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THE ROLE OF ETHICAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN JOHANNESBURG

Miss. Fortunate Cindi

(Student number: 814553)

2021

THE ROLE OF ETHICAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN JOHANNESBURG

By

Miss. Fortunate Cindi

(Student number: 814553)

A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the academic requirements for the degree of Master of Education by Course Work and Research Report to the Faculty of Humanities: Wits School of Education.

Supervisor: Dr S.E. Mthiyane

Date submitted: October 2021.

DECLARATION

I, Fortunate Cindi, declare that **"The role of ethical school leadership in developing and promoting trust and accountability: A case study of two secondary schools in Johannesburg"** abides by the following rules:

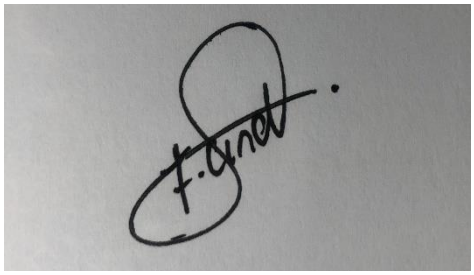
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26 October 2021

Miss F. Cindi Date

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

This research report is submitted with my approval.



28 October 2021

Dr. S.E. Mthiyane Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to:

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative and interpretivist study sought to investigate the role of ethical school leadership in developing and promoting a work culture built on trust and accountability. Given the voluminous studies that have been carried out by different authors on the philosophy of ethical leadership, literature reviewed for the purpose of this study revealed that there is still insufficient research on how this phenomenon highly influences 'trust' and 'accountability'. Consequently, this study acted as a point of departure from the present research on ethical leadership which focuses more on its potential impact in curbing corruption, rather than its extensive role in promoting trust and accountability. This study is based on research that was conducted in two secondary schools found within the Johannesburg Central District in Soweto, Gauteng Province- thus contributing to the existing body of knowledge in terms of 'context'. Two school principals, four heads of department and eight Post Level 1 teachers were purposefully and conveniently identified to participate in the study. An amalgamation of the concepts of ethical leadership, trust and accountability formed the framework as deemed a useful lens to interrogate the generated data. Data generated through triangulation of semi-structured interviews, documents review and observations was thereafter presented, analysed and discussed. The findings indicated that participants possessed an adequate understanding of ethics- which helped them to conceptualise the phenomenon of ethical leadership. However, there was a prevalent culture of mistrust and lack of accountability in the researched schools. The issues that led to mistrust and lack of accountability were multifarious and ranged from ineffective communication, exclusion, bias, or favouritism (i.e., evident through nepotism), lack of ethical leadership traits that build the foundation of trust to exploitation by school principals and futile accountability measures that implicitly encouraged unethical behaviour. Ethics education for pre-service and in-service educators, team building and dismantling of principal power in recruitment processes was therefore recommended.

Keywords: Accountability, ethical leadership, integrity, trust, school leadership.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In her book, ***'Ethics- the heart of leadership'***, Ciulla (2014, p.01) puts forth that "we live in a world where leaders frequently disappoint us" and these disappointments range from leaders constantly failing to fulfil the promises that they made to the people, whom they are supposed to serve, abusing power, evading accountability, and the relentless struggle to practice altruism. Toor and Ofori (2009, p.1) posit that leadership which lacks ethical conduct can be dangerous, destructive, and even toxic; hence the instantaneous need for ethical leadership has never been more indispensable. Over the years, the philosophy of ethical leadership has been conceptualized by various diverse authors, however what appears to be congruent amongst these conceptualizations is the notion that an ethical leader is "one who promotes honesty and mirrors his or her actions with their values and beliefs [i.e., influencing followers to do the right thing through modelling]," Yukl (2006) as cited in (Monahan, 2012, p. 57). Compatibly, Freeman and Stewart (2006, p. 2) define ethical leadership as "simply a matter of leaders having good character and the right values…" as cited in Monahan (2012, p. 57).

In her study, Monahan (2012) maintains that one of the prevalent problems in organisations and individuals today is ***lack of trust***. This absence of trust can be attributed to the nonexistence of ethical leadership in organisations, or what Frank (2002, p.81) calls the "shadow side of leadership". According to Frank (2002), "these shadows include the negative influences of power, privilege, inconsistency, irresponsibility and misplaced loyalty" as cited in Monahan (2012, p. 57). Furthermore, followers become exposed to the consequences that emerge as a result of these shadows and thus, lose trust in the integrity of their leader. Yet again, Monahan (2012) found that the non-existent ethical leadership in organisations had not only blemished trust relations but has ignited a startling increase in misconduct amongst personnel (i.e., teachers, HODs and principals in the schooling context). This is further advanced by the social learning theory which asserts that "leaders influence the ethical conduct of followers via modeling, a form of behavior reenactment. Through modeling… values, attitudes, and behaviors are transmitted in a wide range of settings, including the workplace." For example, Lee and Cheng (2011) posit that "subordinates had higher unethical behavior intentions when they perceived their leaders to be engaged in unethical behavior than when they perceived their leaders as not being engaged in unethical behavior". This is, correspondingly, backed up by the

great Aristotle who states that "the spirit of morality is awakened in the individual only through the witness and conduct of a moral person" as cited in (Ciulla, 2014, p. 2)**.** To some extent, the social learning theory proposes that ethical leadership 'can' be contagious, this theory is elaborated further in chapter two of the study, under theoretical framing. Moreover, by doing what is right (i.e., leading ethically-with empathy, compassion, honesty, transparency); this study believes that the higher the odds of building trust and accountability in organisations (schools to be specific).

It is therefore imperative for me to highlight this conception, as this study accentuates the pivotal role of ethical leadership in developing, as well as, promoting trust and accountability in schools. The lack of trust and accountability in schools, as enthused by the cumulative rate of unethical practices or conduct of both leaders and followers, calls for the intervention of ethical leadership. Plinio (2009) argues that "following the law and obeying regulations is not what makes ethics complicated…rather, the complexity of ethical leadership [lies] in the grey areas of who is responsible when problems arise?" as cited in (Monahan, 2012, p. 57). This then, navigates us to what we call accountability-which happens to be a very broad concept, depending on one's view of the perception. In this study, accountability is simply narrowed down to doing what you 'promised' to do; and thus, taking responsibility 'willingly' for the outcome of one's choices, behaviors, and actions, if things go wrong. This is further substantiated by Brian Dive, in his book titled ***The Accountable Leader,*** who states that:

> *Accountability stems from the tasks inherent in a role; it indicates what the person in that position has the authority to do within that role. Success in carrying out those tasks should lead to reward and recognition from the person or persons who set up the role in the first place. Conversely, failure to deliver what is specified in the role should lead to some sort of sanction*. (Dive, 2008, p.11).

Success in carrying out what one has promised to do, as well as taking responsibility when things go awry often leads to trust, whilst the opposite leads to distrust. In this sense, it is ostensible that accountability fuels or forms the foundation of trust, which is fundamental in organizations as it empowers 'ethical' working conditions. Although trust is complex and quite a delicate dynamic to maintain, earning trust of your subordinates remains a key component for successful leadership. Correspondingly, Mineo (2014, p.1) posits that "trust is the glue that binds the leader to his or her followers and provides the capacity for organisational and

leadership success". This view is further strengthened by Baddinger (2018) who opines that accountability is basically what is needed to build trust, and that "perhaps the most important result of ***accountability is "trust",*** which is essential in any relationship. Almost congruent with Dive (2008) and Van den Akker, Heres, Lasthuizen and Six (2009), Baddinger (2018, p.1) defines accountability as 'being responsible for decisions made, actions taken, and assignments completed', furthermore, he puts forth that when putting accountability into practice, leaders should admit when wrong, not blame others but own up to their mistakes, and not make excuses and get defensive. Baddinger (2018) further acknowledges that accountability is not easy and takes humility, but when practised properly, it builds trust, inspires confidence, promotes ownership, and improves performance. Having touched concisely on ethical leadership, trust, and accountability, we get to see how these concepts correlate with, and implicitly influence one another.

The issue concerning the lack of ethical leadership, trust and accountability is also prevalent within the South African schooling context whereby school principals barely put the philosophy of ethical leadership into practice. Consequently, this weakens the level of trust and accountability that teachers have towards their leaders. Whilst issues of trust and accountability are often under-looked in organisations, leadership without these core elements tends to be ineffective and that is what this study seeks to draw attention on. More so, this study will not solely broaden our understanding of ethical leadership within the schooling context but will also demonstrate the interface between ethical school leadership, accountability, and trust particularly in the two researched schools under Johannesburg Central District (i.e., District 14).

1.2 Problem Statement

The question of ethical leadership continues to receive significant attention with the rise of corruption in South African schools. The Corruption Watch Report (CWR of 2015) reveals that over a thousand reports have been flooding in from the public, concerning corruption that is taking place in schools across the country, and most devastating is the assertions made by the public which seem to point towards the school principals as the leading perpetrators of unethical practices occurring in schools. This is further reinforced by the Corruption Watch Report (2015, p.6) which affirms that indeed "the bulk of these reports finger principals as the main culprits involved in corrupt activities" (Corruption Watch Report, 2015, p.6). The Corruption Watch Report indicates that these corrupt activities range from maladministration

of school finances or theft of funds and goods, as well as the abuse of power through tender and employment corruption (i.e., the manipulation of posts). It is extremely horrendous to witness school leaders who have been ***"trusted"*** with the power to guide and support the development of human potential in their organisations, rather do the contrary by manipulating the education system for their own personal gain, subsequently, these incidents have not only engendered the topic of ethical leadership but have also tarnished trust relations and the importance of accountability in schools. It takes a great deal of effort and [some] sacrifice of pride or one to take the blame and admit responsibility for undesirable outcomes, and consequently, this has had an impact on accountability in organisations. This is corroborated by Biddinger (2018) who states that we are "hard-wired to not be accountable, [because] in our sinful nature, we are full of pride, arrogance and a quest for independence". Furthermore, "fulfilling the expectations…in terms of standards, outcomes and results" has proven to be a great challenge for school leaders due to the complexity of meeting compliance requirements. In her previous study on ethical leadership, Cindi (2018) noted that one of the causes leading to the increase in misconduct amongst educators was the dearth of measures in place to ensure accountability. The fact that there are no extreme or rigid consequences for engaging in unethical conduct within the education system, has without doubt, enfeebled the value of accountability.

The Global Corruption Report (GCR) of 2013 released by Transparency International (TI) has demonstrated that corruption ruins lives and thus prevents any attempts of social and economic development. This is believed to be true particularly when it comes to the education sector. Education, which serves to transmit vital knowledge and give young minds shape and form, should be a means to empower children and adults alike to become active participants in the transformation of societies in which they live. It is therefore imperative that educational services are not tampered with or distorted by corruption, but the sad reality is that hardly a week passes by in South Africa without a report in print or electronic media about the alleged unethical practices of teachers and principals in schools Mthiyane (2018). The Global Corruption Report of 2011 released by Transparency International further revealed that the main risks of corruption identified by SGB members were related to teacher absenteeism (35%), sexual harassment of learners (29%) and the misuse of school funds (27%). Other issues included nepotism in the teaching profession, as it was reported in July 2017 that South African schools have a total number of 5139 under-qualified teachers in the payroll system (which is quite unfair to graduates who sit at home unemployed), the main culprit for the latter was school

governing body (SGB) members and principals withholding and suggesting friends and family for teacher posts, of which some do not even hold the necessary qualifications. Greed, egocentrism and strong desire for material wealth are some of the reasons why leaders engage in unethical practices, however, the Global Corruption Report of 2013 released by Transparency International also discovered that there was poor implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations by the Department of Education, and hence this had an impact in the effectiveness and legitimacy of their work, creating more opportunities for non-compliance or corruption at lower levels. The fact that principals can get away with misusing school funds and still get to preserve their roles as leaders of the school does indeed say a lot about accountability measures, and thus corresponds with the above finding. Consequently, the unethical practices of school leaders and the lack of accountability, transparency, communication, assurance, and reliability has taken a toll on trust in organisations. In their study, Van den Akker, Heres, Lasthuizen and Six (2009; 102) discover that there is a strong correlation between ethical behaviors and trust, hence "the more a leader acts in a way that followers feel is the appropriate ethical leader behavior, the more a leader will be trusted" (van den Akker et al, 2009). Gregory (2017, p. 143) asserts that school principals face the daunting task (or in my view, lack the necessary expertise) of ensuring that every individual under their leadership and care feels safe and has enough opportunities for growth. Having conducted research on ethical leadership at honours level, one of the underlying issues uncovered was that there is lack of trust among teachers and principals, bad experiences of the past (such as losing a post due to manipulation or nepotism) has injured them emotionally and defaced the trust relations in schools, and hence the chaotic and unproductive working conditions teachers and principals find themselves in today.

1.3 Purpose and rationale for the study

One way or the other, the unethical or unscrupulous practices of others within the teaching profession are likely to affect you as an educator (i.e., teacher, principal, or head of department) whether directly or indirectly, but there is no escaping the consequences and that is the sad reality. From principals preferring their desired candidates for jobs (i.e. manipulation of posts), mismanagement of school funds and resources (that is, the abuse of power), and misuse of teaching time in schools, unprofessionalism and hypocrisy in the workplace, working with power-hungry colleagues (or power mongers) to unfair treatment or favoritism; these are 'some' of the unethical practices that are dominant in schools today, and thus the

profession of teaching, which used to be regarded as 'noble' is gradually falling apart. Moreover, the passion of teachers (especially novice teachers, who come into the field with no knowledge of the politics involved) is tarnished as they experience the harsh reality of the system. As a passionate novice teacher, with vast content knowledge to deliver and methodologies up on my sleeve to implement, the issues and politics within schools would have enfeebled my enthusiasm for teaching, if it was not for the B.Ed. (Hons) course which exposed me to the issues in educational policies and leadership, and thus re-affirmed my purpose as both an ethical and servant leader to the underprivileged child whose future depends on me to do what is right (ethical), and equipped me with the necessary expertise to tackle (or solve) issues within education. Having completed my B.Ed. degree in 2017, I have been a post-level one teacher for one year and shockingly, I can write a novel about the unethical practices that take place in schools daily. However, having conducted a mini-research report on ethical leadership at honours level, I have also managed to uncover some of the reasons or motives behind teachers and principals engaging in ethical practices- although this is not to say that unethical actions are justifiable, but it is a step towards understanding the psychology of such behavior and thus finding solutions to change and (hopefully) curb corruption.

Faull (2007) as cited in Serfontein and de Waal (2015, p.1) purports that "nothing is more flourishing in South Africa than the numerous reports on economic greed, major organizational changes, retrenchments, mismanagement, inefficient government and corruption". Simply put, corruption can be defined as an unscrupulous and deceitful conduct by those in power (i.e., principals, educators, district officials and so on) and the abuse or misuse of public resources or public power for personal gain. Serfontein and de Waal (2015, p.1) claims that corruption remains a constant global phenomenon, which is becoming even more complex and intense as competition for resources increases, especially amongst those living in developing countries- with emerging economies such as South Africa. He further states that such acts of corruption include the disregard of basic principles of the South African's constitution, which seek to establish and promote equality, freedom and security for every citizen and a 'democracy for the people, by the people' (Serfontein & de Waal, 2015, p. 01).

The South African public education is one of many, that falls victim to this corruption 'bogey' as reinforced by Clarke (2007, p.10) that educational institutions have more than their own share of sinners whereby too often in schools, decisions are made because they are the easy or popular option and not because they are the option which is in the best educational interest of

the learners at school. It was reported by *Times Live* (6TH of June 2017) that every day, thousands of South African pupils are taught by teachers who do not hold the necessary qualifications to perform the job and as a result, they do not receive the quality education that they rightfully deserve. This illustrates the serious allegations we read about regularly where school governing bodies are alleged to recommend teachers for employment in various positions of responsibility, not because of their knowledge and potential teaching and management skills but because of nefarious underhand activities such as bribery and nepotism (Mthiyane. 2018). It is therefore cases like these which provoke one to question the issues of accountability, responsibility, transparency, integrity, ethics, and morality among educators. In the light of the above reports of unethical behaviour, particularly in schools, the purpose of this study is to explore the role of ethical leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability in two public secondary schools in Johannesburg Central and how the selected school principals and teachers conceptualise and enact them in their daily practices. The elements of trust and accountability are essential in the study of ethical leadership as they are 'intertwined' concepts, signifying that one does not go without the other.

1.4 Significance of the study

Having conducted a small scale study on ethical leadership at Bachelor of Education Honours level, the findings and conclusions implicitly suggested the limited or none existence of ethical leadership, as demonstrated in the unethical practices of educators (i.e. teachers, HODs and principals) in schools such as the "manipulation of promotional post processes, mismanagement of school funds and resources and the struggle for power and control…" (Cindi, 2018, pp. 40-41) has taken a toll on the most fundamental aspect required for a conducive working culture, which is ***"trust"***. Congruent with Cindi (2018), a qualitative study conducted by Plinio, Young, and Lavery (2010) also found that "one of the most serious problems facing organisations today is impoverished ethical behavior and nonexistent ethical leadership, consequently, the authors note that trust in leadership is waning… [These] authors also noted an alarming increase in misconduct by employees at all levels" as cited in Monahan (2012, p. 57). In the previous study, Cindi (2018) noted that one of the causes leading to the increase in misconduct amongst educators was the dearth of measures in place to ensure accountability. Hence, the previous research slightly revealed how the culture of "getting away with wrongdoing" was gradually becoming normalized due to the weak or vain ***accountability*** measures implemented by the Department of Basic Education. For instance, the report on Corruption Watch (2013) discovered that there were no extreme consequences for unethical

conduct in schools, this was evident when the former principal of Senaone Secondary School in Soweto was found guilty of mismanaging school funds but was not held fully accountable for such actions. Instead, the Department of Basic Education dealt with this issue by means of redeployment (which is the process of relocating an employee to another school) which does not reliably guarantee non-practice of unethical conduct in the future. Consequently, the deficiency of accountability and trust in schools has [yet again] calls for the intervention of ethical leadership. This is further reinforced by Frank (2002) who accentuates that the lack of trust and accountability in organizations, emergent as a result of what he frames the shadow side of leadership has "ignited a slew of research and articles regarding the topic of ethical leadership" as cited in (Monahan, 2012, p.57). Brown and Trevino (2005), likewise, recognise that ethical leaders play a crucial role in developing and promoting an atmosphere of trust and accountability, as they "do not just talk a good game but actually practice what they preach and are positive role models for ethical conduct" (Brown & Trevino, 2005, p597). Moreover, Brown and Trevino (2005, p. 597), posit that ethical leaders are characterised as "honest, caring and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions" hence their work on ethical leadership is very crucial and foundational to this study as it obliquely hints on the role of ethical leadership in developing and promoting trust and accountability. Moreover, this study involves a slight paradigmatic shift as it moves beyond perceiving ethical leadership as solely a 'panacea to unethical conduct' (Manyaka & Sebola, 2013) but additionally as a philosophy that carries potential to build or revive trust amongst personnel, as well as promote accountability (Brown & Trevino, 2005). Although voluminous studies have been carried out by different authors on the philosophy of ethical leadership and its potential effect in curbing unethical conduct- in his study, Naidoo (2015) posits that there is still insufficient research on how this phenomenon highly influences 'trust', drawing from (Engelbrecht, Heine and Mahembe, 2014) and 'accountability' (Enrich, Harris, Klewonski, Smeed & Ainscow, 2014). Most importantly, this study recognizes that present research on ethical leadership focuses more on its potential impact in curbing corruption, rather than its extensive role in promoting trust and accountability. The review of literature indicates that various studies focusing on the relationship between ethical leadership, trust and accountability have undeniably, been conducted (Engelbrecht et al, 2014; Enrich et al, 2014); however, not 'specifically' in the township of Soweto (Zola North). Hence this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in terms of context. This study hopes to address these gaps by interviewing teachers, HODs and principals to elicit their conceptualisations of their role as ethical leaders in developing and promoting trust and accountability in their schools. Moreover, this study

intends to impact policy making by seeking to establish and rebuild trust in schools, which is necessary for effective working conditions based on mutual respect. As well as strengthen accountability measures, as an attempt to lessen the lure to engage in unethical conduct in schools. The findings of the study will be shared with the Gauteng Department of Education and the two participating schools after completion of the study.

1.5 Objectives of the study

This study sought to achieve the following research objectives:

- To explore the teachers, principals, and HODs' conceptualisations of their roles as ethical leaders in developing and promoting trust and accountability in their schools.
- To elicit the views of teachers, HODs and principals on how they promote and develop trust and accountability in schools.
- To find out what teachers, HODs and principals believe are the causes for the lack of trust and accountability in schools.
- To ascertain the views of research participants regarding the impediments or enabling factors in developing and promoting trust and accountability in schools.

