURG

3200

Dear Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT IN KWAZULU-NATAL SCHOOLS

I am Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu, a PhD student at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. As part of my degree requirement, I am conducting research on the phenomenon of servant leadership. In this regard, I request permission to conduct research in four KwaZulu-Natal schools. I respectfully request the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to grant me written permission to conduct research in two primary schools and two

secondary schools. The title of my PhD research project is: **'Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal.**

This study aims to explore servant leadership in four schools (i.e. two primary schools and two secondary schools) in KwaZulu-Natal and will focus of the conceptualisations, perceptions and experiences of school principals, Departmental Heads and Post Level One educators on the phenomenon of servant leadership. Servant leadership is a notion that every public servant must be prepared to serve the school community first before aspiring to lead.

In this study, I will work with primary school and secondary school principals (four), Departmental Heads (four) and educators (four) that I have conveniently sampled in Ilembe Education District in KwaZulu-Natal because of the close proximity of the schools.

This study will utilise semi-structured interviews as primary data generation methods and documents review / analysis as secondary data generation methods. These are the documents that will be reviewed for the purpose of this study, namely, school vision and mission statement, minutes of the SMT, RCL and educator staff meetings, logbook, school policy, school newsletter, service commitment charter, service delivery improvement plan, school assessment and school academic improvement plan. The sampled documents will be those with a life span of 3 years in terms their adoption or review by the SGB. The data generated through digitally voice recorded semi-structured interviews will be transcribed and analysed through content analysis. The purpose for utilising audiotape is to accurately capture all the real voices of the study participants for credibility purposes as a trustworthiness principle. The data generation process will take place in a period of three days per school which will come up to a total period of twelve days in all the four schools. This research project will take a period (duration) of 3 years, i.e. from 2016 to 2018. The study participants, namely: school principals, Departmental Heads and educators will be interviewed for approximately 30 to 40 minutes at the time and place convenient to them. My presence at the school and interviews will not interfere with the notional time (normal teaching time) or any other academic activities of the school.

Please Take Note That:

I will have a first meeting with all my participants individually in order to give them a brief description and explanation of the research project, procedures, duration and what will be expected of them.

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomfort.

If anything negative (adverse) response happens during or after the interviews, professional assistance will be organised for the participant and professional contact name and 24 hour telephone numbers will be provided to the participant.

Their identities will not be divulged under any circumstances during and after the reporting process.

All their responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity.

The particulars of all the participants including their schools will not be revealed during the writing of the research report (thesis) and during the dissemination of the findings.

Fictitious names (pseudonyms) will be used to represent participants and schools' names.

Participation will be voluntary; therefore, they will be free to withdraw their participation at any time, should they wish, without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences or penalty on their part.

Interviews will be digitally (voice) recorded to assist me as a researcher in concentrating on the actual interview rather than focusing on writing voluminous notes on participants' responses.

Participants will be contacted on time about the dates and times of the interviews.

Both the participants and the KwaZulu-Natal Department Education will be provided with copies of my PhD research findings in a form of a research report.

All the used study materials such as transcripts, digital voice recorders, etc, will be kept under lock and key by the University of the Witwatersrand and then safely destroyed after a period of 3 to 5 years.

The interview data and findings will be utilised to produce (publish) a research report (PhD thesis), journal articles and conference papers.

I promise to comply with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand code of ethics and any other terms and conditions stipulated in my ethical clearance certificate.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the following details:

Cell phone no. 071 1 22 7071

Email: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My Wits supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane

Tel No: 011-7173092

Cellphone No: 073 377 4672

Email: Siphiwe.Mthiyane@wits.ac.za

Or

Human Research Ethics Committee (Education) Office (Ms Matsie Mabeta)

Tel No: 011-7173416

Fax No: 0865532347

Email: Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za

NB. The interview and documents review schedules are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

…….....