1.6 Critical research questions

This study therefore sought to find answers to the following four critical questions:

- What are the conceptualisations, practices, and experiences of the research participants regarding ethical leadership and practices in the researched schools?
- What do educators (teachers, principals and HODs) believe are the causes of the lack of trust and accountability in the researched schools?
- What could be the impediments or enabling factors in developing and promoting trust and accountability in the researched schools?
- How do educators (teachers, HODs and principals) develop and promote trust and accountability in the researched schools?

1.7 Clarification of the key concepts used in the study

1.7.1 Ethical leadership

Brown & Trevino (2005, p.120) define ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making." More so, ethical leaders are characterized as honest, caring, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions. These types of leaders also regularly communicate with those under their leadership about ethics, they set explicit ethical standards and use rewards and punishments (i.e., positive, and negative reinforcement) to ensure that those standards are followed. Finally, ethical leaders do not just talk a good game but practice what they preach and are "positive role models for ethical conduct" (Brown & Trevino, 2005, p597). Within the schooling context, school principals are responsible for setting high ethical standards as that subconsciously inspire ethical behavior from their teachers and HODs. As put forth by Brown and Trevino (200), school principals are role models, and the development and promotion of ethical leadership begins at the top. Fundamentally, the school principal holds the power to influence ethical behavior by first modelling the kind of behavior that he or she desires to receive from educators. The notion of 'practice what you preach' or 'modeling' is pivotal within the schooling context as ethical leadership is largely reinforced by the social learning theory. When breaking down Brown, Trevino, and Harrison's (2005) conceptualisation of ethical leadership - the initial term that one comes across is 'demonstration'- implying that ethical leadership is elicited or taught through 'showing' or 'displaying' the desired behavior.

1.7.2 Trust

Van den Akker et al, (2009, p.105) define trust as "a psychological state comprising the positive expectation that another party will perform particular actions that are important to oneself, coupled with a willingness to accept vulnerability which may arise from the actions of that other party."

Within the schooling context, teachers and HODs initially trust the school principal with hopes and expectations that s/he will lead ethically. The same notion also applies to school principals who distribute the roles and responsibility to teachers, with the hopes and expectations that teachers will fulfil and honour their duties within their respective departments. With trust comes vulnerability which leaves both parties susceptible to disappointments and inconsistencies. Since human beings (including leaders- who are constantly under scrutiny) are

prone to making errors, trust is likely to be desecrated along the way- however it is one's 'accountability' to those mistakes that can resuscitate trust in organisations.

1.7.3 Accountability

Spaull (2015, p.115) conceptualizes accountability as "the state of being 'answerable' for something to someone. It refers to having to account for one's outcomes or performance and to accept responsibility for those outcomes. It also implies that there are consequences for non-performance."

Being employed comes with duties that one needs to fulfil- accountability is one way to ensure that the assigned responsibilities are accomplished the right way. Teachers and principals have a role to play in schools and communities at large, these roles are underpinned by ethical etiquettes that provide guidance in terms of how the behaviors of teachers and principals ought to be. Failure to comply leads to consequences as stipulated in the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. Accountability, however, is way more than just a tool used to entice compliance- it is also a prerequisite for building trust and promoting ethical leadership. This is discussed further chapter two of this study.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

Maree and van der Westhuizen (2009) state that the "delimitations are formed from the deliberate and conscious decisions of the researcher to specify and define the boundaries and parameters of the research" (Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2009, p. 1). The core purpose of this study is to explore the conceptualisations, experiences and practices concerning the role of ethical leadership in promoting and developing two intertwined concepts, which is trust and accountability, in two township schools located in the heart of Soweto- Zola North. As such, two principals, four teachers and four HODs were selected to participate in the study, as means to understand and compare their conceptualizations of the topic. Because this is a small-scale study, only two secondary schools with close proximity to one another were purposefully selected. Since the schools chosen are opportunely neighbours, this allowed for easier access and adequate time to collect data. Additionally, I happen to be a teacher in one of the schools, this is an advantage because I already have prior insight on what is happening in the school. Conducting a study at my workplace was again beneficial in that I have unrestricted access to my colleagues. The fact that we were familiar with each other made the interview process a bit

more comfortable, to the point where it did not feel like an interview but rather a normal day-to-day conversation, of discussing educational issues. This again enabled openness and the opportunity for deeper experiences to be shared. However, I cannot express the same about the neighboring school. The teachers and HODs interviewed were chosen randomly, based on their availability at the time. Although permission and consent letters were sent to participating schools, securing an interview with the educators was an extreme challenge. Overall, one principal, three teachers and three HODs from each school managed to sacrifice their time and participate in the study.

1.9 Organisation of study

Chapter One introduces the study by highlighting the dilemma and rise of unethical leadership in organisations which has subsequently altered the elements of trust and accountability. Given this predicament, chapter one then outlines the problem statement, rationale, and significance of the study. This chapter further pinpoints the aims and objectives which later unfold into critical key research questions. In addition, the chapter describes the key concepts, organisation of the study and delimitations of the study.

Chapter Two initially breaks down the meaning of a literature review, then proceeds to unravel the conceptualisation of ethical leadership, trust, and accountability within the schooling context. There is also a sub-section on the 'unethical practices that have ignited the need for ethical leadership in schools', this is intended to draw attention on the underlying issues that have inspired this study. The discussion on each phenomenon (i.e., ethical leadership, trust and accountability in schools) is done purposefully to highlight the interrelation and synchronicity amongst these concepts. The distinction between a theoretical and conceptual framework is also discussed- with the intention to provide a rationale for selecting a conceptual framework for this study.

Chapter Three clarifies the research design and methodology employed in this study and justifies why these methods were precisely chosen. The qualitative approach, interpretivist paradigm, and a multiple case study design is described in detail together with their relevance to the study. The methods of convenience sampling are then discussed whilst emphasizing their important function of providing in-depth information. This chapter continues to examine the data generation methods which involve triangulating semi-structured interviews, case studies and document analysis and justified how these methods could facilitate the generation of

relevant data. The value of thematic data analysis within the context of the research is subsequently investigated. This is then followed by an elucidation of relevant issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues whilst simultaneously assessing how the study effectively manages them. Finally, the limitations of the study, as well as the research budget and schedule are outlined.

Chapter Four presents analyses and discusses the data produced during the study. The chapter uses literature and designed conceptual framework of ethical leadership, trust, and accountability to substantiate the emerging themes from the research.

Chapter Five presents the chapter summary, formulates conclusions from the discussions and analysis of the research and provides recommendations and implications which emerge from the study.

1.10 Chapter summary

The focus of this chapter was to briefly highlight how the unscrupulous actions of leaders has covertly violated trust and weakened accountability in organisations, particularly in schools. As a result, the need for ethical leadership as means to develop and promote these two facets (i.e., trust and accountability) in the schooling context is placed at the centre. This chapter slightly looked at each concept (ethical leadership, trust, accountability) separately, as an attempt to determine the interconnection between these three concepts. The basis of this chapter was to also explain that the key aspirations of this study is to uncover the root causes behind the deficiency of trust and accountability in schools, and prospective methods to resolve this problem. The objectives and critical questions mentioned earlier further accentuate the purpose of this study. Moreover, this chapter also discloses the delimitations of the study and finally provides a brief summary of how the study proceeds. The next chapter presents a discussion on the literature and theoretical frameworks that underpin the entire study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter introduced the study on ethical leadership through framing the background, the problem statement, purpose and rationale, research objectives and significance. This chapter examines and reviews literature pertaining to the various aspects on ethical leadership and its role in developing and promoting trust and accountability in schools. The chapter is divided into two main sections, i.e., the literature review section and the conceptual framing of the study. The first part has five focal sub-headings which are: ethical leadership, trust, accountability in schools (as an attempt to understand these concepts as separate entities), thereafter look at the relationship between ethical leadership and trust, as well as the relationship between ethical leadership and accountability. The second part is a discussion of the conceptual framework underpinning the study, i.e., ethical leadership, trust, and accountability.

2.2 Review of pertinent literature

According to Arshed and Danson (2015), the ability to distinguish between what is known about a phenomenon or study topic and what is yet to be uncovered is considered a crucial skill in the field of research. In academia, this is referred to as 'reviewing literature' (Arshed & Danson, 2015, p. 31). Moreover, Arshed and Danson (2015, p.31) ascertain that literature review is a pivotal chapter in a research report or thesis because it "provide(s) the background to and justification for the research undertaken." Furthermore, these authors assert that when reviewing literature, the researcher "extracts and synthesises the main points, issues, findings, and research methods which emerge from a critical review of the readings… to build a coherent argument which leads to the description of a proposed study" (Arshed & Danson, 2015, p. 31). Congruently, Mudavhanu (2017) concurs that by extracting and synthesising the main points- the researcher is basically giving a summary of what others have published about a particular topic- and that essentially forms part of a literature review. Over the years, various types of literature reviews have been developed; including the four types; which are- traditional or narrative, systematic, meta-analysis and meta-synthesis (Arshed & Danson, 2015; Bolderston, 2008). This study employed the traditional or narrative form of literature review, which analyses and summarises the existing body of knowledge or literature on the study topic. The

traditional or narrative type of literature review was achieved through providing a comprehensive background of ethical school leadership, which then revealed the ramifications of this phenomenon on trust and accountability within the schooling context. Arshed and Danson (2015, p.32) further emphasise that the review of literature is crucial for a number of reasons; first, the data gathered from different credited articles or journals can be summarised into a thesis or dissertation, which allows for a study rationale and justification to emerge. This is in sync with Mudavanhu (2017, p.191) who coincides that literature reviews provide a 'justification' of the proposed research.

Second, it serves as a point of departure for researchers to have a comprehensive understanding of what has been previously written about a phenomenon. Third, literature review goes beyond just highlighting gaps or inconsistencies within knowledge- it also ensures that researchers in the equivalent field do not replicate or reproduce 'previous' work (Arshed & Danson, 2015, p. 32).

The subsequent literature attempted to extract and analyse meaning of ethical leadership, trust, and accountability through the eyes of various leadership experts, as means to understand the phenomenon of ethical leadership in promoting trust and accountability within the schooling context. The existing body of knowledge on ethical leadership served as a point of departure for this study and played a pivotal role in assisting me to copiously understand the urgent need for ethical leadership in our schools. Most importantly, Arshed and Danson (2015) advise that when reviewing literature, the issue is not for the researcher to cite as many authors as possible, but to also take a STANCE and position oneself in what is being said. These authors refer to this as 'synthesising' which involves critiquing the existing literature in manner that strengthens and supports your study (Arshed & Danson, 2015, p. 33). By synthesising or taking a stance, Mudavanhu (2017) argues that the researcher contributes to the existing body of knowledge- he utters that "by explaining what has been done and what has not been done [that is, highlighting gaps], the researcher gives a justification of own contribution" (Mudavanuhu, 2017, p.191). Additionally, synthesising also involves the in-depth engagement with literature and substantiating on proposed theories, as opposed to merely presenting the ideas of others one after another. As a result, the subsequent literature presents the ideas of various authors, as well as my perspectives, on ethical leadership, trust, and accountability in schools…drawn typically from my experiences and observations as a teacher and previous research in the field.

2.3 Understanding ethical leadership

> *The first example of leadership is ethical leadership. Leaders adhere to an inner directive to do the right thing whatever the circumstances are, by loving and serving those they lead. In a world where pseudo leadership is most everywhere, servant leaders know people are observing them personally and professionally as a beacon for examples to live from the inside out* – Jim Woods (2018)

This quotation reminds me of the late Robert Sobukwe, who, in his leadership manifesto defined true leadership as "… the complete subjugation of self, honesty and integrity, uprightness of character, courage and fearlessness, and above all a consuming love for one's people" (Leadership Manifesto, 2016). This definition, along with Wood's (2018), captures the essence of both ethical and servant leadership. In my experience as a teacher and an investigator of ethical leadership, I have observed that to be an ethical leader, an effective one for that matter, requires one's actions to be driven by love for one's people and an innate desire to serve. When love is placed at the centre, all the qualities of an ethical leader such as honesty, empathy, accountability, integrity and so on, come naturally to the leader because he or she is inspired by the notion to do GOOD against all odds. Equally, this notion is buoyed by various authors including Ken Blanchard (2010) who in his book '*Leading at a higher level'* concludes by asking his significant other what she thinks leadership is all about and she responds by articulating that "Leadership is not about love, it is **LOVE**… it is loving your mission, it is loving your customers, it is loving your people, and it is loving yourself enough to get out of the way so that other people can be magnificent" (Blanchard, 2010, p. 287). In his book on '*Transformational Leadership'*, Samuel Baloyi (Baloyi, 2018, p.31) affirms that ethical leadership also includes 'living an honourable life as a leader whereby there are no intentional wrongful behaviours labelling you'. Baloyi (2018) further emphasises that ethical leadership involves 'leading by example' which is consistently referred to as 'modelling' in leadership literature. Baloyi (2018) states that when leading by example, "a leader FIRST becomes what he expects his followers to be", and this is non-negotiable in leadership (Baloyi, 2018, p. 31). This is further corroborated by Brown and Mitchell (2010) who affirm that ethical leaders 'teach' ethical conduct to their respective followers through their own behaviour (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, p. 585). This viewpoint is crucial for this study because trust and accountability in organisations have been annihilated due to the leader's failure to walk the talk, or what Monahan (2012) refers to as the DISCONNECT "between what the leader says he or she will do, compared to the reality of their actions" (Monahan, 2012, p. 61). Monahan (2012) further

echoes that this takes us back to Aristotle's initial advice concerning ethics- "the spirit of morality is awakened in the individual only through the witness and conduct of a moral reason" (p.61). Likewise, this assumption is corroborated by Bandura's social learning theory which suggests that "individuals can learn standards of appropriate behaviour by observing how role models (like teachers, parents, and leaders) behave" (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, p. 585). Brown and Mitchell (2010) posit that social learning of ethical behaviour requires role models to be 'credible' in terms of moral behaviour. This implies that by being ethical (i.e., treating others fairly, displaying transparency and consistency), "leaders [inevitably] become worthy of emulation by others" (p. 585). This is similarly substantiated by Brown, Trevino, and Harrison (2005) who liken ethical leadership with transformational leadership, and states that such leaders are "role models for followers to emulate…and can be counted on to do the right thing [because] they demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral conduct" (Brown et al, 2005, p. 118).

In their study on the relationship between school principal's ethical leadership behaviors and positive climate practices, Eranil and Ozbilen (2017) accentuate that the role and behaviors of a school leader, along with the tactics that he or she adopts, play a crucial role in attaining desired organisational goals; as well as influencing the values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of those under their leadership (Eranil & Ozbilen, 2017). Furthermore, Arslantas and Dursun (2008) posit that leadership behaviors perceived as 'ethical' serve as constructive motivation for organisations, as cited in (Eranil & Ozbilen, 2017, p. 100). Given that ethical leadership includes the "demonstration [or modelling] of normatively appropriate actions and promotion of such actions among followers" as put forth by Brown et al, (2005). Katranci, Sungu and Saglam (2015) reinforce that the modelling of ethical behavior is pivotal in the sense that followers (or subordinates) often link the leader's effectiveness with the leader's honesty and trustworthiness. This purely implies that if a leader lacks transparency and fails to fulfil his promises, his effectiveness as a leader to positively steer or influence the organisation or followers towards achieving organisational goals, gradually declines as the leader reveals no sign of reliability. It is therefore this deficiency, along with the rise of unscrupulous actions of leaders across various types of sectors (be it cooperate, health, education and so on) that has enthused the need for ethical leadership in organisations. Although Brown's (2005) conceptualization of ethical leadership happens to be the most prominent (as it is often used as a point of reference in most studies conducted on ethical leadership) various conceptualizations from different authors have also emerged as the phenomenon of ethical leadership evolves and

continues to be investigated further in different contexts. Similarly, Mangena (2011) posits that one cannot define ethical leadership without first defining the meaning of ethics. For many years, the topic of ethics has been debated due to the ambiguousness concerning what is 'right' and 'wrong', it is this subjectivity that continues to add complexity to the phenomenon of ethics. According to Rich (2005, p.4), ethics are a "systematic approach to understanding, analyzing and distinguishing [between] matters of right and wrong, good and bad, admirable and deplorable as they relate to the well-being of…sentient beings." Likewise, Mangena (2011) refers to ethics as the scientific study of morality…morality meaning the "behavioral rules and values in a given society with regard to what is considered as good or bad for oneself, for others and for the society in its various facets" (Mangena, 2011, p. 105). Subjectively, I have always perceived ethics to be a 'set of rules or principles that guide human behavior'… these rules are not designed to oppress anyone but rather to improve human relations. Therefore, an ethical person to me would be one that chooses to do the right thing according to the norms and standards put in place. According to Brown, Trevino, and Hartman (2003, p.1) "… leadership is considered ethical if it leads in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others" as cited in Mangena (2011, p. 105).

Having conducted research on ethical leadership in schools at honour's level, most of the participants likened an ethical person to one who does "things the right way" or "one who holds high regard for the rules put in place" (Cindi, 2018), hence it is suitable to say that there is some congruence between my understanding of ethics and that of others. After having reviewed various readings concerning ethical leadership, I still believe that 'love' is at the center of ethical leadership, if you possess love for one's people and find joy in the growth and success of your followers or organization, qualities such as humanity, honesty, fairness, empathy, reliability…and most of all SELFLESSNESS come naturally to an ethical leader, as alleged earlier. An ethical leader will therefore be one who understands that they have been placed in an influential position to serve for a greater purpose and would do things accordingly to ensure that their followers or organization succeed (s). To strengthen this contention, Baloyi (2018) proclaims that "leaders are never interested in their success before the success of their followers. They are not self-centered, but people oriented. The success of their follower does not hurt them but excites them" (Baloyi, 2018, p. 09). This is further corroborated by Mangena (2011) who concurs that:

> *As leaders are by nature in a position of social power, ethical leadership focuses on how these leaders use their social power in the decisions they make, actions*

> *they engage in and ways they influence others…Leaders who are ethical are people oriented and are also aware of how their decisions impact others as they use their social power to serve the greater good instead of self-serving interest,* as cited in (Mangena, 2011, p. 105)

Strong-willed ethical and transformational leaders understand that when their followers prosper, THEY also prosper because they played a role in the success of those under their leadership. This then takes me back to my classroom, as a teacher, nothing gives me joy than seeing my learners soar and thrive, their success reflects my teachings. Every time one of my learners succeed, my heart beams with delight because I know that I have achieved my purpose as a teacher. To me, this is a true reflection of ethical and servant leadership, doing thorough justice to those who believed in you to lead them. This is once more reinforced by Mangena (2011) who posits that the goodness of an ethical leader is driven by the desire to achieve one's purpose or goal- he emphasises that "… the goodness of the action of a leader is conceived of with regard to a model or goal that the leader is supposed to achieve through theoretical and practical reason on the basis of a plan in order to master or inform a situation" (Mangena, 2011,107). It is from this point of view that we see that ethical leadership is a goal-oriented or purpose-driven process. In his study on ethical leadership in post-colonial Zimbabwe, Mangena (2011) proposes a distinction between ethical leadership in the Western and African context. He argues that in western literature, ethical leadership dwells more on the qualities and role of the leader as the "GREAT MAN" whilst the African perspective of ethical leadership focuses on the role that the leader plays in promoting common interests. In the African context, "the leader is not some gigantic, mythic or heroic figure but somebody who is given that mandate to lead by the people" (Mangena, 2011, p. 107), inferring that in Africa, leaders are chosen BY the people FOR the people, not because they possess some special qualities but because they simply happened to be at the right place at the right time. He therefore highlights that:

> *[Ethical] leaders in Africa are not supposed to be "Great man" but <u>servants</u> of the people* (Mangena, 2011, p. 107)

Whilst western literature places its emphasis on the leader's ability to influence others through their actions (i.e., social learning theory), African literature perceives leaders as influential people who also follow the "collective will of the masses". An ethical leader in this sense is one who works with his followers to achieve a common goal, according to Mangena (2011), this shared vision is captured in the philosophy of ***ubuntu*** which is an act of showing humanity

towards others, often expressed in the Xhosa language as '*umntu ngumtu ngabantu*' meaning 'I am because we are'. Given that ethical leaders are characterised as honest, caring, fair, principled, trustworthy, and reliable, unethical leadership would therefore be any form of behavioral demonstration that opposes the above-mentioned ethical leadership characteristics. The subsequent sub-topic draws on the precise unethical practices in schools that have aroused the burning need for ethical leadership in South African schools today.

2.3.1 Unethical practices that have ignited the need for ethical leadership in schools

> *Corruption is a true enemy to development.* Tsakhiagniin Elbegdorj (President of Mongolia, 2014, address at the Central European University)

Mangena (2011, p.114) posits that unethical leadership, also known as bad leadership, displayed through "persistent human rights violation, bad governance, dysfunctional institutions… electoral fraud, manipulation of ethnic differences, corruption and personalisation of power has hindered the occurrence of growth, peace and social justice. Consequently, ethical leadership remains an urgent matter (Mangena, 2011). Before delving into the unethical leadership practices that are prevalent in our institutions of learning today, it is primarily important to clarify the meaning of unethical behaviour. According to Brown and Mitchell (2010, p.588), unethical conduct "involves acts that are illegal and/or are morally inappropriate to larger society" therefore an unethical leader would be one who engages in illegal or morally inappropriate actions that are, as a result, harmful to others or society.

Brown and Mitchell (2010, p.588) further claim that "unethical leadership transcends beyond the leader's own behaviour", implying that leaders can encourage corrupt and unethical conduct through their actions. Because a leader is a role model, followers are likely to emulate their leader's actions especially when they observe that the consequences of such actions are partial or close to none. In as much as the social learning theory applies to the philosophy of ethical leadership, the same goes for unethical leadership. Leaders are in a position of influence and thus it is important that they use this position to promote good conduct, otherwise they run the risk of harmfully influencing their followers. Congruently, in a qualitative study conducted by Sims and Brinkmann (2002), these authors affirm that "leaders who reward short-term results, model aggressive and Machiavellian behaviour, do not punish followers' wrongdoing, and promote like-minded individuals heighten unethical behaviour within organisations" as cited in (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, p. 588). Hence unethical leaders do not merely engage in

unethical practices but also "impose processes and structures that encourage unethical conduct by followers" (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, p. 589). It is without doubt that unethical leadership impedes the processes of change and growth which are essential for organisations to thrive. Take for example, the misappropriation of school funds. I work in a township school where there is a shortage of school furniture. It saddens me to see two or three grown-up teenagers sharing a single chair and table, because not only does this setting make them uncomfortable but it also tampers with their learning process and thus deprives them of quality education which they rightfully deserve. Depriving a child quality education is a violation of human rights yet leaders do it every day through taking self-centred decisions. In their research, Pelletier, and Bligh (2008); Tepper (2000); Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone and Duffy (2008) revealed that unethical leadership has a negative influence on employee attitudes. From this body of literature, we grasp that unethical leadership can influence the followers in two ways: they either rebel against the leader in a way that they completely lose the trust in him/her and anything s/he has to say OR they emulate his/her behaviour because they know that chances of facing accountability measures and consequences are extremely low and hence believe that they can easily get away with misconduct. The question that they constantly ask themselves is, "IF S/HE CAN DO IT, WHY CAN'T WE?"

In his study on ethical school leadership, Mthiyane (2018, p.166) asserts that hardly a week passes by in South Africa without a report in print or electronic media about alleged unethical practices in schools such as misappropriation of school funds, sexual assault of learners by teachers, chronic teacher absenteeism, teachers submitting fraudulent qualifications when applying for employment or even worse, principals actually employing under-qualified teachers to educate pupils in schools as reflected in a study conducted by Human Sciences Research Council Report (HSRCR) of 2010. This was further advanced by the following shocking statements, 'Principal stole girl's virginity', 'Principal sex scandal', 'Principal exposed after having sex with female students and teachers' which made headlines in the newspapers as videos and pictures emerged of the school principal engaging in sexual activity with learners and educators, in January 2018. According to the South African Council of Educators (SACE) code of ethics, s 7 (7.2) educators [should] behave in a way that enhances the dignity and status of the teaching profession and that does not bring the profession into disrepute and also recognize the employer as a partner in education as stated in section 8 (8.1) yet teachers completely ignore or disregard these rules on a daily basis and engage in the opposite. A principal should serve as a leader and a role model to teachers, learners, and the

community at large yet it appears that most principals have no idea about what it takes to be an 'ethical leader', moreover this does not only apply to principals but to teachers as well who are expected to lead and display ethical teaching practices in their classrooms.

In a report titled '*Loss of principle: A report of corruption in schools'* conducted by the Corruption Watch (2015), it was revealed that as from July 2012 to 2015, high volume of reports (over 1000) alleging corruption in schools fingered principals as the leading perpetrators or culprits involved in corrupt activities. These acts of corruption are multifaceted and range from: financial mismanagement (being the highest at 37%), theft of goods- including groceries related to school feeding schemes (at 3%), theft of funds (20%), tender corruption (13%), employment corruption (9%) and 'other' at 18% (Corruption Watch, 2015, p. 07) of which this study intended to uncover. As presented in Chapter Four, there was absolute congruence between this literature and what is currently happening in our schools. Not only have I experienced and witnessed some of these types of corruption first-hand but some of my fellow colleagues who have been in the system for many years have been exposed to this kind of behaviour…which subsequently had an impact on their attitudes towards our school leaders. It is shameful that this report was conducted in 2015 yet the very same activities are congruent with the ones happening today. More saddening is that they keep on growing with new unethical practices emerging and one cannot stop but ask themselves, 'will this ever stop?'.

The Corruption Watch Report of 2015 also revealed that the acts of corruption which make up 18% of the 'other' include: the manipulation of the employment process, where school principals and school governing body officials (SGB) officials collude in favour of a particular applicant; the report exposes that Union members and Department officials are as well involved in these shenanigans. Moreover, there have been cases of ghost teachers and learners, which is a tactic that school principals often use to intensify the government's allocation of school funds. Nevertheless, this is not the only activity principals engage in to generate personal wealth, it has also been discovered that some principals have the tendency to demand the payment of school fees in no-fee paying schools; whereas failure to pay school fees frequently led to learners being denied their results at the end of the school year by the school principal. (Corruption Watch, 2015, p. 08). Sadly, the above cases do not 'completely' cover the unethical practices that school leaders engage in but only highlight a few.

Mthiyane (2018) also states that almost every week, new cases of transgression in South African schools emerge and this sort of behaviour seems to be growing yearly instead of

declining. It is indeed a tragedy that several revolutionaries have died for underprivileged children to have access to quality education, have a promising future (like all the other children) and possibly break the chains of generational poverty…yet leaders continue to shatter this possibility through their self-centred, avaricious actions.

Northhouse (2012) purports that 'ethics' is a derivative of the Greek word 'ethos' meaning customs, conduct and character, in this sense, ethics are concerned with the kinds of values and morals an individual or society ascribes as desirable or appropriate, implying that if an action is deemed right or good by the society, then it is 'ethical'. Northhouse (2012) further posits that ethical theory is therefore imperative in that it provides a system of rules or principles as a guide in making decisions about what is right or wrong and good or bad in a specific situation. Simply put, ethical theory provides a basis for understanding what it means to be a morally decent human being. Given the number of unethical practices being constantly reported in South African schools today, one cannot stop but wonder if teachers and principals truly understand what it means to be a morally decent human being.

Most petrifying is the fact that we seem to be living in turbulent times where corruption or unethical practices are gradually being normalized, where individuals effortlessly disregard rules because accountability measures in place are not strict to the point where one would even fear engaging in unethical practices (for example, the misuse of school funds for personal gain). This was highlighted by the Corruption Watch Report of 2015, which discovered that there were no extreme consequences for corrupt principals, one of many instances was when Lebo Mashuga, the former principal of Senaone Secondary school in Soweto was found guilty of mismanaging school funds yet was not held fully accountable for such actions (Corruption Watch Report, 2015). Although he was placed under cautionary suspension by the Gauteng Department of Education for financial management, the Corruption Watch found that he still had access to the school's bank account and was signing off cheques with large amounts. Even though the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) concluded its disciplinary proceedings against Mashuga who was found guilty of corruption, he was still relocated to another school, acting as principal again, thus verifying that unethical conduct is taken lightly within our education system. Brown and Trevino (2005) state that ethical leaders were thought to be honest and trustworthy. Beyond that, ethical leaders were seen as fair and principled decision makers who care about people and the broader society and who behave ethically on their personal and professional lives (Brown & Trevino, 2005, p. 597) yet it has become extremely

rare to come across such ethical leaders in our society as substantiated by Clarke (2007, p.10) who posits that too often in schools, decisions are made because they are the easy option or because they are the popular option and not because they are the option which is in the best educational interests of the students at the school. Cheteni and Shindika (2017, p.3) state that although the South African government went as far as launching the ***Batho Pele*** initiative ('people first') in an attempt to improve the integrity of public servants through tighter monitoring of performance, accountability measures and compliance with ethical conduct, the frequency of unethical practices suggest that there is very little improvement that has taken place. Raga and Taylor (2005) predicted that these principles and "proliferation of ethical codes of conduct would be unlikely to put unethical practices to an end and suggested that public officials should be [instilled] with attitudes and virtues for guiding human conduct" as cited in (Cheteni & Shindika, 2017, p.3). Indeed, these authors' assumptions have proven to be accurate given the budding rate of corruption since the implementation of ***Batho Pele principles***, which were aimed at improving the quality-of-service delivery and ensuring that such processes are not tampered with venality.

By advising that public officials should [instead] be implanted (through regular training) with attitudes and virtues; that implicitly calls for ethical leadership as principles such as humanity, trust, accountability, integrity, honest, and fairness lie at the heart of this philosophy. Congruent with the ***Batho Pele*** principles, Chapter 10 of the South African constitution, Section 195 (1, a, b, d & f) also state that those who work in public administration should ensure that "a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained; efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted; services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias [furthermore] public administration must be accountable and transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information". These principles are congruent with the philosophy of ethical leadership, which upholds that ethical leaders are not only altruistic and respectful in carrying out their duties, but they are highly concerned with the issues of fairness and justice and always make it a top priority to treat all of their subordinates equally and make fair decisions that are bias-free. Furthermore, ethical leaders are honest (Brown et al, 2005). It is without a doubt that dishonesty leads to distrust (this conception is not only applicable in the world of work but also in our real-life relationships and friendships). If a friend or superior is not honest and transparent, one's perspective about them changes as they come to see them as undependable and unreliable.

Consequently, trust is desecrated, and people lose faith in what the leader has to say or stands for. Moreover, respect for the leader diminishes and consequently the leader's impact is compromised as he has violated a vital aspect of ethical leadership, which is trust. In his study, Kapur (2018) outlines out a very crucial idea and that is the fact that instead of "perceiving ethical leadership as preventing people from carrying out inappropriate acts…one should [rather] view it as ***enabling people*** to do the right thing" (Kapur, 2018, p.02). Given the above discussion, it is ostensible that the unethical practices of teachers and principals have put into question the issues of accountability, responsibility, transparency, integrity, ethics and morality in our education system, and hence the growing need for ethical leadership is emphasised once more.

2.4 Trust in school leadership

> *Trust is the lubricant that enables a leader in on organisation to bring about transformational change* (Browning, 2014).

In her study on ethical leadership in organisations, Darcy (2010) concludes that one of the biggest problems in organizations and individuals today is the 'lack of trust' (Darcy, 2010, p. 200). Trust is a very fragile yet complex aspect in relationships (be it personal or professional) that may take years to build but minutes to break. The complexity and elusiveness of trust is corroborated by various authors including Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014, p.108) who assert that despite a number of studies that have been investigated on trust, there is still "no apparent consensus on a best definition of trust...due to its complex, situated and multifaceted nature." Lack of trust often results from a series of disappointments, inconsistences, and betrayals- this is corroborated by Tschannen-Moran (2004) who concurs that often times, "trust in organisations is broken by betrayal, breach of confidentiality, deception, dishonesty, breach of integrity, corruption, coercion, overuse of power, exclusion of others or divisiveness among staff" as cited in (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 115). I believe that no relationship will thrive without the foundation of trust. Trust is essential in creating a constructive and harmonious climate, likewise, Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014, p.109) emphasize that "if properly developed, trust can propel organisations to greatness, [however if] improperly used, trust can plant the seeds of collapse". The inability to trust those around you infiltrates the mind with adverse thoughts that hinder growth and the ability to see good in the action of others, hence trust should always be nurtured as it often leads to vicious and chaotic relationships once tampered with.

The above stance is drawn from my daily observations in both my personal and professional relationships. The deficiency or non-existence of trust in the workplace is a messy situation that no organization wishes to find itself in. As a novice teacher in a school, I have observed how experienced teachers and principals have developed passive grudges towards one another due to past experiences that have led to the lack of trust between two parties. Take for example, conflict management. I work in a school where the principal was once a post level one educator before being promoted to principalship. He formulated friendships with the fellow educators whilst still a post level one teacher and hence cannot merely dismantle those friendships because he is now occupying a position of superiority. As much as that may have been professional thing to do when one occupies a leadership position, it is not that simple. In this case, two educators had a disagreement and were subsequently called to the principal's office. Coincidently, one of the educators happened to be friends with the principal (educator A) and this led to the biasness of the conflict management process, in that the other educator (educator B)- who is not friends with the principal) was victimized and the entire blame was shifted onto her. The conflict was resolved through demanding that educator B gives an apology to educator A. Although it is not clear what the disagreement between the two educators was about, the conflict was resolved unfairly. Educator B apologized as a matter of compliance but did not mean it from the heart. As a result, the issue was not thoroughly dealt with but simply swept under the rug because the leader could not separate between business and friendship. The relationship between the principal and educator B has been incapacitated because the leader lacked fairness.

This might be a minor scenario or case but demonstrates how easy it is for followers to lose trust in their leader. Additional to the factors that lead to lack of trust, mentioned above, biased leadership can also contribute towards distrust in the leader. As a novice teacher, I have always wondered why some educators display a negative attitude towards the school principal. Initially, I believed it to be the lack of respect but now (delving deeper into the situation) I realize that it is the past experiences and how the leader previously dealt with situations that has dented the leader's reputation with his followers. The saddest part about this is that violation of trust or "broken trust requires a long time to rebuild, [and there also lies a possibility that] lost trust may never be restored" (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 109), hence the relentless nurturing of trust in all relationships is vital. There are many incidents that may lead to lack of distrust in the leader and this narrative is merely one of them. In this case, the principal lacked fairness…fairness being one of the fundamental aspects of ethical leadership.

Combining the works of various authors including Daly (2009), Day (2009), Mischra (2013), Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2009), Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) conclude that trust is:

> *The extent to which one engages in a reciprocal interaction and a relationship in such a way that there is willingness to be vulnerable to another and to assume risk with positive expectations and a degree of confidence that the other party will possess some semblance of benevolence, care, competence, honesty, openness, reliability, respect, hope and wisdom* (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 109).

Subjectively, I have always viewed trust as a choice. A choice to be vulnerable and believing that the other party will do right by you. Choosing to trust is never an easy decision to make because it involves accepting the risk of being disappointed or deceived in advance.

There is no denying that trust is [also] the essence of leadership because the leader's ability to inspire and influence members of the staff depends vastly on trust- when subordinates trust their leader, they are bound to have confidence in whatever decision the leader makes. Slightly congruent with Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014), van den Akker et al, define trust as the "expectation by one person, group or firm of ethically justifiable behaviour, that is morally correct decision and action based upon ethical principles of analysis" (van den Akker et al, 2009; 105). A leader cannot be considered as 'ethical' if he or she is not accountable or trustworthy, hence it is essential for an ethical leader to possess both these qualities. Van den Akker (2009), Brown, et al. (2005), Lawton and Paez (2014) and others, concur that there is a positive correlation between ethical leadership and trust in the leader. These authors elucidate that "if ethical leadership is correctly implemented by a leader within an organization, then one of the consequences could be a greater measure of emotional trust of followers towards that leader" as cited in Naidoo (2015).

In their investigation on '*Trust in schools: A core resource for school reform'*, Bryk and Schneider (2003) introduce us to the concept of relational trust, which is built upon day-to-day social exchanges between the leader and co-workers (e.g., school principals and teachers) in the workplace. This type of trust manifests itself through the following pillars: respect, personal regard, competence in core role responsibilities and personal integrity. Coincidently, these pillars mirror similar characteristics of an ethical leader, thus signifying the correlation between trust and ethical leadership as proposed by this study. This correlation will be reviewed in detail in the ensuing sub-heading 'the relationship between trust and ethical leadership'. Bryk and

Schneider (2003) advice that school stakeholders can foster relational trust by ensuring that words match actions, for trust "grows through exchanges in which actions validate these expectations" (Bryk & Schneider, 2003, p. 5).

2.5 Accountability in school leadership

Accountability is the glue that ties commitment to the result (Bob Proctor, 2018).

Section 1(f) in Chapter 10 of the South African Constitution (1996) highlights that "public administration must be accountable' yet there is very little accountability that we observe in public service (education included) which suggest that this remains an issue, even post the dawn of democracy. Accountability is very essential in public organisations because without this 'glue' that Bop Proctor (2018) speaks of- what else is there to ensure that leaders and subordinates ethically fulfil their duties to achieve the desired outcomes without any form of sabotage along the way?

According to the Global Corruption Report (2011) released by Transparency International, accountability refers to "holding individuals and organisations responsible for executing their powers properly (in accordance with the rules and duties of their post), and for paying particular consideration to vulnerable parties." More unambiguously, accountability is about the "upwards and downwards responsibility of actors (to their superiors and to service users), participation, and sanctioning of actors for their corrupt acts" (Global Corruption Report, 2011, p. 04). Abun (2014, p.1) further states that accountability can also be used synonymously with concepts such as 'answerability', 'blameworthiness' along with other terms associated with the expectation of account-giving. This is further corroborated by Dive (2008) who concurs that accountability is the state of being "answerable to another for work (goal-oriented behaviour), resources, results and/ or services which can be measures in quantity, quality, cost and time" (Dive, 2008, p. 21). In addition, Dive (2008) states that quite often, we tend to confuse accountability with responsibility, but that is not necessary as these concepts are synonymous and interchangeable (Dive, 2008, p. 22). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, accountability is taken as synonymous with responsibility…and vice versa.

As an educator bind by the SACE Code of Professional ethics, I have always conceptualized accountability as acting in accordance with the rules and regulations put in place as a professional and taking full responsibility instead of 'hiding under a rock' or 'pointing fingers' if mistakes occur. As simple as that may sound, being accountable is one of the rare qualities

that many leaders lack today. From the two conceptualisations of accountability provided by the Global Corruption Report (2011) and Dive (2008), we can see that accountability can be viewed from different perspectives (i.e., as a tool and a personal trait)- this is also corroborated by Bovens (2010) who distinguishes between main concepts of accountability: accountability as a virtue and accountability as a mechanism. Accountability can be a 'tool' or mechanism used by officials for holdings individuals responsible for discrepancies that occur, this form of accountability is often followed by punishment for failing to do what is right or achieving the organisation goal. The literature presented earlier on the constant growth of unethical practices in South African public schools today has demonstrated that there is a serious issue with the accountability measures implemented by the government in South Africa because they are too feeble to be considered seriously. This is further corroborated by the report conducted by the Global Corruption Report (GCR) of 2011 which discovered that:

> *There is poor implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations by Provincial Department of Education [consequently] this has led to weaknesses in the effectiveness and legitimacy of their work, creating more opportunities for non-compliance at the lower levels* (GCR, 2011, p. 7).

Instead of declining, cases of corruption in South African public schools are mounting rapidly, putting the measures of accountability in question. One question that I am constantly pondering on is, why do leaders find it easy to engage in unscrupulous actions for personal advancement…and only answer comes into mind: they are not afraid of the consequences. That is the focal reason behind the rate of corruption increasing daily, the accountability procedures are extremely weak, and the justice system does not have severe consequences in place for perpetrators. Consequently, they get away with their crimes, reset and continue to loot after public funds which are aimed at alleviating poverty and advancing our country. It is a continuous and petrifying process that threatens the socio-economic future of our country and recurrently taking us a step back. The lack of accountability and engagement of leaders in unethical practices (such as the embezzlement of school funds) in our schools is gradually becoming contagious and normalized, which is truly disturbing. If nothing is to be done about this, transformational and ethical leadership will remain remote ideals that only flourish in theory and never in practice. Holding leaders and organisations accountable should never be viewed as exercise of control but rather an act of empowerment to do what is right- accountability is therefore [implicitly] an enabler of ethical leadership and vice versa. Inducing

fear for disregarding rules may seem harsh but given the budding rate of corruption, there is an urgent "need to enforce strict compliance of public officials with rules governing the management of public resources…" (Gberevbie, Shodipo & O Oviasogie, 2013, p. 3). Chapter Five of this study will therefore attempt to unearth ways in which accountability in school leadership can be evoked, as well as strengthened to reduce and curb unethical conduct in schools.