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Appendix C

(Permission letter from the KZN Department of Education)

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma | Tel: 033 392 1041 | Ref.:2/4/8/1167

Mr SG Mthembu
PO Box 3940
Sundumbili
4491

Dear Mr Mthembu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN CHALLENGING AND MULTIPLE DEPRIVED RURAL CONTEXTS: A CASE OF FOUR SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 March 2017 to 07 June 2019.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

(Please See List of Schools Attached)

Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 07 March 2017

...Championing Quality Education - Creating and Securing a Brighter Future

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa
Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201
Tel.: +27 33 392 1004/41 • **Fax.:** +27 033 392 1203• **Email:** Kehologile.Connie@kzndoe.gov.za/Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za •**Web:**www.kzneducation.gov.za
Facebook: KZNDOE....Twitter: @DBE_KZN....Instagram: kzn_education....Youtube:kzndoe

APPENDIX D

A LETTER TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SGB CHAIRPERSON (AS GATE-KEEPERS: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE HEAD AND GOVERNANCE HEAD) REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THEIR SCHOOL

P. O. Box 3940

SUNDUMBILI

4491

22 July 2016

The Principal (Administrative Head)

The SGB Chairperson (Governance Head)

X Secondary / Primary School

P. O. Box …

MANDENI

4490

Dear Sir / Madam

Request For The Permission To Conduct Research In Your School

My name is Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu and I am a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am doing research on **"Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal"** My research explores the phenomenon of servant leadership in rural schools. Servant

leadership is a notion that every public servant must be prepared to serve the school community first before aspiring to lead. It will involve school principals, Departmental Heads and Post Level One educators as study participants. This study will utilise semi-structured interviews and documents review as data generation methods. The documents to be reviewed will be school vision and mission statement, minutes of the SMT, RCL and educator staff meetings, school newsletter, school policy, logbook, school principal, DHs and educators' reports, school service commitment charter, service delivery improvement plan, school assessment plan and school academic improvement plan. The sampled documents will only be those with a life span of three years. The study participants will be interviewed for the duration of approximately 30 to 40 minutes at the time and place convenient for them at their school. The interviews will not interfere with the notional time (normal teaching time).

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a convenient site for me to conduct my research. As a result, it is my belief that your school is an appropriate location for me to conduct my research successfully. For that reason, I am inviting your school to participate in this research. I am therefore humbly requesting permission to conduct research in your school. Participation would require that all the study participants participate in the semi-structured interviews and make the necessary documents available for review or analysis by me as a researcher. Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand to conduct this research.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. Pseudonyms will be used so as to protect the participants' identities or real names together with their schools for ethical purposes. Participation in this study will be voluntary and participants can withdraw their participation at any time without fear of victimisation.

All research data will be safely kept under lock and key by the University of the Witwatersrand and thereafter destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

I promise to comply with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand code of ethics and any other terms and conditions stipulated in my ethical clearance certificate.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the following details:

Cell phone no. 071 1 22 7071

Email: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My Wits supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane

Tel No: 011-7173092

Cellphone No: 073 377 4672

Email: Siphiwe.Mthiyane@wits.ac.za

Or

Human Research Ethics Committee (Education) Office (Ms Matsie Mabeta)

Tel No: 011-7173416

Fax No: 0865532347

Email: Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely

…….

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Email address: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Cell phone: 071 122 7071

APPENDIX E

PERMISSION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AS THE FIRST CLASS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

P. O. Box 3940

SUNDUMBILI

4491

22 July 2016

The Study Participant (School principal)

X Secondary / Primary School

P. O. Box…..

MANDENI

4490

Dear Sir / Madam

Request For Your Participation As A Study Participant In My PhD Research Project

My name is Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu and I am a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am doing research on **"Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal"** My research explores the phenomenon of servant leadership in rural schools. Servant leadership is a notion that every public servant must be prepared to serve the school community first before aspiring to lead. It will involve school principals, Departmental Heads and Post

Level One educators as study participants. This study will utilise semi-structured interviews and documents review as data generation methods. The documents to be reviewed will be school vision and mission statement, minutes of the SMT, RCL parents and educator staff meetings, school newsletter, school policy, logbook, school principal, HoDs and educators' reports, school service commitment charter, service delivery improvement plan, school assessment plan and school academic improvement plan. The sampled documents will only be those with a life span of three years. This PhD research project will be completed in duration of 3 years, i.e. 2016 to 2018. The study participants will be interviewed for the duration of approximately 30 to 40 minutes at the time and place convenient for them at their school. The interviews will not interfere with the notional time (normal teaching time).