Being accountable as an individual means taking responsibility for one's outcomes, whether good or bad. In organisations, you will find that leaders are more than joyful to claim credit for job well done yet quick to find scapegoats or point fingers when plans go astray. Lacking accountability as a leader impedes the process of change that is needed, because how can one improve if they fail to acknowledge their faults or mistakes? Quite often, change requires the ability to conduct self-introspection, in order to identify areas of improvement. The inability to acknowledge one's mistakes is destructive as it may result in the recurrence of the same actions repeatedly. Accountability is one of the essential leadership qualities that ensure that this does not happen and that organisations are continuously evolving and learning from their choices, behaviours, and actions in which they are involved. This is further substantiated by Gberevbie et al, (2013) who affirms that "development is actually a function [or result] of proper accountability at the individual, organisational and national level" (Gberevbie, et al, 2013, p. 13).The metaphor in Proctor's definition of accountability mentioned above implies that accountable leaders are 'fixers' when things turn topsy-turvy- the glue is known to possess the ability to piece things together, even when broken.

However, in his book on *Accountable Leadership,* Irvine (2018) differs and argues that accountability is beyond the notion of 'blame or fault-finding' or even increased punishment. He alludes that "accountability is about the ability to be counted on as a leader" (Irvine, 2018, p.4). He further argues that more than anything, accountability serves to create a 'no-excuse' culture that supports the public and leaves no room for unfulfilled promises. Congruent with Proctor, Irvine (2018) concurs that accountability is also about 'results'- delivering on what you have promised and earning the trust of those you lead, by developing a reputation of a person 'who can be counted on' (Irvine, 2018, p. 04). Whilst I mentioned earlier the induction of fear through strict disciplinary measures, as means to strengthen compliance and discourage lack of accountability, Irvine (2018) argues that is not the way to inspire accountability. He states that accountability is not a ***'programme to be installed'*** but rather a philosophy of life.

Irvine (2018) therefore proposes that leaders can inspire accountability by applying the following four pillars: “Build trust - by being trustworthy, create clarity- by being purpose-driven, engage staff - by being engaged themselves and lastly, ensure results - by having the right tools in place” (Irvine, 2018, p. 26). Through this, the correlation between trust and accountability is amplified. We see that these concepts are intertwined and influence one another. Accountability is trust and vice versa, and this will be elaborated further in the ensuing sub-heading.

2.6 The correlation between ethical leadership, trust, and accountability in the leader

> *Leadership is about integrity, honesty, and accountability. All components of trust.*
> Simon Sinek (2014, p.28).

The intersection between ethical leadership, trust and accountability lies in the fact that each phenomenon cannot exist without the other (i.e., intertwined concepts) and are often used interchangeably…implying that you cannot be an ethical leader if you are not “accountable”, true leaders take the blame for catastrophes that occur in the organization and they account for mistakes, misjudgements, and decisions transparently. The same notion applies to trust as well, ethical leaders must be trustworthy, if organizations are to run smoothly and flourish. Van den Akker et al, (2009, p. 105) accentuate that trust is the fundamental “component of successful working relationships between leaders and followers- that enables cooperation, helps to manage differences, encourages information sharing, and thus increases openness and mutual acceptance.”

2.7 Conceptual frameworks underpinning the study

2.7.1 Understanding the distinction between theoretical and conceptual framing

Adom, Hussein and Joe (2018) emphasize that understanding the difference between theoretical and conceptual framework is pivotal in research, because quite often many postgraduate students, as well as academic staff at universities confuse the two terms and thus apply them incorrectly in their research papers. Although the overall aim of these two frameworks is the same, i.e., making “research findings more meaningful, acceptable to the theoretical constructs in the research field and ensures generalizability” (Adom et al, 2018, p. 438), they remain different in concept and in their roles in the research investigation. Having a

clear understanding of the two frameworks enables the researcher to apply the correct framework that is most suitable for his or her study.

Grant and Osanloo (2014) elucidate that a theoretical framework refers to the 'blueprint' or guide for a research. This is equally substantiated by Adom, Hussein and Joe (2018, p.438) who elaborate that a theoretical framework is "based on an existing theory in a field of inquiry that…reflects the hypothesis of a study." Additionally, this blueprint or plan is often 'borrowed' by the researcher to build a research investigation and serves as the foundation upon which the study is constructed. According to Sinclair (2007), as well as Fulton and Krainovich-Miller (2010), the role of a theoretical framework could be compared to that of a map or travel plan… just like a map guides a traveller to his or her final destination, a theoretical framework guides the researcher in fulfilling their objectives of inquiry. This is reinforced by Adom et al, (2018) who concur that "a theoretical framework guides the researcher so that he or she would not deviate from the confines of the accepted theories to make his or her final contribution scholarly and academic" (Adom et al, 2018, p. 438). Grant and Osanloo (2014) state that in a research report, all aspects of the research are expected to correlate with the theoretical framework. To ensure this, Adom et al, (2018) argue that the researcher must select a relevant theory or theories that underpin the knowledge base of the phenomenon to be investigated (for example, ethical leadership).

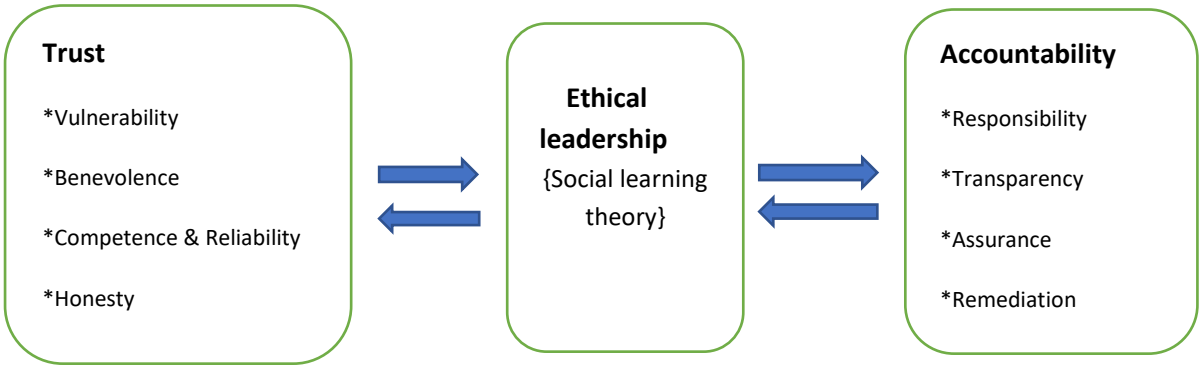
Grant and Osanloo (2014) highlight that a theoretical framework is beneficial in that it provides "a common world view or lens from which to support one's thinking about the problem and analysis of data" (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 14). Most importantly, Akintoye (2015) emphasise that the correct selection and presence of a theoretical framework demonstrates that the phenomenon being investigated is not based on 'personal instinct' of the researcher but rather is firmly rooted or underpinned by an established theory supported by credible studies, as cited in (Adom et al, 2018, p. 438). Just like the findings of the study must corroborate, extend, or modify existing body of knowledge as presented in the review of literature, the same applies with theoretical framing of the study. The findings can either corroborate or refute the literature review or theoretical frameworks, however what remains central is that the study is grounded by theory. Congruently, Grant and Osanloo (2014) position that "the researcher may critique, develop and/ or expand the theory that served as a guide for his or her study" (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 15), however, this critique is presented in the data analysis stage of the study where the researcher interprets whether the findings are in consensus or incongruity with

the theories selected. Because a theoretical framework is a 'plan' that guides the entire research, and thus influences every decision made by the researcher in carrying out the study, Adom et al, (2018) suggest that a researcher is supposed to select and clarify the theoretical framework from the initial stages of the research. This is further corroborated by Grant and Osanloo (2014) who assert that the chosen research theory or conceptual framing must be stated early in the beginning of the research report,

According to Adom et al, (2018), a conceptual framework on the contrary is a construct formulated by the researcher to explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied (i.e., ethical leadership). These authors further elaborate that it is linked with concepts, empirical evidence and relevant theories used in promoting the hypothesis or knowledge advocated by the research, hence it is "the researcher's explanation of how the research problem would be explored" (Adom et al, 2018, p. 439). In addition, Adom et al, (2018) postulate that the conceptual framework describes the relationship between the main concepts of the study (for example, the link between ethical leadership, trust, and accountability) in an attempt to demonstrate the correlation amongst these concepts. This is corroborated by Grant and Osanloo (2014) who claim that a conceptual framework is "arranged in a logical structure to provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in a study to one another" (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 16). These authors argue that the conceptual framework offers a variety of benefits to the researcher. One of the benefits of conceptual framing as proposed by Grant and Osanloo (2014) is that it enables the researcher to identify and construct his or her own worldview on the phenomenon being investigated, thus creating new knowledge, and contributing to the field of study. The conceptual framework is to some extent aligned with the interpretivist paradigm which "concedes that the researcher's own [perspectives] will also have an impact on the research" (Naidoo, 2015, p. 48). This is elaborated further in Chapter Three under the section that deals with the research paradigm. Atinkoye (2015) adds that the conceptual framework offers the simplest way through which the researcher provides remedies to the problems that he or she identified in the study. Because conceptual frameworks are constructed by researchers, Adom et al, (2018) claim that they reflect the researcher's thinking of the entire research process, and in most cases, the relationship between constructs and variables of the research topic is demonstrated through the use of a diagram with arrows to highlight the link. Adom et al, (2018, p.440) state that conceptual framework can also "be an adaption of a model in an existing theory" which the researcher adapts and modifies to suit his or her research purpose. The subsequent conceptual framework draws from the already existing theories or

concepts that underpin each phenomenon, in an attempt to understand the connection amongst the variables being studied. It is important to note that conceptual framing of the study does not mean that the researcher shies away from focal theories that underpin the study, rather it implies that the researcher only selects 'relevant' theories that allow him or her to make sense of the proposition being emphasised by the study. This is corroborated by Adom et al, (2018) who concurred earlier that conceptual framing is linked with concepts, empirical evidence and ***relevant theories*** used in promoting the hypothesis or knowledge advocated by the research, hence it is "the researcher's explanation of how the research problem would be explored" (Adom et al, 2018, p. 439).

Having presented the above discussion, I now present my conceptual framework, based on the concepts and theories that I believe will assist me in analysing the collected data- and to further understand the relationship between ethical leadership, trust, and accountability:



(Cindi, F; 2020)

2.7.2 Ethical leadership and social learning theory

> *Ethical leaders are models of ethical conduct who become the targets of identification and emulation for followers.* (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005, p. 120)

Mthiyane (2018, p. 172) states that various ethical theories have been conceptualized to comprehend this phenomenon of ethical leadership behaviour in organizations, social learning theory being one of them. Social learning theory was originally coined by the prominent psychologist, behaviourist, and philosopher Albert Bandura; from then onwards, several authors from various disciplines have drawn from this theory to philosophize their own studies. This is further substantiated by Usman, Hameed and Manzoor (2018) who state that social

learning theory has also been repeatedly used in ethical leadership research by numerous researchers (including myself) to examine the effects of ethical leadership on work-related behaviours and practices of employees in organisations (Usman, Hameed & Manzoor, 2018, p. 34). Nabavi (2012) explains that the theory of social learning is a based on the notion that "we learn from our interactions with others in a social context" (Nabavi, 2012, p. 05). According to Bandura (1977), this learning occurs through observation, thereafter, manifests itself through imitation. This is correspondingly noted by Nabavi (2012) who concurs that by observing the behaviours of others around them, individuals develop similar behaviours. Nabavi (2012) further highlights that after observing the behaviours, individuals "assimilate and imitate that behaviour [especially if] their observational experiences are positive ones or include rewards related to the observed behaviour" (Nabavi, 2012, p. 05). According to Bandura (1977), people learn from one another through three stages: observation, imitation, and modelling, and that is how social learning fundamentally occurs, as cited in (Nabavi, 2012, p. 06). Congruently, Usman et al, (2018) add that the theory of social learning proposes that "followers learn by observing, learning and imitating from their role models" (Usman et al, 2018, p. 34). Although social learning theory is "increasingly cited as an essential component of sustainable natural resource management and the promotion of desirable behavioural changes", unwanted or destructive repercussions may emerge if models (i.e., the people who are being observed) engage in undesirable behaviour. Leaders are role models who are constantly being observed by those that they lead. The promotion of desirable behaviours in organisations depends vastly on the leader, does he practice what he speaks? Does he model ethical behaviour? The theory of social learning in organization is bound to be effective if the answers to these questions are YES! Likewise, this is corroborated by Brown et al, (2005) who, in their study, propose social learning theory as a theoretical basis for understanding ethical leadership. These authors state that leaders possess the power to influence the ethical conduct of followers via modelling. This simply implies that a leader can evoke or promote any desirable behaviour in the organisation, be it trust or accountability, through exhibiting the sought behaviour through his actions.

The title of my study, '*The role of ethical leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability in schools'* is the accurate embodiment of social learning theory. The ethical leader can arouse trust and accountability by FIRST practicing those aspects (that is, being accountable and trustworthy in his leadership) and conducting themselves in a manner that promotes ethical standards. Through observation, followers will then imitate and model the

same behaviours demonstrated by their leader. This proposition is substantiated by various leadership authors including Usman et al, (2018) who argue that as much as ethical leadership can enable desirable behaviours through modelling, it can also "facilitate the unlearning of destructive behaviours and practices in organisations" (Usman et al, 2018, p. 34). Ethical leadership as *"the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers"* (Brown et al, 2005, p. 120) undeniably draws from Bandura's theory of social learning. This is substantiated by Brown et al, (2005) who in their study, conceptualize ethical leadership in terms of social learning. The review of literature highlighted several aspects of ethical leadership, including honesty, fairness, accountability, trustworthiness, integrity, care, and humanity. If a leader demonstrates these aspects through his actions, followers are more likely to adopt the same behaviours, and consequently, organizations will run smoothly as they should. The application of social learning theory within leadership provides a possible panacea for unethical conduct…however, that is if the 'model' promotes behaviour that is desirable.

2.7.3 Trust and ethical leadership

Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) acknowledge that trust cannot be established overnight, but it is something that takes time to build and sustain. These authors further argue that reaching a state of trust does not occur automatically, but rather "trust is created by the things one does [or fails to do]…trusting is something that we individually do; it is something we make, we create, we build, we maintain, we sustain with our promises, our commitments, our emotions and our sense of our own integrity" (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 110). In their exploration of trust, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) discover that leaders can engage in certain behaviours that promote the atmosphere of trust in the workplace, these behaviours are also congruent with that of Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) who propose the same principles to establish and sustain trust in an organisation or in personal relationships generally. According to these authors, leaders can facilitate or nurture trust through employing various facets that underpin the phenomenon of trust, around which individuals base their trust judgments in relationships- these include vulnerability, benevolence, competence, honesty, openness, and reliability. The subsequent discussion will address each facet and its relevance to the notion of trust. Most noteworthy is the apparent similarity between these characteristics or principles with that of ethical leadership. Drawing from Northhouse' study on ethical leadership, Abun (2014) highlights that to be an ethical leader, "one must be sensitive to the needs of others, treat

others in ways that are just, care for others [i.e., benevolence], treat others fairly with no cheating and lying, [as well as build] harmonious working conditions" (p. 01).

2.7.3.1. Vulnerability

According to a study conducted by O'Lopez on '*Vulnerability in Leadership'*, vulnerability can be defined as the "willingness to be transparent and emotionally exposed in relationship with another individual, with the possibility of being hurt or attacked" (O' Lopez, 2018, p. 04). On the other hand, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) note that the aspect of trust is more relevant when two or more parties (for example, principals and teachers) are dependent on each other for something that they both need or care about. This builds a relationship of interdependence, which requires vulnerability to be at the centre. Vulnerability in relationships (whether personal or professional) is therefore crucial since trust is characterized by one's willingness to 'rely' upon the other, as well as make oneself vulnerable to the other party, and do that with a certain sense of comfort or ease. (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 259). Choosing to be vulnerable (or bare) to your fellow co-worker means accepting the potential risk of being betrayed or harmed by the other party, as substantiated by O'Lopez (2018) earlier. However, it is taking this leap of faith that allows for trust to develop, thus leaders need to foster this kind of behaviour through initially becoming vulnerable to their followers. The element of vulnerability for building trust is again emphasised by Lopez (2018) who states that "vulnerability is a foundational component for building trust between a leader and their followers" (O'Lopez, 2018, p. 03). Whilst vulnerability has always been viewed as a weakness for leaders in the past, in her renowned and enlightening ted-talk, Brene Brown dismisses this myth and claims vulnerability to be the most powerful tool in building trust within an organization.

2.7.3.2 Benevolence

The term benevolence is synonymous to kindness, compassion, generosity, and goodwill. As human beings, we are more likely to trust those who demonstrate such qualities because they possess the 'ethic of care' which makes it less likely for them to hurt others deliberately through their actions. This is further strengthened by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) who elaborate that a starting point for the development of trust is a 'sense of caring or benevolence'. For leaders (i.e., school principals) to earn the trust of those under their leadership (i.e., teachers, learners, and parents), they must initially demonstrate genuine care towards them.

School principals can therefore develop and promote trust in their schools through exhibiting benevolent behaviours such as "showing consideration and sensitivity for employees' needs and interests, acting in a way that protects employees' rights, and refraining from exploiting others for personal gain" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 259). This builds some sense of confidence in employees that their well-being or interests will be protected and not injured by the person whom they chose to trust. The goodwill of a leader is what inspires an atmosphere of trust in an organisation. Ethical and servant leaders are known to be compassionate individuals by nature, hence, trusting such leaders comes naturally to the follower.

2.7.3.3 Competence and Reliability

Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) explain that competence is "the ability to perform a task as expected, according to the appropriate standards or measured expectations" (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 262). To some extent, competence is interlinked with accountability, in the sense that accountability is the glue that ties commitment to the desired outcomes (Proctor, 2018) without any form of destruction along the way. Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) claim that when leaders demonstrate the ability to get the job done, whatever that job may entail, employees are more inclined to 'trust' the leader (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p.263). Reliability on the other hand, involves the ability to keep promises and delivering on what you have promised. This is corroborated by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) who concur that "reliability [involves] following through on decisions and promises" (p. 263). Reliability is not strengthened instantaneously but overtime (with consistency), as the individual demonstrates competence through repeatedly fulfilling promises without disappointment. It is this 'consistency' that builds trust and hope that an individual can be relied upon. Leader or not, being competent and honouring duty at all times is never a simple task but one that requires strong commitment to the end result. Both competence and reliability are crucial elements for establishing trust in an organization. Whilst it is apparent that competence is the expertise to perform the task, reliability is needed to ensure that 'the task' is accomplished as it involves following through on the decisions and promises made. It is therefore ideal to argue that competence and reliability are compatible with one another.

2.7.3.4 Honesty

Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) assert that honesty is a fundamental aspect of trust. To be trusted or trustworthy, leaders need to be honest in their interactions with their subordinates.

For Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015), honest behaviour is manifested through the "integrity of character, authenticity and accountability for one's actions" (p. 260). Honesty involves the ability to tell the absolute truth…in reality, this is not an easy thing to do as individuals tend to shy away from telling the truth for a variety of reasons. Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) reveal that honesty entails more than just the ability to tell the truth, it also includes the 'sense of integrity and authenticity of behaviour' (p. 260). Practising what you preach is the true essence of integrity- for Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015), leaders earn the reputation of integrity by telling the truth, as well as consistently matching their words with deeds (i.e. keeping promises). Authenticity is the combination of vulnerability and accountability, this is elaborated further by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) who ascertain that "authenticity has to do with a willingness to be oneself [i.e., bare, vulnerable]- to truthfully represent one's beliefs and feelings, as well as owning up to one's foibles [i.e., accountability]" (p. 260). Being authentic remains a challenge since vulnerability is still stigmatized as a weakness for leaders and taking blame for idiosyncrasies means sacrificing one's pride, which individuals dread.

2.7.3.5 Openness and Transparency

Whilst openness is synonyms to honesty, these aspects are slightly different in that openness refers to "the extent to which relevant information is not withheld or exploited to ensure reciprocal trust and confidence" (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 111). Openness in this sense means being transparent with useful information that might be of help to others or bring about change. It also enables the flow of communication between two parties. In their study, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) realize that leaders often withhold information "as a way to maintain power and manipulate employees" (p.261). However, withholding information only leads to suspicion or distrust as individuals wonder why the information is hidden in the first place. Brown et al, (2005) equally highlight that ethical leaders are those who promote transparency through "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct… through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (p. 120). Furthermore, the spirit of openness and transparency is also advocated by the Batho Pele principles, which highlight that "citizens should [always] be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive…as well as be told how departments are run, how much they cost and who is in charge" (Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa).

2.7.4 Accountability and ethical leadership

According to Pearson (2013), the conceptual definition of accountability is divided into two ideologies: first, accountability as being 'responsible and proactive (i.e., explaining, justifying and remedying) the delivery of actions. Secondly, accountability as the 'compliance with respect to internal and external criteria defined by stakeholders' (Pearson, 2013, p. 05). This distinction is also noted by Bovens (2010) who views accountability as a virtue (i.e., being a responsible individual), and accountability as a mechanism or tool used to ensure compliance (Bovens, 2010, p. 01). The concept of accountability thus refers to complying with the rules and principles and taking responsibilities for one's actions or outcomes (whether positive or negative). Moreover, Pearson (2013) states that accountability is underpinned by 'conceptual attributes' that are used across different multidisciplinary domains and these include: transparency, responsibility, liability, remediation, verifiability, observability and attributability. Congruent with Pearson (2013), Al-Rashadi, Dick and Storey (2015) identify the very same components and explain their significance in terms of achieving accountability in organisations. Al-Rashadi et al, (2015) narrow down these concepts that elicit and underpin accountability into four central components, which are: responsibility, transparency, assurance, and remediation. The subsequent discussion will look at each component and its role in promoting a culture of accountability in organisations.

2.7.4.1 Responsibility

Whilst accountability is often considered synonymous with accountability, Pearson (2013) clarifies that responsibility is "the state of being assigned to take action to ensure conformity to a particular set of policies or rules" (Pearson, 2013, p. 14). This idea of responsibility as ensuring conformity is also corroborated by Al-Rashidi et al, (2015) who affirm that "responsibility would be achievable by ensuring the existence of obligatory and enforceable written policies and procedures…." (p. 06). Due to the misconception surrounding the distinction between accountability and responsibility, McGrath and Whitty (2018) conducted a study to clarify the difference between the two concepts. These authors state that responsibility involves 'doing' whilst accountability involves 'reporting' (McGrath and Whitty, 2018, p. 689). The review of literature on accountability, however, appears to combine these concepts into one, as accountability is frequently referred to as both taking responsibility for one's actions, as well as complying with the rules. Nonetheless, responsibility or the state of being responsible remains an essential attribute for fostering accountability in organisations.

2.7.4.2 Transparency

Not only is transparency vital for nurturing trust (as demonstrated earlier), but it is also vital for cultivating a culture of accountability. For Pearson (2013), transparency is the capability to give an account of, or providing visibility of, how organisations or leaders conform to the governing rules and commitments. To ensure transparency in the context of accountability, Al-Rashadi et al, (2015) suggest that "information should be appropriately conveyed to both client organisations and regulators in a rigorous cos [and] cost effective manner" (p. 09). This purely implies that organisations should be completely open about the processes of decision-making and implementation of plans, in a manner that is free of secrecy and privacy. Congruent with Al-Rashadi et al, (2015), the report conducted by Transparency International (2011) concurs that transparency "involves clear and public disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions by governments, companies, organisations and individual. It is the principle that public affairs need to be conducted in the open" (p. 4). Usually, the questions formulated to measure transparency focus on financial management, financial record keeping, and stakeholder knowledge of schools' financial status…this is to ensure that public funds are employed appropriately, as well as limit corruption or the maladministration of public funds. Ball (2009) reveals that the definition of transparency is underpinned by three metaphors, one being "transparency as a public value embraced by society to counter corruption" (p. 2). The first metaphor is relevant in this context as it is subtly intertwined with accountability. Transparency and accountability serve as apparatuses to counter corruption in organisations.

2.7.4.3 Assurance

For Al-Rashadi et al, (2015), assurance involves the compliance with "governance and ethical measurements, along with promoting the implementation of practical mechanisms [which are] commonly considered as key parts of accountability processes and procedures" (p. 07). Given that the term assurance is synonymous to 'word of honour', 'promise', 'pledge', 'oath' and so on, assurance would therefore be a positive declaration or pledge intended to give confidence that a promise will be fulfilled. With declaration, comes accountability. Failure to honour one's declaration or comply with ethical measurements must be followed by an account or explanation as to why the individual or organisation failed to honour their word. Assurance thus serves to keep individuals or organisations liable for their actions.

2.7.4.4 Remediation

Failure to honour one's word is not only followed by an account but also a remedy to fix the problem. This is also justified by Pearson (2013) who proclaims that accountability is the state of accepting allocated responsibilities, explaining, and demonstrating compliance to stakeholders [as well as] ***remedying*** any failure to act properly" (p. 14). Pearson (2013) further alludes that remedying involves taking corrective measures and providing a remedy for any party affected or harmed, by the organisation or individual's failure to comply with the governing norms. Drawing from The Centre for Information Policy and Leadership, Al-Rashadi et al, (2015) concur that accountable organisations ought to promote a suitable practice in correction and redress, in the case of failure and misconduct (p. 9). Remediation strengthens accountability in the sense that failure to comply with the norms or misconduct is not left unattended but there are mechanisms in place to tackle cases of failure and misconduct.

2.8 Chapter summary

The focus of this chapter was to review literature pertaining to ethical leadership and its role in developing trust and accountability in organisations. The chapter began with a discussion of the conceptualisation of ethical leadership, this was subsequently followed by a brief review of the conceptualisation of trust and accountability. A claim regarding the correlation between these three interrelated concepts was proposed and justified. This chapter further reviewed the distinction between theoretical and conceptual framing, with the intention to clear the misconception, as well as select and justify the appropriate framework for this study. I selected a conceptual framework and demonstrated how the concepts underpinning ethical leadership are to some extent congruent with those underpinning trust and accountability. The three concepts share analogous principles, and through social learning theory at the centre, the leader holds the power to develop and promote both trust and accountability, by first, modelling ethical behaviour himself.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was devoted to literature review as well as the conceptual framework pertinent to the study. The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the research design and methodology of this study. Specifically, the chapter commences with the research paradigm, followed by the research design and methodology, the sampling, the data generation and analysis, issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study. This chapter concludes with the discussion of the limitations of the study and a chapter summary.

3.2 Research paradigm

Taylor and Medina (2013, p.1) posit that during the 20th century, paradigm wars (or debates) emerged amongst researchers, "arguing for the superiority of their chosen paradigm.". Consequently, this led to 'paradigm dialogues' which served as enlightenment to different researchers that, every "method of research has its own philosophy. Whatever type of educational research it might be, the goal…is to generate such knowledge that describes, predicts, improves [and] explains…a practice related to human behaviour or educational phenomenon" (Lakshmi, 2019, p.1) and thus, researchers realized that all research paradigms are equally important. Prior to discussing the selected paradigm of this study, the concept 'paradigm' needs clarification.

Although various authors have attempted to explain what a paradigm is, these conceptualisations often narrow down to perceiving a paradigm as a 'world view'. For instance, Willis (2007, p.08) defines a paradigm as a "comprehensive belief system, world view, or framework that guides research and practice in a field" as cited in (Taylor & Medina, 2013, p.02). Likewise, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) explain that in educational research, the term paradigm is used to describe the researcher's 'world view'. The term paradigm is further elaborated by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) who states that a research paradigm echoes the "researcher's beliefs about the world he or she lives in and wants to live in. It constitutes the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how a researcher sees the world, and how he or she interprets and acts within that world" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 26). Simply put, a paradigm could be understood as a basic set of beliefs that drive research practice and investigation. This

concurs with Bunnis and Kelly (2010) who reiterate the point that paradigms direct and lead the research process (Naidoo, 2015, p. 47).

Given that paradigms are 'human constructions' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000), they form an integral part of research because "they provide beliefs…which influence what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the results of study should be interpreted" (Kivunja et al, 2017, p.26). These researchers also highlight that paradigms are crucial in research because they tell us how meaning will be constructed from the data that will be gathered, based on the researcher's experiences. Furthermore, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) hold that there are several paradigms that have been framed by various researchers and can be assembled into three main taxonomies, that is, the positivist, the interpretivist or critical paradigms. This research study is underpinned by the interpretivist paradigm, also known as the constructivist paradigm. Leaders in the field of paradigmatic studies such as Guba and Lincoln (1989) state that the essential purpose of the interpretivist paradigm is to "understand the subjective world of human experience" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 33). This concurs with Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) who posit that the central purpose of the interpretivist paradigm is to "emphatically understand the subjective world of the participant's lived experience". The distinctiveness of this approach lies in the fact that it attempts to look beyond the surface. The interpretivist approach tries to 'get inside the head of the subject being studied' in search for a deeper meaning. Within this approach, emphasis is placed on understanding the individual and their interpretation of the world around them. Hence, Bogdan and Biklen (1998) put forth that "the key tent of the interpretivist paradigm is that reality is socially constructed."

This study integrates both the ***subjectivist epistemology*** and ***naturalist methodology***. Punch (2005) elucidates that subjectivist epistemology implies that the researcher makes meaning of data through their "own thinking and cognitive processes informed by their interactions with participants" as cited in (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p.33). The interpretivist approach is therefore relevant to this study because it explores different educators' conceptualisations of their role as ethical leaders in developing and promoting trust and accountability in schools. This was done as an attempt to understand if educators were conscious of their role as ethical leaders or the fact that being ethical in practice implicitly laid the foundation for trust and accountability in the workplace (which is of paramount importance). Furthermore, the study endeavoured to understand the causes behind the lack of trust and accountability in schools today, in order to find potential measures to re-establish trust and strengthen accountability. Moreover, the study realizes that the participant's conceptualisations and interpretations of

their role as ethical leaders in developing trust and accountability are dissimilar. The socially constructed or multiple realities of each participant concerning the above were idiosyncratic but relevant in increasing the knowledge about the correlation between ethical leadership, trust and accountability in South African schools. The study also considered the contextual factors and realizes that schools are not the same but have different cultures imbedded in them; hence the findings of this study cannot be universalized. This is further corroborated by Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (2000) who argue that "since by definition, interpretivist research is context-specific, with regard to locale and participants, generalisability of the findings of research conducted within the interpretivist paradigm is practically impossible". This study was empirical as all the information gathered was researched directly and mainly from the subjective perspectives and experiences of principals and teachers from the two schools located in Johannesburg Central District.

3.3 Research design

The research design is defined as the methodical process of accumulating and rationally evaluating empirical data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) and involves the accumulation, examination and interpretation of data in order to comprehend a phenomenon (Williams, 2007). Furthermore, a research design is "a broad, general plan that outlines all the details, steps and methods on how empirical data will be generated in order to answer the research questions of the study" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p.2). Consequently, a research design includes information regarding WHERE and WHEN the study took place. It further includes the details of the participants in the study and justification for choosing those participants. Similarly, it includes all the methods of data generation and analysis that was used in the study. Baxter and Jack (2010, p.544) elucidate that a qualitative case study is "an approach that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources…this ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood." In addition, Crabtree and Miller (2000) state that one of the advantages of utilizing a case study is that it brings a close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, whilst also enabling participants to share their stories. This is further reinforced by Baxter and Jack (2010) who coincide that case studies prescribe an on-site interaction between the researcher and participants. A case study thus aligns with the interpretivist or constructivist paradigm which assumes that truth is relative and dependent upon one's perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2010, p. 546). Consequently, this

research adopted a case study as a research design because it focused on gaining insights on a phenomenon (that is, ethical school leadership) and adopted a social interpretivism or constructivism as a research paradigm. Because qualitative case studies are conducted within "real-life contemporary contexts or setting" (Yin, 2009), this case study design was a 'naturalistic inquiry' that sought to find in-depth conceptualizations of a social phenomenon through direct experiences of human beings (in this case, teachers and principals) as "meaning-making agents in their everyday lives" (Klenke, 2016).

In addition, Stake (2015) suggests that in order to effectively implement the case study approach, the researcher needs to have an exclusive degree of interaction with participants…and the research audience, as cited in (Marrelli, 2019, p. 02). To achieve this, the researcher ought to collaborate closely with the participants to "collect the data, then select and structure the ideas to include in the report, developing themes (and sub-themes if they emerge), highlighting [key] ideas, subordinating or eliminating others, and finally connecting the ideas and embedding them in a narrative context" (Marrelli, 2019, p.02). A (qualitative) case study report therefore reflects the subjective meanings of events and relationships both as voiced by the participant and the researcher, in the form of a story. Kabir (2016) however emphasizes that a "case study is not itself a research method, but researchers select methods of data collection and analysis that will generate [data] suitable for case studies such as qualitative techniques, personal notes or official documents" (Kabir, 2016, p. 253). The data collected can also be analysed using different theories such as grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, text interpretation (Kabir, 2016). The data collected for the purpose of the study was analyzed through 'text interpretation', which then unfolds into themes and sub-themes. This form of interpretation is also called a thematic analysis, which will be elaborated further on the data analysis section. I purposefully chose a case study as a research design because not only did it provide detailed and focused data about the teachers and principal's lived experiences of ethical school leadership; but also allowed for varied and extensive data analysis and collection. In addition, the selection of a case study was influenced by the fact that "case studies offer rich perspectives and insights that can lead to in-depth understanding of variables, issues, and problems" (Marrelli, 2019).

Baxter and Jack (2010, p.544) posit that multiple case studies can either be used to (a) predict similar results (i.e., a literal replication) or (b) predict contrasting results for a predictable reason (i.e., a theoretical replication). This study sought to predict similar results (through

finding congruence amongst the participant's conceptualizations) so as to strengthen the purpose of the study which is to authenticate the idea that ethical leadership plays a vital role in developing trust and promoting accountability in schools. Furthermore, by conducting a multiple case study, the role of ethical school leadership was analysed in two different schools in order to seek patterns and causes for behavior and thus draw comparisons and conclusions. The hope is that learning gained from studying these two can be generalized to many others (Kabir, 2016). This is further corroborated by Marrelli (2019) who coincides that in a multiple case study, "the individual cases would be compared to identify similarities and differences among the cases and arrive at conclusions" (Marrelli, 2019, p. 03).

3.4 Research methodology

Igwenagu (2016) defines research methodology as "the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study [and that] typically, it encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques (Igwenagu, 2016, p.04). This is congruent with Makenzie and Knipe (2006) who describe the term methodology as a "set of ideals, dogmas, theories, philosophies and principles on which a specific research approach is based". According to Williams (2007), Tuli (2010) and Lee (2012), the three most common methodologies in research are the quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches. This study undertakes the qualitative study to research. Elkatawneh (2016) states that the purpose of qualitative research is to explore the meaning of the people's experiences, the meaning of people's culture, and how the people view a particular issue or case. Likewise, Tuli (2010) concurs that qualitative research attempts to facilitate a greater understanding of social structures by examining the motivating factors that guide people's behaviour.

Since qualitative research is of an explorative nature, Elkatawneh (2016) posits that research questions usually start with words such as WHAT or HOW. This is evident in the key research questions presented in Chapter One of the study. Furthermore, the qualitative methodology serves as an effective approach for this research because this study attempts to explore the role of ethical school leadership in developing and promoting trust and accountability, from the perspectives and experiences of teachers and principals. Congruent with the interpretivist approach, Wellington (2000), Sale et al (2002), Krauss (2005); Creswell, 2007 and Lee (2012) concur that qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities, knowledge is subjective and that many truths exist, as cited in (Elkataweh, 2016, p. 3) The structure of this

study is based on the personal experiences and understandings of teachers and principals concerning their role as ethical school leaders in developing trust and accountability. Consequently, this research explored multiple realities and truths of ethical school leadership using the subjective knowledge of participants. Thus, aligning this study with the interpretivist paradigm, and accordingly with the qualitative approach to research. This study utilized several different research methods, which are explained in detail below. This includes the methods of sampling, along with data generation and analysis strategies. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues, as well as limitations of the study, research budget and schedule are also discussed.

3.5 Sampling

Sampling can be defined as "the process of selecting units (e.g., people, organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen" (Trachoma, 2006). Usually, the population is too large for the researcher to review all it's members (i.e., participants), hence a small but carefully chosen sample can be used to represent the population. The sample echoes and represents the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. Sampling in research is necessary because often researchers do not have enough time, resources, or money to study the whole population. Cohen, et al., (2011) and Petty, Thompson &Stew. (2012) posit that there are many different methods of sampling that can be used depending on the methodology chosen for the research. Alvi (2016) states that sampling techniques are broadly categorized into two major types, that is probability and non-probability sampling methods.

The following methods of sampling are included in the non-probability sampling: volunteer, convenient, purposive, quota, snowball, matched, and genealogy-based sampling (Alvi, 2016, p. 28). Convenient sampling (also known as accidental or opportunity sampling) includes those participants that are easy or convenient to approach. With convenient sampling, Alvi (2016, p.29) states that "any member or the target population who is available at the moment is approached. He or she is asked for participation in the research; if [the participant] shows consent, the investigation is done" (Alvi, 2016, p. 29). Convenient sampling is advantageous because it is inexpensive, less time consuming (as the sample is easy and quick to approach) and it takes fewer efforts. This is further corroborated by Cohen, et al., (2011) and Petty, et al., (2012) who assert that convenience sampling involves participants being chosen because of convenience and ease. This study utilized convenient sampling of two secondary schools located in Johannesburg Central District for the generation of data. I chose these two schools

because I am a teacher in one of the schools, which allowed me to gain easier access. Additionally, I am acquainted with the teachers at the school because they are my colleagues and beyond this research, we regularly discuss education issues within the school- this prior knowledge and personal encounters with the participants implicitly contributed to the convenience of sampling and solidified the quality of findings or data. The second school selected for the study is fortunately a neighbouring school, I walked to the school for data collection during lunch. Some of the teachers, I have had the opportunity to meet and converse with them during workshops. This familiarity allowed for an open-ended, flowing interview process. Secondary schools were specifically selected because they would probably share a mutual understanding of ethical dilemmas or issues. Moreover, the reason behind selecting these two schools was to compare data from two different school contexts, in order to investigate if there were recurring themes or any congruence between the participant's responses. In total, two principals were interviewed (one from each school), eight post-level one teachers (four from each school) and four HODs (two from each school) a total number of fourteen participants were interviewed for this study. The schools and participants of the study were therefore conveniently (and to some extent) purposefully sampled.

3.6 Data generation methods

Data generation methods refer to the "systematic procedures used for data generation and analysis" (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This is further corroborated by Walliman (2011) who posits that research methods are the tools and techniques that one uses for doing research. Likewise, Given (2018, p.1) explains that data generation refers to "theory and methods used by researchers to [engender] data from a sampled source in a qualitative study." This concurs with Kabir (2016) who consents that the process of data generation involves gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in such a way that it enables the researcher to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate results (Kabir, 2016, p.202). According to Uher (2018), data generation methods differ across the empirical sciences. He further claims that whilst physicists generate their data through automated technologies, this is quite impossible for behavioural, psychological, and social scientists, because they have to explore a precise phenomenon that is not technical accessible, such as social beliefs, attitudes, values. In this instance, a behavioural or social scientist ought to generate data primarily through interaction with persons (Uher, 2018, p. 01).

In addition, whilst data collection methods vary by discipline, the end goal still remains the same-which is "to capture quality evidence that then translates to rich data analysis and allows the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that have been posed" (Kabir, 2016, p. 202). He further asserts that quite often (but not always), this data captures feelings, emotions or subjective perceptions of participants pertaining to a certain phenomenon. As a result, this data cannot be generalized to participants beyond the study as it only reflects the perceptions of the sample selected (Kabir, 2016, p.202). Qualitative data collection often tends to be open-ended and less structured. This form of data collections relies heavily on interactive interviews. The researcher may even use triangulation (i.e., employing multiple data collection methods) to strengthen the credibility of their findings (Kabir, 2016, p.202). This study is in sync with the above attributes because 'qualitative' data collection methods were utilized for the purpose of this study. Naidoo (2015) elaborates that in a qualitative study, primary data (i.e., data collected from first-hand experience) is usually generated through semi-structured interviews; also referred to as standard open-ended interviews. Secondary data (i.e., data collected from a source that has already been published) is typically generated by researching relevant documents and literature. Likewise, Kabir (2016) concurs that the most commonly used data collection methods in a qualitative study include in-depth (or semi-structured) interviews, case-studies, and document review. This study utilized triangulation by incorporating all three methods (semi-structured interviews, documents reviews and observations) to generate data.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

According to Adams (2018, p.493), semi structured interviews capture the conversation between the researcher and the participant- they incorporate both closed and open-ended questions which subsequently lead to follow-up 'why' or 'how' questions. The dialogue between the researcher and the participant is centred around the study topic rather than strictly adhering to rigorous questions- thus the use of open-ended questions.