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a convenient site for me to conduct my research. Participation would require that all the study participants participate in the semi-structured interviews and make the necessary documents available for review or analysis by me as a researcher. I therefore, humbly request you to be one of my study participants and make a positive contribution towards its successful completion. The Norms and Standards for educators dictate that an educator should be a lifelong scholar; as a consequence, participation in this study may empower you in terms of gaining the skills of conducting research semi-structured interviews in an ethical manner. Essentially, I value you and your contribution as an educator, a leader and a member of integrity in the society. I addition, it is my belief that you are a suitable person to participate in this study and assist me to conduct my research successfully.

Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand to conduct this research. The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. The refusal to participate in this study will not lead to any penalty or prejudice or benefits if there are any that participants are entitled to. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. More importantly, all the interview questions and documents review schedules will be approved by my University of the Witwatersrand supervisor before they can be used.

The ethical principle of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality will be observed. All participants will be expected to read the information sheets and consent forms carefully with understanding and also requested to sign them in order to give a written consent. The school principals as school administrative heads and School Governing Body (SGB) chairpersons as school governance heads will receive written applications for permission to conduct research and will be requested to give written permissions to conduct my study at their institutions. The names of the research participants and identity of the schools will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Only pseudonyms will be utilised to represent the names of participants and their schools. No participant will be interviewed in the presence of his or her colleague or any other person. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation in this study will be voluntary and participants can withdraw their participation at any time with fear of victimisation or penalty. You are at liberty to decline to respond to some of the interview questions that you feel may cause any discomfort. Even though this study does not involve any risks or intrusive questions but, professional assistance will be provided to participants in case something negative and expected happens. The participants will also be provided with nearest professional counsellors available at the level of the Education District Office and their 24 hour contact telephone numbers. The research data and findings will be utilised for academic purposes only such as writing a research report (thesis), journal articles and conference papers.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Thank you very much for your help.

Please let me know if you require any further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the following details:

Cell phone no. 071 1 22 7071

Email: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My Wits supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane

Tel No: 011-7173092

Cellphone No: 073 377 4672

Email: Siphiwe.Mthiyane@wits.ac.za

Or

Human Research Ethics Committee (Education) Office (Ms Matsie Mabeta)

Tel No: 011-7173416

Fax No: 0865532347

Email: Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely

……

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Email address: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Cell phone: 071 122 7071

APPENDIX F

(PERMISSION LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENTAL HEADS AS THE SECOND CLASS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS)

P. O. Box 3940

SUNDUMBILI

4491

22 July 2016

The Study Participant (Departmental Head)

X Secondary / Primary School

P. O. Box…..

MANDENI

4490

Dear Sir / Madam

Request For Your Participation As A Study Participant In My PhD Research Project

My name is Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu and I am a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am doing research on **"Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal"** My research explores the phenomenon of servant leadership in rural schools. Servant leadership is a notion that every public servant must be prepared to serve the school community first before aspiring to lead. It will involve school principals, Departmental Heads and Post

Level One educators as study participants. This study will utilise semi-structured interviews and documents review as data generation methods. The documents to be reviewed will be school vision and mission statement, minutes of the SMT, RCL parents and educator staff meetings, school newsletter, school policy, logbook, school principal, HoDs and educators' reports, school service commitment charter, service delivery improvement plan, school assessment plan and school academic improvement plan. The sampled documents will only be those with a life span of three years. This PhD research project will be completed in duration of 3 years, i.e. 2016 to 2018. The study participants will be interviewed for the duration of approximately 30 to 40 minutes at the time and place convenient for them at their school. The interviews will not interfere with the notional time (normal teaching time).

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a convenient site for me to conduct my research. Participation would require that all the study participants participate in the semi-structured interviews and make the necessary documents available for review or analysis by me as a researcher. I therefore, humbly request you to be one of my study participants and make a positive contribution towards its successful completion. The Norms and Standards for educators dictate that an educator should be a lifelong scholar; as a consequence, participation in this study may empower you in terms of gaining the skills of conducting research semi-structured interviews in an ethical manner. Essentially, I value you and your contribution as an educator, a leader and a member of integrity in the society. I addition, it is my belief that you are a suitable person to participate in this study and assist me to conduct my research successfully.

Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand to conduct this research. The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. The refusal to participate in this study will not lead to any penalty or prejudice or benefits if there are any that participants are entitled to. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. More importantly, all the interview questions and documents review schedules will be approved by my University of the Witwatersrand supervisor before they can be used.