Since the dialogue is followed by questions such as 'how' or 'why', this allows for a deeper analysis and understanding of the phenomenon being researched and may delve into (or uncover) totally unforeseen issues (Adams, 2015, p. 493). Qualitative 'open-ended' semi-structured interviews, also known as 'conversations with a purpose' as put forth by Burgess (1984, p. 102) were therefore used to generate in-depth information regarding participants' conceptualizations, practices, and experiences of the role of ethical leadership in promoting

trust and accountability in schools. The interviews, with the permission of the participants were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. The participants in this study constituted of the two school principals, eight experienced and novice post level one teachers, as well as four heads of department (HODs) from two secondary schools. The interview process began with a pre-interview meeting with each participant, this was done purposefully to establish a bond and trusting relationship and set the tone for the actual interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The pre-interview played a crucial role, especially with the second school as I was not completely familiar with the educators in the school. Prior to the interview, participants were also provided with a letter detailing the research and its purpose. The interviews in this study took place at the respective schools of the participants and took the form of direct or face-to-face interviews. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, each interview commenced with a brief summary of the main objectives of the interview, as well as emphasizing to the participants that the information shared will be utilized solely for study purposes and that pseudonyms will be employed to maintain anonymity (Cohen, et al., 2011). The participants were thereafter given a consent form to sign as suggested by (Wahyuni, 2012). Each interview was no longer than twenty minutes in order to sustain the maximum attention and not inconvenience the participants in any way (Wahyuni, 2012; Petty, et al., 2012). Mason (2002, p.39) advocates that one of the possible reasons one might wish to utilize qualitative semi-structured interviewing as a method is because 'your ontological position suggests that people's perspectives, conceptualizations and experiences are meaningful properties of the social reality of which your research questions are designed to explore' (Mason, 2002, p.39).

3.6.2 Documents reviews

Kabir (2016) posits that secondary data is the "data that is collected from the primary sources which can be used in the current research study" (Kabir, 2016, p. 273). Collecting secondary data through documents review could be compared to conducting a desktop study whereby the researcher reviews previous literature done on the same topic to strengthen their study. Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe document analysis as "a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents (both printed and electronic) …in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge" as cited in (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). Petty, Thompson and Stew (2012) however elaborate that secondary data through document analysis goes beyond merely reviewing literature but as well as other documents that could establish more understanding and knowledge about the topic of study. This is further corroborated by

Petty et al, (2012) who concur that documents review involves the "examination, study and analysis of usually written documents relevant to the research". Kabir (2016) states that collecting secondary data through documents review can be beneficial in that it often takes considerably less time than collecting primary data where the researcher gathers every information from scratch (Kabir, 2016, p. 273). Furthermore, Bowen (2009, p. 28) argues that document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a "means of triangulation [which is the amalgamation] of different methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" as cited in (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). Similarly, Creswell (2007) advocates the use of document reviews to "facilitate the triangulation of data generated from interviews with the participants of the study". Thus, this study ***'triangulates'*** three data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, case-studies and document reviews. Bowen (2009) explains that the method of triangulation expects the researcher to "draw upon multiple (at least two) sources of evidence; that is, to seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods" (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). The documents that were reviewed for the purpose of this study was the previous literature on ethical school leadership, trust, and accountability- this was done to compare the findings; as well as identify the gaps found in previous studies as means to address them. The SACE code of professional ethics, Batho-Pele principles and the South African Constitution or Bill of Rights were also revisited in order to understand the legislative framework underpinning and upholding the study.

3.6.3 Observations

Marshall and Rossman (1989, p. 79) describe observations as "the systematic description of the events, behaviors, and artifacts of a social setting" as cited in Kawulich (2012, p. 2). According to Kawulich (2012), there are two major types of observations- that is participant and direct observations, participant observation includes "being in the setting under study as both observer and participant [whilst] direct observation involves observing without interacting with the objects or people under study in the setting" (Kawulich, 2012, p. 3). Given that I am a teacher in one of the studied schools, 'participant' observation was used to generate and analyse data. With participant observation, the researcher's position or stance is influenced by the daily or frequent interactions one has with their participants. Likewise, Kawulich (2012, p. 3) adds that participant observation is effective in that it allows the researcher to "understand the participants' world by actively engaging in activities in which participants typically are

involved". As a researcher, I am not a participant of the study however I have had the opportunity to 'observe' and witness first-hand some of the experiences shared by the participants- thus strengthening my findings.

3.7 Data analysis

Krauss (2005), Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, p. 01) explicate that qualitative data analysis "involves establishing and constructing meaning from the generated data by inductive processes". Wahyuni (2012) and Cohen, et al. (2011) also concur that qualitative data analysis involves making deductions and suppositions from raw data that has been taken apart and reconstructed. This is further corroborated by Sunday (2019) who elaborates that qualitative data analysis is the range of processes and procedures whereby we move from the qualitative data that have been collected, into some form of explanation, understanding or *interpretation* of the people and situations we are investigating" (Sunday, 2019, p. 19). Given that qualitative data analysis is driven by the interpretivist philosophy, Sunday (2019) highlights that "the idea is to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data" (Sunday, 2019). Simply put, data analysis is what happens after the data has been collected. Wellington (2000), Wahyuni (2012), O'Connor and Gibson (2003) assert that the first step in data analysis involves organizing the data. O'Connor and Gibson (2003) advise that the "best way to organise one's data is to go back to the interview schedule, identify and differentiate between the questions you are trying to answer, and those that were simply included in the interview guide as important, but for the moment, not essential." In addition, Sunday (2019) states that the organisation of data involves transcribing data, translating data, data cleaning and labeling data (for structuring and familiarization).

To analyze my data, I transcribed all the audio-taped interviews with the fourteen participants. I also translated the audio-taped recordings into the language of instruction English, in cases where the participants decided to code-switch. I further separated the transcriptions into three: those of teachers, HODs and principals. Questions that had the potential to emerge into themes were highlighted. The data from the interviews was cleaned by removing all information that reveals the names of the participants and schools involved in the study. The second step in data analysis is finding and organizing ideas and concepts (Sunday, 2019). Marshall and Ross (1995, p.114) enlighten that "identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language, and patterns of belief that link people and settings together is the most intellectually challenging phase of the analysis and one that can integrate the entire endeavor" as cited in (Sunday, 2019,

p.68). This step is centred around finding congruence within the participant's responses. This is further corroborated by Sunday (2019) who alludes that when analyzing data, the researcher may find that specific words or ideas keep coming up (i.e., congruence). This to some extent has the power to authenticate the phenomenon being investigated. This study advocates that the philosophy of ethical leadership implicitly plays a crucial role in developing trust and accountability in schools. The responses of participants seemed to be aligned with the position made by this study. The third step in data analysis is building over-arching themes in the data (Sunday, 2019).

This qualitative study utilised what is known as a thematic data analysis to generate themes from interview data. A thematic analysis involves the "systematic identification of themes and patterns that develop and arise from the data as it is disassembled and re-organised" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Cohen, et al., 2011; Petty, et al., 2012; Wahyuni, 2012). I specifically selected this method of data analysis as it provided a suitable set of methodical procedures for extracting important and relevant issues from data generated. Sunday (2019) states that that fourth step in data analysis involves ensuring reliability and validity in the data analysis and in the findings. This step is discussed in-depth on the next section, with issues of trustworthiness. To ensure validity and reliability; trustworthiness issues of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability were effectively managed within this study. Lastly, step five involves finding possible and plausible explanations of the findings (Sunday, 2019, p. 76). The researcher needs to start by making a summary of the findings and themes; and determine whether these findings refute or corroborate with literature. Sunday (2019) further states that when analyzing data, the researcher should also be able to answer the following questions: "where there any major surprises in the findings? How are they different or similar to what is stated in the literature from other similar studies?" (Sunday, 2019, p.76). To find the possible answers to these questions, I went back to review my literature, in order to find the corroborations or refutations between findings and the literature presented in Chapter Two of the study.

3.8 Issues of trustworthiness

Petty et al, (2012) highlight that in a qualitative study - the faith, assurance, and trust one can have in the research including its findings is referred to as trustworthiness. Gunuwan (2015, p. 4) alludes that trustworthiness becomes a matter of persuasion whereby the researcher is viewed as having made those practices visible and therefore auditable". Similarly, Lincoln-

Guba (1985) concurs that the issue of trustworthiness lies in finding responses to the following inquiries: "how can the [researcher] persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of the study are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? (Lincoln-Guba, 1985, p.29. Gunuwan (2015, p. 4) further argues that validity in qualitative studies should not be measures in terms of truth or value as those are for the positivists. Given that this qualitative study adopts the interpretivist paradigm, it assumes the position that knowledge is subjective and socially constructed (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p.33). Hence a qualitative study is trustworthy if and only if the reader of the research report judges it to be so (Gunuwan, 2015). Elo, Kaariainen, Kantse, Polki, Utriainen and Kyngas (2016) state that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study is often presented by using terms such as credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability, and confirmability (Elo et al, 2016, p. 1). These are also known as the trustworthiness criteria. The trustworthiness issues of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability are to a certain degree effectively managed within this study. This is elaborated in the following discussion:

3.8.1 Credibility

Shenton (2004) highlights that ensuring credibility is one of the most important aspects in establishing trustworthiness. Credibility of the study can be warranted through "adoption of the research methods which are well established…the development of an early familiarity with the culture of participating organisations [prior data collection] … random sampling of individuals to serve as informants, triangulation, tactics to help ensure honesty in informants when contributing data, peer scrutiny of the research project…examination of previous research findings" (Shenton, 2004, pp.64-65). Credibility in this study was ensured through selecting a suitable methodology, instrumentation, and sample. Given that I work as a teacher in one of the participating schools, this has without doubt familiarized me with the culture of the school. Moreover, I have also managed to build amicable relationships with my colleagues. This familiarisation was crucial because it engendered what Shenton (2004, p. 65) refer to as 'prolonged engagement' between the researcher and the participants; this form of engagement enables the researcher "to gain an adequate understanding of an organization and to establish a relationship of trust between the parties". Credibility was also ensured in this research study by triangulation of data generated through semi-structured interviews, case-studies and document reviews. As mentioned earlier, Cohen et al, (2011) elaborate that triangulation involves the use of two or more data generation methods in the research. Shenton (2004)

highlights that each potential participant should be given an opportunity to refuse to participate in the study to ensure that the data collection process involves only those who are genuinely willing to take part and prepared to offer information freely. It is also important for the researcher to make it clear to the participant that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, if ever they feel the need to (Shenton, 2004, p.45). Prior to conducting interviews, permission or consent letters informing the participants about the research were issued to the educators. The letters further emphasized that participation is voluntary and that withdrawal from the study will not lead to any consequences. The opportunity to review or scrutinise the project (once complete) by colleagues, peers and academics was also encouraged. The review of previous research conducted on the role of ethical leadership in developing trust and accountability in organizations was also studied to find congruence within findings.

3.8.2 Dependability

Korstjens and Moser (2018, p.120) state that dependability refers to "the stability of findings over time…it involves participants evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data as received from participants of the study". Similarly, Petty et al, (2012) concur that dependability refers to "the measures to which a study can be replicated or repeated". Korstjens and Moser (2018, p. 121) further explain that the dependability of the study can be warranted though "transparently describing the research steps taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of the findings…the records of the research path are [also] kept throughout the study". Therefore, the dependability of this study was strengthened by transparently revealing the steps taken during the research process, as demonstrated through the research design and methodology.

3.8.3 Transferability

Synonymous to its name, Korstjens and Moser (2018) assert that transferability is the extent to which the findings of the study can be 'transferred' to other contexts or settings with other participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). This can be achieved by not only describing the behaviors and experiences of participants, but their 'context' as well, so that the behavior and experiences become meaningful to the reader (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 122). Transferability in this study was reinforced by comprehensive explanations of the phenomenon, together with the literature. Furthermore, the context of the two schools being

investigated was also taken into account to see whether it had an influence on the behavior and experiences of participants.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is referred to as an extent to which the findings of the study could be confirmed by other researchers. Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that the interpretation of data and findings is not creations of the researcher's imagination, but evidently derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 122). Slightly similar to dependability, confirmability can also be warranted through recording or providing a detailed step-by-step process of data analysis. To ensure that the findings were not a reflection of the researcher's imagination; direct, verbatim quotations of the participant's responses were included in the study to back up the interpretations. The audio-taped interviews, along with transcriptions were safely kept.

3.9 Ethical issues

Cohen, et al, (2011) elucidate that ethics involve being sensitive to the rights of research participants and prioritising respect for individuals above the need for research. Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 12) concur that "the researcher is ethically and legally responsible for protecting the interests and well-being of the participants of a study". As such, I understood that the questions being posed could reveal some sensitive information and therefore I ensured that the information provided by the participants during interviews and questionnaires is be kept confidential and pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity in the research report. To ensure anonymity throughout the data collection process, interviews were held in a private area (office or empty classroom) where no intrusion took place. To ensue confidentiality, I asked permission from the participants to use an empty office or classroom to conduct interviews and not share the information discussed with anyone else (i.e. this was clearly communicated to participants in the permission letters and consent forms that participants had to sign prior to issuing out questionnaires and conduction interviews- this is reinforced by Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011) who posit that permission to generate data should be requested from all participants and an informed consent letter supported by the principles of autonomy, non-maleficence and beneficence issued to all participants. To further protect the rights of participants and ensure privacy, the information discussed was recorded in a 'password' encrypted audio tape so that no one else will have access to the data but myself. Data collected was stored in my office cupboard that is always locked; as well as saved in my

'password' encrypted laptop. Ethics clearance to conduct this research was approved by the Research Committee of the University of the Witwatersrand School of Education. Permission to conduct research in schools was also requested and granted by the Gauteng Department of Education

3.10 Chapter summary

The focal purpose of this chapter was to clarify the research design and methodology employed in this study and justify why these methods were precisely chosen. The qualitative approach, interpretivist paradigm, and a multiple case study design were discussed in detail together with their relevancy to the study. The chapter also examined the data generation methods which involved triangulating semi-structured interviews, case studies and documents analysis and justified how these methods could facilitate the generation of relevant data. The value of thematic data analysis within the context of the research was subsequently investigated. This was then followed by an elucidation of relevant issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues whilst simultaneously assessing how the study effectively managed them. Finally, the limitations of the study were outlined. The next chapter presents, discusses, and analyses the findings that emerged from the data.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explained and justified the research design and methodology employed in this study. This chapter focusses on the discussion of data generated from semi-structured interviews, document reviews and through observations conducted in two secondary schools. The presentation and discussion of findings is organised according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data (i.e., thematic data analysis). Direct or verbatim quotes are used throughout the presentation to reinforce and corroborate the research findings. Furthermore, the findings are explored, analysed, and construed within the context of the literature reviewed and the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter Two.

4.2 Data presentation and discussion

The following data is presented under themes that developed through the analysis of interview transcripts as well as other methods that were used to generate data (that is, document reviews and observations).

4. 2. 1 Conceptualisations of ethical leadership in schools

The data generated from semi-structured open-ended interviews indicates that school educators in both the investigated schools possess a thorough and in-depth understanding of what ethics entail- as such they are able to liken the concept of ethics and leadership to explain what ethical leadership means to them. Key words that are synonymous to ethics or ethical leadership in literature such as ‘morals’, ‘attitudes’, ‘professionalism’, ‘being conscious of what is right or wrong’, ‘values’ are noted and congruent within the participant’s responses. Participants are in sync with the notion that ethical leadership has to do with leading in a manner that upholds, promotes, or adheres to the principles and standards of ethical conduct in the organisation. Ms. Mseleku, a newly appointed deputy principal from Sizophumelela Secondary School professed that:

> *Ethical leadership involves leading by example, being a principled individual, knowing how to handle yourself because it is all about what you do more than what you say that will teach people about ethics…that is what I think.*

In addition to Ms. Mseleku's understanding of ethical leadership, two teachers from Motubatuba High School for Girls highlighted that ethics comprise of morals, values and principles that guide human behaviour, as a result, an ethical individual would be one who acts in accordance with these set of standards (i.e., doing what is right). Mr. Kgabashane, a post-level one teacher from Motubatuba High School for Girls put forth that:

> *When we look at ethics- we refer to moral principles. These moral principles regulate the conduct and the behaviour of teachers, irrespective of their levels. Therefore, if you lead ethically, you are leading and at the same time, applying the rules…*

Slightly congruent with both her colleague and Ms. Mseleku from Sizophumelela Secondary School, Ms. Ntombela- an acting HOD from Motubatuba High School for Girls agreed that:

> *For me, ethical leadership means doing what is right in terms of following protocol and ensuring that your subordinates follow the rules. In this case, 'Leading by example' is a strong concept because it has an influence on those you lead. Subordinates are more likely to emulate the leader's behaviour because he or she serves as a role model.*

In analysing data, we see that the educator's conceptualisations of 'ethics' and ethical leadership has an influence on the ethical teaching and leading practices that teachers and principals promote in their respective schools- as such, the ensuing sub-theme is the continuation of this theme. Discussion of both themes followed by the infusion of literature and conceptual framing is therefore incorporated towards the end of this thematic analysis.

4.2.1.2 Ethical teaching or leading practices that educators promote in schools

Given that teachers and principals possessed an adequate understanding of what ethics or ethical leadership ought to be, the subsequent question sought to decipher the congruence between 'knowing' and 'doing' (that is, practising what you preach and vice versa). The responses provided by the participants showed that indeed, teachers and principals do put their knowledge of ethics or ethical leadership to practice. Consequently, their knowledge of ethics serves as a foundation and philosophy that guides how they act in the workplace. Mr. Mavimbela, a teacher at Sizophumelela Secondary School clarified that:

As a teacher, I ensure that I interact professionally with the learners. I also tend to be cooperative with my colleagues and try my level best to be open with them- even if we do not agree on something, 'honesty' must lead.

Likewise, Mr. Ntombela- a deputy principal from Motubutuba High School for Girls harmoniously hinted that the ethical teaching and leading practices that she tries to promote in the workplace are rooted in honesty. She emphasized that:

I am not a perfect human being- I am prone to making errors however I always try to be transparent, trustworthy, respectful when leading and managing- this is important for building trust in the workplace.

Whilst most of the school educators centred their ethical teaching and leading practices around 'honesty', a few other educators added that being ethical in the workplace goes beyond issues of transparency and honesty. An educator has to be a law-abiding public servant bind by the SACE Professional Ethics- this simply implies that by doing one's job thoroughly and properly (i.e., honouring their class schedules, early arrivals and being present at work, following protocol and so on); they are implicitly promoting ethical behaviour. Mr. Gqabashe, an H.O.D from Motubatuba High School for Girls put forth that:

To promote ethical teaching practices, I attend to my classes on a regular basis and do justice to the learners. I do not absent myself unnecessarily. I assess learners and evaluate performance on a regular basis.

In analysing the views of four participants- it is apparent that school educators have an adequate understanding of ethics, ethical behaviour and what an ethical leader ought to be. Most of the teachers highlighted that ethical leadership involves being a role model to those that you lead or serve, that is 'leading by example'- this is extremely crucial as it aligns or corroborates with what literature has to say about ethical leadership. Baloyi (2018) elaborates that leading ethically involves 'modelling behaviour' whereby the leader FIRST becomes what he EXPECTS others to be. This is without doubt non-negotiable in leadership as it would be very paradoxical (more so, hypocritical) for a leader to expect ethical behaviour from followers whilst he, himself, engages in unscrupulous activities. Baloyi (2018) accentuates that this idea of leading by example is pivotal as it is a steppingstone to manifesting the kind of behaviour that would be conducive at the workplace.

This is further reinforced by Brown and Mitchell (2010) who affirm that ethical leaders simply 'teach' or ignite ethical conduct to or from their respective followers through their own actions. This ideology of 'walking the talk' or leading by example is also substantiated by Bandura's social learning theory which suggests that "individuals can learn standards of appropriate behaviour by observing how role models (like teachers, parents and leaders) behave" (Brown & Mitchell, 2010, p. 585). Drawing from Aristotle- also known as the father of ethics, Monahan (2012) similarly echoes that, "the spirit of morality is awakened in the individual only through the witness and conduct of a moral reason" (p.61). The notion of 'leading by example' has been emphasized numerously by various authors, this confirms how important it is for a leader to become what he expects others to be, because before a leader can become anything-he is FIRST a role model, and therefore his behaviour is bound to be determinant of whether he or she is worthy of emulation from subordinates. Congruently, Brown, Trevino, and Harrison (2005) accentuate that ethical leaders are therefore role models for followers to emulate…and can be counted on to do the right thing [because] they demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral conduct" (Brown et al, 2005, p. 118).

Participants also positioned and likened ethical leadership with being a morally inclined, principled individual who conducts themselves professionally within the workplace, follows protocol, honours, and upholds the laws that govern the teaching profession such as the SACE Code of Professional Ethics, the South African constitution and the Batho Pele principles. The mindfulness of conducting oneself professionally is also highlighted under Section 7 (7.2) of the SACE code of professional ethics which stipulates that an educator [must] behave "in a way that enhances the dignity and status of the teaching profession and that does not bring the profession into disrepute". The idea of following protocol is also substantiated under section 9 (9.1 & 9.2) of the SACE code or professional ethics which states that an educator [must] make every effort to familiarise him or herself and his or her colleagues with the provisions of the Code [as well as] comply with the provisions of the code.

In addition, I have noted that the participants were very much aware of the fact that ethical leadership serves as a foundation for building trust- as such, they emphasised the need for honesty and transparency to be at the centre when leading. This is further reinforced by Katranci et al, (2015) who re-affirm that modelling ethical behavior (such as honesty, integrity, transparency) is pivotal because followers or subordinates often link the leader's effectiveness with the leader's honesty and trustworthiness (Katranci et al, 2015, p.547).

Although most of the responses provided by the participants were in line with the literature reviewed, one essential aspect of ethical leadership was left out by participants- and that is the aspect of LOVE or SELFLESSNESS that underpins and propels ethical leadership. The late Robert Sobukwe, along with Blanchard (2010) and Baloyi (2018) emphasised the need for an ethical leader to possess love for one's people. When love guides leadership, the decisions taken are solely for the betterment of others instead of promoting one's self-interests, the leader takes pride in the success of others as this reflects good leadership. Therefore, in this study, the participant's conceptualisations of ethical leadership are limited because they are 'linear' and theoretically induced. What these authors bring to the table is that to be an ethical or servant leader, it starts within- with the innate desire to serve and the intention to leave the society better than one found it, being the driving force behind ethical leadership. This is likewise highlighted in Wood's lecture on ethical leadership where he explains that an ethical leader "adhere [s] to an inner directive to do the right thing whatever the circumstances are, by loving and serving those they lead" (Woods, 2018).

4.3 Teachers, principals, and HODs' experiences of 'trust' in the schools

The data generated from semi-structured interviews, as well as through observations, indicates that a culture of mistrust is prevalent in both the schools being investigated, which makes it even harder for ethical leadership to flourish. By analysing the views of educators regarding trust relations- the study unleashes the causes behind the levels of mistrust that exist in schools today. From the data provided, it is obvious that there is a huge gap with issues concerning trust- teachers do not completely trust their leaders and vice versa. This makes it difficult for both parties to harmoniously work with one another as there is always a 'questioning' of actions. The data also shows that the causes behind the nonexistence of trust in the workplace stem from various reasons-from school principals demonstrating biasness or nepotism in their decisions, as well as 'a don't care' attitude towards their teachers, misuse of power, failure to be transparent and demonstrating accountability for past wrong doings…to teachers constantly engaging in gossip (i.e. failure to exercise confidentiality) and being spiteful towards one another due to unresolved past disputes. The literature reviewed shows that 'trust' is a very fragile aspect in relationships that takes so much effort to build, and re-build once shattered- as such, the notion of 'prevention is better than cure' is highly recommended to avoid the chaos that comes with the toxic culture of mistrust. Given the fact that 'trust' is a very fragile element in relationships, issues that lead to lack of trust are multifarious, countless, and sometimes implicit- thus emphasising how simple and effortless it can be-to break trust.

With regards to school principals not trusting their teachers, Mr. Ntombela- a deputy principal from Motubatuba High School for Girls put forth that:

> *This varies from one person to another- I cannot put them under one umbrella and say that I trust them all. Some are trustworthy and some are not- sometimes we hold SMT meetings and you find that the very things that were confidentially discussed are now being conversed about by the post level one teachers.*

The issue of SMT (school management team) members holding meetings without teachers has somehow created an atmosphere of exclusion amongst the school staff- which as a result, causes teachers to dig up information from their HODs- who form part of the school management team. By giving out information discussed in the SMT, the HODs come across as 'sell-outs' to the school principals as they deem their meetings to be 'confidential'. Ms. Dubandlela, a post-level one teacher from Motubatuba High School for Girls articulated that:

> *I cannot say that I completely trust the school leaders because they are constantly withholding information from us teachers- there is no transparency. A lot of information discussed in the SMT meetings does not come down to the teachers. That somehow makes us feel unimportant and excluded.*

The response provided by Ms. Dubandlela shows how distributed leadership is hardly practiced by school principals. Teachers are excluded from important meetings that may require engagement to reach mutual consensus regarding matters of the school. There is also no transparency as school leaders feel the need to 'hide' information from teachers. There is apparent lack of communication amongst teachers and school leaders and that implicitly takes a toll on trust. The issue of miscommunication thus plants a seed for gossip which tends to take place in the school corridors as teachers try to keep up with 'what is happening' in the school.

The issue of exclusion or miscommunication however proves to be 'relative' and is not prevalent in all contexts. Mr. Ngonyama- a post-level one teacher from Sizophumelela Secondary School expressed that:

> *I am very confident when it comes to trusting the school leader. We must remember that not everyone is perfect…I trust him because you can approach the principal 'whenever' you feel unhappy about a certain situation. I also look at the way that he conducts meetings/morning briefings- he is open for criticisms; staff members*

can share ideas…he is also accepting of when he is wrong, which makes him an accountable leader as well.

Oddly enough, most of the teachers from the very same school expressed conflicting views in comparison to what their colleague put forth...in terms of trusting the school leader. Mrs. Mzekandaba, a teacher from Sizophumelela Secondary School voiced that:

I do not trust the school principal seeing that most of his decisions are influenced by other people. He does not have a standing point or what we call a 'back bone'. When there are issues- he does not sit with that colleague down to address and resolve the matter (he fears confrontation). His leadership is also very biased as he does not require the same level of work ethic from everyone, he is very picky and that leads to distrust.

Mrs. Mzekandaba's response brings forth the issue of nepotism, biasness, or unequal treatment that school leaders subconsciously engage in…which subsequently leads to their subordinates (i.e., teachers) automatically losing trust in them. Congruent with Mrs. Mzekandaba, Mr. Njongo expressed that:

I am not confident enough to say that I fully trust the school leader because I have realized that he portrays 'favoritism' in his leadership…and his also not protective of his staff. He is big on suppressing others and he is also not open.

Mr. Njongo's response strengthens Mrs. Mzekandaba's claim that indeed, the school leader seems to be engaging in nepotism (i.e., favoritism) and does not treat his staff equally. There is also an issue of 'protectiveness'- the teachers hold that the lack of protectiveness often leads to be them feeling unsafe in the workplace and to always look out for themselves by being cautious or extra vigilant as minor errors might unexpectedly escalade to immediate dismissal. In corroboration with Mrs. Mzekandaba and Mr. Njongo- Mr. Mavimbela added that:

I realized that I had to be extra careful at work when one of my colleagues made a minor mistake in class. Instead of calling the teacher and learner to address the matter (i.e., dealing with the issue internally). The school principal called the parents and advised them to go report the issue to the district.

It is unquestionable that teachers must always conduct themselves professionally within the workplace, however the principal's lack of protectiveness has not only left teachers feeling 'unsafe' but also curious about whether the leader possessed any form of 'care' or 'love' for

their careers or professional growth. Although the terms ‘professionalism’ and ‘love’ may appear a bit contradictory in the sense that being professional comes with boundaries where there ought to be a limited display of affection- demonstrating a sense of care towards others in the workplace is fundamental for building trust. This sense of caring- also known as ‘benevolence’- is one of the conceptual concepts that underpin the element of trust. Possessing benevolence or ‘the ethic of care’ gives one assurance that they will not be hurt deliberately. This is backed up by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) who elaborate that a starting point for the development of trust is a ‘sense of caring or benevolence’. For leaders (i.e., school principals) to earn the trust of those under their leadership (i.e., teachers, learners, and parents), they must initially demonstrate genuine care towards them. School principals can therefore develop and promote trust in their schools through exhibiting benevolent behaviours such as “showing consideration and sensitivity for employees’ needs and interests, acting in a way that protects employees’ rights, and refraining from exploiting others for personal gain” (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 259).

Furthermore- given the above case, failure to deal with issues internally has built the assumption that losing one’s job would bring joy to the school leader. This therefore refutes literature in the sense that ethical leadership theory advocates the leader’s ability to be selfless and caring towards their subordinates. According to Baloyi, (2018) a good leader could be compared to a parent who would do almost anything to see their child thrive, as this brings them ultimate joy and pride. A child’s success implicitly highlights exceptional parenting skills and often makes the parent feel as if one has fulfilled a grand purpose of some kind. The same notion applies to ethical leadership, Baloyi (2018) proclaims that “leaders are never interested in their success before the success of their followers. They are not self-centered, but people oriented. The success of their follower does not hurt them but excites them” (Baloyi, 2018, p. 09). This is also known as the art of selflessness which good leaders ought to possess.

Not to excuse Mr. Mavimbela’s from his transgressions- we note that the school principal also attempted to avoid confrontation (in the form of reprimanding) by referring the parents directly to the district to report the matter. Reprimanding of subordinates is part of the leader’s job- although it may often come across as abusing one’s power- when done with the correct approach, reprimanding has the power to demonstrate care for one’s professional growth as well as bring awareness in terms of circumventing the same mistakes in the future. It is therefore this ‘care’ or ‘compassion’ that subordinates yearn for, that defeats insecurity and builds the foundation for trust in the workplace.

In analysing the views of all seven participants, it is once more evident that the factors leading to mistrust in schools are multifaceted, elusive, and mostly influenced by past experiences. Unresolved issues of the past have perpetuated a culture of mistrust and served as a hindrance for the development of ethical leadership. Likewise, this view is corroborated by Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014) who affirm that "trust in organisations is broken by betrayal, breach of confidentiality, deception, dishonesty, breach of integrity, corruption, coercion, overuse of power, exclusion of others or divisiveness among staff" as cited in (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 115). Coincidentally, the responses provided by participants all narrow down to the factors enlisted by these authors.

Furthermore, there is no denying the fact that trust amongst teachers and principals is very limited, if not non-existent. Ethical leadership and trust work simultaneously, with literature suggesting that these are intertwined concepts that cannot coexist without the other. The lack of trust in organisations pinpoints the lack of ethical leadership practiced by both the teachers and principals in schools in which they are stationed- "breach of confidentiality, dishonesty, breach of integrity, coercion, overuse of power…" (as identified by Kutsyuruba and Walker; 2014) are not only the roots for lack of trust but they also signify what we call unethical leadership- which is described by Mangena (2011) as bad leadership [that is] displayed through persistent human rights violation, bad governance, dysfunctional institutions… electoral fraud, manipulation of ethnic differences, corruption and personalisation of power (Mangena, 2011, p.114). Pelletier and Bligh (2008) therefore assert that unethical leadership has a negative influence on employee attitudes, one of which is the inability to trust. As such, lack of trust proves to be a hindrance to ethical and transformational leadership. Literature reviewed further suggests that the steppingstone towards enticing and reviving trust among leaders (i.e., school principals) and their subordinates (i.e., teachers) requires the engagement in certain behaviours that promote the atmosphere of trust in the workplace- these include vulnerability, benevolence, competence, honesty, openness, and reliability (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis, 2015; Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014).

The responses of participants indicate that school principals hardly demonstrate these qualities in their leadership which has subsequently led to an ambiance of mistrust…and contagiously- lack of accountability. The inability to feel safe and loved in the workplace does stir up negative feelings such as insecurity in an individual. As seen in normal day-to-day relationships; insecurity is toxic because it breeds paranoia and unwanted behaviours. Given that trust is the foundation of all relationships- it is important for leaders to understand that trust begins with

them. By being trustworthy or earning the trust of those under their leadership- leaders set the tone for the kind of environment in which they want to operate.

4.4 Demonstration of accountability practices by school leaders

The data generated from semi-structured interviews and observations indicates that teachers and principals hold different views with regards to conceptualising accountability. This is however justifiable as literature reveals that accountability is synonymous to different concepts such as 'responsibility', 'answerability' and 'blameworthiness'. The participants in the study understand that they are 'employed' – and being employed comes with duties to fulfil. Failure to comply with one's duties is followed by the responsibility to account for poor implementation or negligence of duty. Therefore, teachers and principals understand accountability as taking responsibility for one's actions. However, participants also note that accountability goes beyond the issues of compliance and non-compliance. Accountability is linked to integrity and how one reacts when their actions have harmed others- do they take blame and apologise? Or do they shift the blame and point fingers? It is the answers to these questions that determine one's level of accountability. Teachers expressed that principals demonstrate accountability in terms of following protocol and sharing or distributing instruction from above (top level-i.e., district) with regards to how things should be done. However, the problem lies internally where principals constantly engage in unscrupulous actions that subsequently harm their subordinates. This lack of accountability is dangerous because in addition to ruining trust, it contributes negatively on the professional development of others, thus taking them a step behind in life. This is justified by Ms. Mpiyakhe, a former novice teacher from Motubatuba High School for Girls. She heart-achingly expressed that:

> *Having worked in this school for over a year without any payment was a journey I thought would be fruitful because the principal had promised that I will be backdated all of my income- with the possibility of being absorbed into the system. Today I am unemployed, I never received any payment from the department because apparently there was no post in the school to begin with. I also never received a phone call from the principal, to explain or at least apologise for what transpired. This experience has infiltrated my view of school principals- they are unashamedly evil and lack compassion.*

Ms. Mpiyakhe's dreadful experience is one of many experiences that teachers go through because of the principal's actions. Teachers note that school principals hold the power to

manipulate vacant posts and can also destroy one's career without being held accountable. Consequently, teachers constantly live-in fear of principals because they do not want to jeopardise or lose their jobs. Drawing from her colleague's experience, Ms. Mgungundlovu from Motubatuba High School for Girls alluded that:

> *This kind of behaviour from the school principal can make one feel unsafe in the workplace because such lack of protectives or love may lead to one easily losing their job. It is evident that the principal does not care about us at all. This is a dangerous kind of leadership. As such, we always need to be vigilant and not step on his toes.*

The sense of fear that exists amongst teachers is perpetuated by the feeble accountability measures put in place…as well as the level of power given to principalship. On the issue of accountability measures, Mrs. Mzekandaba from Sizophumelela Secondary School shared that:

> *Principals are highly ranked at the district. After not receiving payment for three months- I called the district to find out if my documents were received by the HR department. I was blatantly told that the human resource office does not speak to teachers- only principals. Within a few hours, the principal came to reassure me that he did send my documents to the district. I felt very embarrassed for inquiring.*

Without disputing the power that comes with principalship, teachers are mindful of the fact that school principals constantly get away with a lot of mishaps because there are no serious consequences for their behavior. Ms. Mpiyakhe's predicament [as presented in her case above] is one of many experiences that proves this to be true. It is obvious that Ms. Mpiyakhe was embarrassingly exploited by the school principal- to say she was 'exploited' is an understatement, given the fact that she was coerced into volunteering with the hopes that she will be paid all the income from the previous months. Her patience and trust on the leader perpetuated the exploitation which then built on the resentment she now holds for the principal. Ms. Mpiyakhe being one of my closest former colleagues, I must disclose that it was heartbreaking to witness her disappointment at the end of every month when other teachers were ecstatic about payday, knocking off early to run errands and pay off accounts whilst she was worried about how she will get to work the following day. Most infuriating was witnessing the school principal proceeding with life as if all is well- with no sense of remorse or whatsoever. Ms. Mpiyakhe and I would often question whether this person was 'humane' at all, for he was devoid of empathy. It is this questioning and curiosity that influenced my

conceptualisation of what it truly means to be an ethical leader- I believe for so long, literature on leadership sold us the idea that a good leader is one that is influential, well-spoken, or articulate, knowledgeable, delegative, courageous, respectful…all those superior attributes associated with what a good leader ought to be. Having written about this topic for over two years- I have come to the realisation that these attributes may perhaps play a role in shaping a leader HOWEVER what makes a great leader is his good/noble and empathetic heart. It is crucial to understand that more than anything- leadership is an act of love and service and that those who lead with love and pure intentions fulfil the core purpose of leadership. This is of cause corroborated by Blanchard; the author of 'Leading at a Higher Level'- who similarly voices that "Leadership is not about love, it is **LOVE**… it is loving your mission, it is loving your customers, it is loving your people, and it is loving yourself enough to get out of the way so that other people can be magnificent" (Blanchard, 2010, p. 287). Blanchard (2010) wraps his conceptualisation with the idea that a true leader is one who is secure enough to allow others to soar, even to greater heights than them. Being secure enough to find joy in the betterment of those that you lead is an act of selflessness. In reality, putting the lives of others before your own is one quality that is rare to find in human beings- because human beings are so fixated on acquiring wealth and advancing one's self instead of fixing the problem that called for them to be appointed as a leader to begin with. Now given this rarity- it is safe to proclaim that true ethical and servant leaders or leadership is a rare kind of leadership that is right now needed most to save organisations from the pitfalls of venality.

Quickly diving back to Ms. Mpiyakhe's case, lack of means to bring herself to the school finally led to her sitting at home and leaving the position of being a 'volunteer' teacher, with no phone call from the school principal enquiring about her whereabouts and that was the end of it. Teaching and learning in the school proceeded as normal as teachers were reshuffled as means to fill in the gap and no one was held accountable. The question now arises, does principalship come with the power to exploit others? If not- how is the Department of Education ensuring that this does not continue to happen in schools as it is truly an excruciating and frustrating experience that no individual deserves to go through. Chapter Five unravels possible solutions on how to avoid future occurrences of ethical predicaments.

Ms. Mpiyakhe's case is also congruent with the literature reviewed on the constant growth of unethical practices in South African public schools- which uncovers the serious issue with the accountability measures implemented by the government in South Africa- deeming them as

too feeble to be considered seriously. This is further corroborated by the report conducted by the Global Corruption Report of 2011 which discovered that "there is poor implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations by Provincial Department of Education [consequently] this has led to weaknesses in the effectiveness and legitimacy of their work, creating more opportunities for non-compliance at the lower levels" (Global Corruption Report, 2011, p. 07). Consequently, cases of corruption in South African public schools are mounting rapidly, putting the measures of accountability in question.

Furthermore, the weaknesses in the enforcement of rules and accountability measures have not only stirred more opportunities for non-compliance at higher level but at lower levels as well [where those who are led find themselves adopting and mimicking their leaders' unscrupulous ways]- this trend is also backed up by Bandura's social learning theory. This theory imposes that human beings 'learn from their interactions with others in a social context' (Nabavi, 2012)- this learning does not happen in a formal setting where a teacher is standing in front of a class and transmits knowledge to the learner BUT happens through observation that later manifests into imitation. This is once more reinforced by Nabavi (2012) who emphasises that 'by observing the behaviours of others around them, individuals develop similar behaviours'- this is particularly true in the workplace where subordinates look up to their leaders as role models- leaders hold the power to manifest the energy and behaviour they want from their subordinates by SIMPLY demonstrating it through their actions. Unfortunately, it is oblivion to this power that has enthused the practice of corruption in organisations. By constantly observing leaders engaging in immoral acts and not having to account- subordinates realise that there are no serious consequences for non-compliance and in cases where the leader decides to hold the subordinate accountable- pulling a 'tit-for-tat' card may work in favour of the subordinate. For instance, Mr. Madlingozi from Sizophumelela Secondary School expressed that:

> *It is important for school principals to walk the talk. A leader cannot say that teachers are always glued on their cell-phone screens and not working- yet the only thing he does is check if teachers are in class; thereafter go back to the comfort of his office to be busy on his phone. Having observed some of the shady acts of the principal- it is difficult for me to take that person seriously.*

This was further reinforced by Mr. Madlingozi's colleague from the same school- Mrs. Mzekandanda, who voiced that:

> *If the principal is naturally abusive, people are going to act unethically because they 'model' what the leader reflects. In terms of causes behind the lack of trust or accountability- it is a lifestyle or culture that teachers have been exposed to through their interactions.*

As such, teachers develop and portray a tit-for-tat attitude when being reprimanded for behaviours that principals engage in themselves; justifying it as 'he does it all the time- why can't we?". It is therefore evident that non-compliance and lack of accountability at lower levels is influenced by social context and to some extent dependent upon the behaviour modelled by the leader. This is reinforced by Usmal et al, (2018) who edify that unwanted or destructive repercussions may emerge if models (i.e., the people who are being observed) engage in undesirable behaviour. In addition- this takes me back to the incident that took place in Senaone Secondary School where the school principal was found guilty of misusing school funds [as discovered by the Corruption Watch Report of 2015] yet the only repercussion he suffered was cautionary suspension that led to him being relocated to another school. Given this form of punishment [which does not even qualify to be referred to as 'punishment']- the question arises- who would be afraid to loot public funds when they still get to keep their job but in a different location? The answer is undoubtedly 'no one'. The perpetual culture of easily getting away with crimes within the education system has turned the concept of accountability into a remote ideal that only flourishes in literature, and not in the real world. However, the question remains- is accountability solidified by punishment? Whilst literature suggests the induction of fear through strict disciplinary measures, as means to strengthen compliance and discourage the lack of accountability, Irvine (2018) argues that is not the only way to inspire accountability. This author states that accountability is not a ***'programme to be installed'*** but rather a philosophy of life- and suggests that one way to inspire the spirit of accountability within organisations is through the application of the following four pillars by the leader. Because a leader is the head that guides the body- the leader ought to build trust - by being trustworthy, create clarity- by being purpose- driven, engage staff - by being engaged themselves and lastly, ensure results - by having the right tools in place" (Irvine, 2018, p. 26).