The ethical principle of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality will be observed. All participants will be expected to read the information sheets and consent forms carefully with understanding and also requested to sign them in order to give a written consent. The school principals as school administrative heads and School Governing Body (SGB) chairpersons as school governance heads will receive written applications for permission to conduct research and will be requested to give written permissions to conduct my study at their institutions. The names of the research participants and identity of the schools will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Only pseudonyms will be utilised to represent the names of participants and their schools. No participant will be interviewed in the presence of his or her colleague or any other person. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation in this study will be voluntary and participants can withdraw their participation at any time with fear of victimisation or penalty. You are at liberty to decline to respond to some of the interview questions that you feel may cause any discomfort. Even though this study does not involve any risks or intrusive questions but, professional assistance will be provided to participants in case something negative and expected happens. The participants will also be provided with nearest professional counsellors available at the level of the Education District Office and their 24 hour contact telephone numbers. The research data and findings will be utilised for academic purposes only such as writing a research report (thesis), journal articles and conference papers.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Thank you very much for your help.

Please let me know if you require any further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the following details:

Cell phone no. 071 1 22 7071

Email: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My Wits supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane

Tel No: 011-7173092

Cellphone No: 073 377 4672

Email: Siphiwe.Mthiyane@wits.ac.za

Or

Human Research Ethics Committee (Education) Office (Ms Matsie Mabeta)

Tel No: 011-7173416

Fax No: 0865532347

Email: Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely

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Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Email address: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Cell phone: 071 122 7071

APPENDIX G

(PERMISSION LETTER TO EDUCATORS AS THE THIRD CLASS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS)

P. O. Box 3940

SUNDUMBILI

4491

22 July 2016

The Study Participant (Educator)

X Secondary / Primary School

P. O. Box…..

MANDENI

4490

Dear Sir / Madam

Request For Your Participation As A Study Participant In My PhD Research Project

My name is Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu and I am a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am doing research on **"Exploring servant leadership in multiple-deprived rural contexts: A multiple case study of four schools in KwaZulu-Natal"** My research explores the phenomenon of servant leadership in rural schools. Servant leadership is a notion that every public servant must be prepared to serve the school community first before aspiring to lead. It will involve school principals, Departmental Heads and Post

Level One educators as study participants. This study will utilise semi-structured interviews and documents review as data generation methods. The documents to be reviewed will be school vision and mission statement, minutes of the SMT, RCL parents and educator staff meetings, school newsletter, school policy, logbook, school principal, HoDs and educators' reports, school service commitment charter, service delivery improvement plan, school assessment plan and school academic improvement plan. The sampled documents will only be those with a life span of three years. This PhD research project will be completed in duration of 3 years, i.e. 2016 to 2018. The study participants will be interviewed for the duration of approximately 30 to 40 minutes at the time and place convenient for them at their school. The interviews will not interfere with the notional time (normal teaching time).

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is a convenient site for me to conduct my research. Participation would require that all the study participants participate in the semi-structured interviews and make the necessary documents available for review or analysis by me as a researcher. I therefore, humbly request you to be one of my study participants and make a positive contribution towards its successful completion. The Norms and Standards for educators dictate that an educator should be a lifelong scholar; as a consequence, participation in this study may empower you in terms of gaining the skills of conducting research semi-structured interviews in an ethical manner. Essentially, I value you and your contribution as an educator, a leader and a member of integrity in the society. I addition, it is my belief that you are a suitable person to participate in this study and assist me to conduct my research successfully.

Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the University of the Witwatersrand to conduct this research. The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. The refusal to participate in this study will not lead to any penalty or prejudice or benefits if there are any that participants are entitled to. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. More importantly, all the interview questions and documents review schedules will be approved by my University of the Witwatersrand supervisor before they can be used.

The ethical principle of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality will be observed. All participants will be expected to read the information sheets and consent forms carefully with understanding and also requested to sign them in order to give a written consent. The school principals as school administrative heads and School Governing Body (SGB) chairpersons as school governance heads will receive written applications for permission to conduct research and will be requested to give written permissions to conduct my study at their institutions. The names of the research participants and identity of the schools will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Only pseudonyms will be utilised to represent the names of participants and their schools. No participant will be interviewed in the presence of his or her colleague or any other person. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation in this study will be voluntary and participants can withdraw their participation at any time with fear of victimisation or penalty. You are at liberty to decline to respond to some of the interview questions that you feel may cause any discomfort. Even though this study does not involve any risks or intrusive questions but, professional assistance will be provided to participants in case something negative and expected happens. The participants will also be provided with nearest professional counsellors available at the level of the Education District Office and their 24 hour contact telephone numbers. The research data and findings will be utilised for academic purposes only such as writing a research report (thesis), journal articles and conference papers.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Thank you very much for your help.

Please let me know if you require any further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the following details:

Cell phone no. 071 1 22 7071

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Tel No: 011-7173416

Fax No: 0865532347

Email: Matsie.Mabeta@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely

……

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Email address: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Cell phone: 071 122 7071

APPENDIX H

(INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, DEPARTMENTAL HEADS AND EDUCATORS AS STUDY PARTICIPANTS)

This semi-structured interview schedule / guide was designed to investigate the study participants' conceptualisations of servant leadership, practices, challenges and strategies to enhance this style of leadership in multiple-deprived rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

1. **Biographical information of study participants**
   1.1 Professional and academic qualifications they possess.
   1.2 Actual teaching experience
   1.3 Subjects and grades taught

2. **Interview questions**
   2.1 What is your conceptualisation or understanding of servant leadership or Batho Pele?
   2.2 What servant leadership practices do you as a leader and manager enact in the leadership, management and teaching in your school?
   2.3 What is the vision of your school and why do you think it is important? **Please elaborate.**
   2.4 According to my understanding, teaching is the core-business / function of the school in the Republic of South Africa. As a school principal / Departmental Head / PL1 educator what significance do you attach to the notion of the provision of quality public education and how do you ensure that it does occur in your school? **Please elaborate.**
   2.5 What educator development programmes do you have in your school and what is your role in developing colleague educators? **Please elaborate.**
   2.6 What pieces of legislation / educational law assist you in discharging your duties (roles) and responsibilities in line with servant leadership? **Please elaborate.**
   2.7 What measures do you take in order to reward excellence of learners and colleague educators in your school? **Please elaborate.**
   2.8 What challenges do you normally encounter when implementing servant leadership in rural schools? **Please elaborate.**

2.9 What do you think should be done to enhance servant leadership practices in multiple-deprived rural schools?

2.10 In light of the information that we have shared together so far, in your view, is there any other information that you would like to share with me as a researcher in relation to

servant leadership and management of teaching and learning which you think is related to my study topics, in addition to what we have discussed earlier?

Thank you very much for participating in my study. May God bless you richly in his grace.

APPENDIX I

(DOCUMENTS REVIEW SCHEDULE / GUIDE)

In addition to the semi-structured interviews as the primary data generating method, the documents analysis was also utilised as a data generating method. This was consistent with Kimchi, Polivka and Stevenson's (1991) assertion that research methods triangulation entails the utilisation of two or more research methods in one study at a level of design or data generation. Further, the chief purpose of using different documents as data sources was to enhance the credibility of the research findings. This study intended to scrutinise many types of school records or documents but after realising that some schools did not have other documents I, as a researcher ended up scrutinising the school vision, mission statements, minutes, reports and logbook entries only with a lifespan of four years (2015 – 2018).

No.	Document/s	Nature of analysis / review
1.	School vision / mission	1. Do these speak to the core-business of the school? 2. Were these communicated to SMT, educators, learners and parents? 3. How were these formulated or was there any consultation?
2.	Minutes	1. Do these meetings discuss curriculum matters? 2. Do these meetings discuss learner outcomes and improvement strategies? 3. Encouraging innovation, appreciating and rewarding excellence
3.	Reports	1. Evidence of the understanding of servant leadership or Batho Pele including its dimensions. 2. Evidence of educator professional development. 3. Evidence of the enactment of servant leadership.
4.	Logbook entries	1. Positive issues which support servant leadership domains. 2. Records of malpractices or deviant behaviours.

APPENDIX **J**

(LANGUAGE EDITOR'S CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE)

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

Phone 031 – 7075912
0823757722
Fax 031 - 7110458
E-mail:
dr1govender@telkomsa.net
sathsgovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

21 JUNE 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the thesis titled:

EXPLORING SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN MULTIPLE-DEPRIVED RURAL CONTEXTS: A MULTPLE CASE STUDY OF FOUR SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL, by S. G. Mthembu, student no. 1-508-600.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used meets generally accepted academic standards.

Yours faithfully

S. Govender

DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.