Likewise, Al-Rashadi, Dick and Storey (2015) identify quite similar components and explain their significance in terms of achieving accountability in organisations. Al-Rashadi et al, (2015) narrow down these concepts that elicit and underpin accountability into four central components, which are: responsibility, transparency, assurance, and remediation. The last

component ‘remediation’ is very crucial for it pinpoints the idea that accountable individuals or organisations do not leave wounds unattended but ensure that they use the necessary anti-inflammatory and bandage them to heal. As discussed under conceptual framing in Chapter Two of this study- remediation strengthens accountability in the sense that failure to comply with the norms or misconduct is not left unattended but there are mechanisms in place to tackle cases of failure and misconduct.

When looking at schools, the concept of accountability is often linked to learner performance, having worked as a teacher for three years, the term ‘accountability’ usually resurfaces when conducting the analysis of learner or school results and that is when the department of education intervenes to offer support to those teachers or subjects that performed poorly. This support usually comes in the form of workshops and regular visits from the subject advisor. Because teachers are directly involved in the teaching and learning process, the responsibility to ensure good results lies on their shoulders. Teachers are held accountable for poor learner performance, as a result, remediation is usually directed towards improving the teaching and learning in the classrooms rather than the overall leadership of the school. Leadership is an implicit yet strong force that affects teacher performance in the classroom…are the teachers motivated and inspired to carry out their duties effectively? What is the culture of the school and what behaviours does the school principal model and promote? It all starts at the top and therefore where accountability should begin.

In analysing the views of teachers regarding the demonstration of accountability by school principals, it is evident that an aura of insecurity lurks amongst teachers. This refutes literature given that ‘accountability is about the ability to be counted on as a leader’ as proposed by Irvine (2018, p.4), however that is not the case in the studied schools as principals present themselves as threatening individuals who should not be messed around with. The responses shared by participants highlight the dreadful experiences that teachers have undergone, that reveal the lack of accountability that exists amongst principals, as well as the feeble accountability measures that continue to perpetuate misconduct and misuse of power within the education system. The participant’s responses also touch on the social learning theory- working in a hostile environment where leaders’ model unwanted behaviours can only lead to the reproduction of such hostility. As such, modelling ethical behaviours and ‘walking the talk’ is crucial for promoting a culture of accountability.

4.5 The significance of trust and accountability in schools

The themes that emerged from semi-structured interviews and observations indicate two pivotal aspects: one is the fact that there is lack of trust and accountability in the studied schools; the reasons behind this are reflected through the responses of participants which are to some extent, in sync with the literature reviewed- as demonstrated above or earlier. Furthermore, this 'lack', or 'deficiency' proves to be problematic as teachers and principals find themselves trapped in very toxic and chaotic working cultures that impede the process of change and growth that is needed for the success of their schools- consequently, this 'deficiency' hints on the need or importance of trust and accountability in organisations.

Substantiating on the importance of trust, Ms. Mseleku - a newly appointed deputy principal from Sizophumelela Secondary school shared that:

> *When you trust the people you work with, you become very open with them. You speak your mind and give them your all. But if you are working with people that you do not trust, unfortunately every time I leave my office, I have to lock the doors…even if it just means going to the bathroom.*

Similarly, Mr. Ntombela, a deputy principal from Motubatuba High School for Girls voiced that:

> *When your subordinates trust you as a manager, they feel free to disclose information because they know that they can count on you as the leader. If there were any underlying issues, openness calls for them to be resolved.*

The same sentiments were shared by two teachers, one from Motubatuba High for Girls- Mr. Ggabashe who uttered that:

> *Trust contributes to a harmonious workplace as it limits conflict. More so, if teachers trust the school principal, they feel safe knowing that they can share whatever concerns they have with the principal.*

Congruent with both Mr. Gomora and Mr. Ggabashe from Motubatuba High School for Girls, Mrs. Mzekandandaba from Sizophumelela Secondary School expressed that:

Trust in crucial because if your colleagues are free and open around you, problems are easily dealt with on time and in a healthy manner.

The responses from teachers and principals indicate how the mere act of trusting those you work with can bring about a state of productivity and peace of mind. Trust can also ease feelings of anxiety and the self-imposed paranoia that makes the workplace unbearable. There is no denying that demonstrating professionalism and a bit of emotional intelligence is one way to detach yourself from a toxic organisational culture manifested by the lack of trust- however professionalism and emotional intelligence can only go so far…the foundation of trust is always needed for any relationship to flourish. Moreover, the responses provided by participants regarding the need and importance of trust seem to narrow down to increased productivity, security, [feeling safe, loved, and cared for], harmonious energy and remediation of issues. This is further substantiated by Kutsyuruba and Walker (2014, p.109) who argue that trust is essential in creating a constructive and harmonious climate and emphasising that "if properly developed, trust can propel organisations to greatness, [however if] improperly used, trust can plant the seeds of collapse". On the other hand, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) discover that leaders can engage in certain behaviours that promote the atmosphere of trust in the workplace, these behaviours- also known as the 'enabling factors' are discussed further in the ensuing theme.

With regards to accountability, Mrs. Mzekandaba- a teacher from Sizophumelela Secondary School shared that:

Accountability helps to stray from blundering and finding yourself in trouble.

To paraphrase this, Mrs. Mzekandaba's demonstrates how accountability serves as a tool to discourage misconduct and enthuse ethical behaviour. On the other hand, Ms. Mseleku (the deputy principal from the same school, hinted on the correlation between trust and accountability by expressing that:

Accountability creates trust. These are intertwined concepts- you cannot divorce one and cling to the other and still be a balanced leader. NEVER!! You need all of them.

Congruent with Ms. Mseleku- Mr. Ntombela -a deputy principal from Motubatuba High School for Girls concurred that:

Given that accountability relates to transparency- being transparent means that nothing is hidden. Therefore, accountability leads to trust.

Similarly, Mr. Ngonyama- a teacher from Sizophumelela Secondary School uttered that:

…when you are accountable, you are basically ensuring the next person not to worry and that brings about trust…

The views of participants pertaining to the necessity and significance of accountability touch on accountability as a tool to counter or at least limit indiscretions within the workplace, as well as the existing interrelation between accountability and trust. These views are in sync with Bovens' (2010) who distinguishes between main concepts of accountability: accountability as a virtue and accountability as a mechanism. According to this author- accountability can be a 'tool' or mechanism used by officials for holdings individuals responsible for discrepancies that occur, this form of accountability is often followed by punishment for failing to do what is right or achieving the organisational goal; hence Mrs. Mzekandaba's response highlights that accountability measures in place can prevent one from blundering as means to avoid being held accountable. Furthermore, the interrelation between accountability and trust is noted by participants- which is in sync with the literature reviewed. Accountability is viewed as steppingstone towards trust, this view is further strengthened by Baddinger (2018) who opines that accountability is basically what is needed to build trust, and that "perhaps the most important result of ***accountability is "trust",*** which is essential in any relationship. Mr. Ngonyama's response corroborates with Irvine (2018) who alludes that "accountability is about the ability to be counted on as a leader" (Irvine, 2018, p.4). Although the participant's responses are in synchroneity with the literature studied, not all aspects of accountability were unearthed by teachers and principals. Accountability as a 'virtue' as proposed by Bovens (2010) was overlooked and not paid attention to. Just like ethical leadership and trust, accountability begins from the heart- with the intention to not harm others (that is, by keeping commitments to those that you lead) and taking the responsibility if mistakes occur. In addition, we discover that the effects of accountability, trust, and ethical leadership in organisations are all the same, thus emphasising the coexistence of these concepts.

4.6 Chapter summary

The data generated from semi-structured interviews and observations, indicates quite a number of 'impediments' rather than 'enabling factors' that got in the way of creating and fostering a

work environment that is built on trust and accountability. This implies that the responses from participants pinpointed issues within the schools that had led to mistrust and lack of accountability in schools rather than the factors that enable these qualities, consequently we see the imbalance as the negative outweighs the positive thus evincing the 'problem statement' reviewed in chapter one. Through expressing their views, the participants did not only uncover and raise awareness on issues that plagued the success of their schools but unravelled areas of improvement that could bring about the change that was needed. In relation to trust, the principals touched on 'confidentiality of meetings held by the SMT' which teachers found to be exclusionary- leading to lack of openness, transparency, and miscommunication. Biasness of school principals and not feeling loved, cared for and protected is amongst the impediments mentioned by teachers that make trusting the leader impossible.

In relation to accountability, teachers drew attention on how principals misuse their power to get what they want without being held accountable- this also comes in the form of exploitation- drawing novice or desperate unemployed teachers in with false promises that they will get paid whereas there are no vacant posts in the school- which should be a criminal offense but is currently under looked. Exposure to this not only causes fear amongst teachers who get to see what their leaders are capable of but also an all-round negative perspective towards school principals. Once again, the lack of protection, compassion, and benevolence from school principals does not sit well with teachers who highlight the importance of having to be extra cautious at work because the chances of being kicked to the curb are high. In addition, unresolved issues have perpetuated a culture of resentment and vengeance amongst teachers and principals which is toxic because one tends to draw happiness from the downfalls of another. The process of remediation in accountability [highlighted earlier] is therefore important to clear this toxicity. It is also important to note that these impediments form basis for the enabling factors which serve as the point of departure for recommendations of the study. This shall be elaborated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, analysed and discussed data generated from semi-structured interviews, documents reviews and observations. The focus of this chapter is to present the study summary as means to 'recap' prior final conclusions; the study summary provides a brief overview of each chapter (from one to four). Subsequently, the themes and sub-themes that emerged from data discussion (i.e., the previous chapter) are summarised into conclusions. These conclusions are informed by the key questions reviewed in chapter one. Recommendations are made to address the critical issues that emerge from the findings of this study.

5.2 Study summary

The focus of this study was to explore the role of ethical school leadership in developing and promoting trust and accountability in South African schools, as well as reveal and justify the interrelation between ethical school leadership, accountability, and trust particularly in the two researched schools under Johannesburg Central District.

Chapter One introduced the study by highlighting the dilemma and rise of unethical leadership in organisations which has subsequently altered the elements of trust and accountability. Given this predicament, chapter one then outlined the problem statement, rationale, and significance of the study. This chapter further outlined the aims and objectives which later unfolded into critical key research questions. In addition, the chapter described the key concepts, organisation of the study and delimitations of the study.

Chapter Two unpacked the meaning of a literature review, thereafter, unravelled the conceptualisation of ethical leadership, trust, and accountability within the schooling context. The sub-section on the 'unethical practices that have ignited the need for ethical leadership in schools', intended to draw attention on the underlying issues that have inspired this study. The discussion of each phenomenon (i.e., ethical leadership, trust, and accountability in schools) was done purposefully to highlight the interrelation and synchronicity amongst these concepts. A conceptual framework was designed to explain and justify the link between these concepts.

Chapter Three clarified the research design and methodology employed in this study and justify why these methods were precisely chosen. The qualitative approach, interpretivist paradigm, and a multiple case study design were discussed in detail together with their relevancy to the study. The chapter also examined the data generation methods which involved triangulating semi-structured interviews, documents review and observations and justified how these methods could facilitate the generation of relevant data. The value of thematic data analysis within the context of the research was subsequently investigated. This was then followed by an elucidation of relevant issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues whilst simultaneously assessing how the study effectively managed them. Finally, the limitations of the study were outlined.

Chapter Four presented, analysed and discussed the data produced during the study. The chapter used the literature reviewed and the conceptual framework of ethical leadership, trust, and accountability to analyse the emerging themes. The findings indicated that participants possessed an adequate understanding of ethics- which helped them to conceptualise the phenomenon of ethical leadership. However, there was a prevalent culture of mistrust and lack of accountability in the researched schools. This formed the basis for chapter five.

Chapter Five presented the study summary of each chapter (from one to five). Themes that emerged from the previous chapter (i.e., chapter four) were summarised into conclusions, which were then used to make recommendations of the study.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusions that emerged were informed by the key research questions and the findings in the previous chapter.

5.3.1. Conceptualisations of ethical leadership in schools

The findings indicated that participants possessed an adequate understanding of the concept ‘ethics’, although they were not familiar with the phenomenon of ‘ethical leadership’. They were able to draw from their understanding of “ethics” to define what it could possibly mean to be an ethical leader. Their descriptions were congruent with literature which associates ethical leadership with particular traits such as integrity, honesty, transparency, compassion, accountability and fairness (Brown et al, 2005) . Notably, was also their ability to link ethics or ethical leadership with ‘good’ deeds, morals and values. There was however, an imbalance when teachers had to clarify ethical leadership practices that they observed being practiced by the school principals, more so, the varied responses of participants suggested that although they

were able to demonstrate an understanding of ethics or ethical leadership, there was no affirmation that educators (i.e., teachers, principals and HODs) actually practiced ethical leadership.

5.3.2 Ethical teaching or leading practices that educators promote in schools

The findings showed that the educator's knowledge of ethics was crucial because it underpins and determines their behaviour in the workplace. A state of oblivion concerning ethical behaviour proved to be problematic as educators become prone to conducting themselves unprofessionally or unethically. The participants revealed that by simply conducting themselves professionally, as stipulated in the South African Council of Educators and doing one's job properly (i.e., honouring their class schedules, early arrivals and being present at work, following protocol and so on); they were implicitly modelling and promoting ethical behaviour. The idea of 'walking the talk' that is- leading by example was also emphasised by participants. The school leaders acted as role models in a school setting and therefore held the power to manifest and ignite the desired behaviours and attitudes from their organisation. Teachers expressed that ethical leaders, who walk the talk, conjure an aura of trust and accountability in the workplace. There was a strong yearning amongst educators for this kind of working environment as it provides feelings of reassurance and safety. In addition, the literature studied (Blanchard, 2010; Baloyi, 2018) showed that 'walking the talk' was not the only antidote for promoting and inspiring ethical behaviour but also leading with LOVE or SELFLESSNESS at the centre. In their responses, teachers were adamant that the demonstration of the so called 'ethical leadership traits' (i.e., integrity, honesty, transparency, compassion, accountability, fairness and so on) would guarantee an atmosphere of trust and accountability- although that is partly true- it is pivotal to note that these qualities are FIRST driven and conjured by love. For a leader to be compassionate, honest, accountable…love must be at the centre, this is also corroborated by Blanchard (2010) and Baloyi (2018) who ascertain that when love guides leadership, the decisions taken are solely for the betterment of others instead of promoting one's self-interests, the leader takes pride in the success of others as this reflects good leadership.

5.3.3 Teachers, principals and HODs experiences of 'trust' in the school

The findings indicated that there was a culture of mistrust within the schools studied. The causes of mistrust were multifarious and complex. These causes ranged from ineffective communication, exclusion, bias or favouritism (i.e., evident through nepotism), and lack of

ethical leadership traits that build the foundation of (as well as nurture) trust relations- that is of cause the demonstration of benevolence or altruism, compassion, vulnerability, accountability, and integrity towards those that you lead. Ineffective communication and exclusion were interlinked in the findings, teachers shared that the meetings held by the School Management Team- were followed by 'imposition of decisions', thus causing division amongst staff and feelings of exclusion. The school management team which comprises of the principals and the heads of departments (HODs) took decisions without the input of teachers, thereafter, expecting compliance without question was perceived to be autocratic by the teachers. Unequal treatment from the school leaders also contributed to the lack of trust in the schools, the principals are said to have different relationships with the teachers which consequently determine how one is treated. Furthermore, the lack of protectiveness (which manifests through compassion, integrity, reliability, selflessness…) from the school principals caused feelings of distrust as participants came to accept that the decisions taken were not influenced by the need and passion to make a difference but to enforce and maintain compliance.

5.3.4 Demonstration of 'accountability' practices by school leaders

The findings showed that an overabundance of power is given to school principals who end up misusing it because the measures of accountability in place are feeble or do not have serious consequences. The participants shared that they have been victimized by school principals through 'exploitation' or false promises of permanent employment; the idea of manipulating qualified educators into volunteering should be a crime yet there seems to be a pattern of normalisation as newly appointed teachers do not receive income for months but are expected to show up for work every day. The school principals used the district 'human resources department' as a scapegoat for non-payments, however when teachers call the district to enquire about their status of employment- they discovered that there were no posts to begin with or that their documents were never received (i.e., this could be due to the fact that the schools studied were under 'rationalisation' or 'redeployment'). The school principals were not held accountable for this abuse of power and they did not even demonstrate remorse for engaging in such unethical behaviour. Exposure to this behaviour led to fear amongst teachers who did not wish to be victimized as a result of excessive power bestowed upon school principals. In addition, the findings were congruent with the social learning theory- working in a hostile environment where leaders' model unwanted behaviour is likely to inspire the imitation of such hostility. As such, modelling ethical behaviours and 'walking the talk' was crucial for promoting a culture of accountability.

5.3.5 The significance of 'trust' and 'accountability' in schools

The findings substantiated the literature reviewed by affirming that trust brings about peace, productivity, security, passion, and overall HAPPINESS. The world of work can be so rigid that concepts such as happiness, love and trust were hardly considered to be the contributing factors towards underperformance and stagnant schools- BUT if we were to view organisations like we view relationships, one would find that the same ingredients that are used to build and sustain successful relationships, also apply in organisations (i.e., schools). Accountability on the other hand, was perceived to be the foundation of trust. By being accountable, leaders demonstrated that they can be counted on to do the right thing and that consequently built trust. Accountability as a 'tool' served to ensure compliance and lessen the impulse to engage in unethical behaviour because one would be held accountable and punished if fails to do so. The findings also hinted that accountability as a virtue, was under-looked- which linked accountability to the leader's integrity.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were informed by the conclusions discussed above. It was crucial to note that whilst the participants' suggestions or recommendations were not broad, they unravelled critical issues that required to be further investigated.

5.4.1 Recommendation One: Pre-service education on ethical conduct

It is recommended that one of the compulsory courses at University or Colleges for pre-service educators should be 'ethics education' where knowledge on ethics and ethical behaviour is taught, emphasised, and instilled. In that way, teachers will come into the profession with an in-depth understanding on how to conduct themselves in the workplace. In his study on ethical leadership in schools, Mthiyane (2018, p.188) states that although it is necessary to have programmes that train pre-service teachers on instructional leadership and school management-studies on ethical leadership should be at the centre to 'help teachers and aspiring or serving principals to challenge their own ethical and moral values as human beings, as teachers and as active patriotic citizens of the country". This is further corroborated by Salawu's (2012) paradigm of ethical development which advocates the need to educate individuals about socially accepted values, which they can in-turn emulate in their professions.

5.4.2 Recommendation Two: School Committees & SACE intervention for in-service educators

It is known that schools establish committees at the beginning of every year to oversee, facilitate and manage issues within a particular discipline (for example, we have disciplinary, IQMS, uniform, entertainment, bereavement committees et cetera, functioning in our schools), this is done to promote distributed leadership (i.e., delegation of duties) and encourage staff participation and activism. However, a committee that deals specifically with a periodical review or unpacking of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics policy document is hardly heard of, or existent in schools. As such, schools should establish what we call an 'ethics' committee- that will work directly or hand-in-hand with SACE to ensure that educators are adequately developed about the code of ethics. These workshops should not be intended to 'impose' or scare educators about the consequences of breaching the code but rather to build and inspire educators to want to be ethical servants and see the bigger picture. Recent studies on ethical leadership in South African schools have exposed the partial involvement of SACE in assisting schools (i.e., through workshops) yet educators contribute a certain fee on a monthly basis. This call is long overdue, SACE should be devolved to the education districts and be active.

5.4.3 Recommendation Three: Dismantling principal power in teacher recruitment.

To avoid the manipulation of posts and exploitation of teachers who are coerced into volunteering, the employment of post-level one teachers should be handled at district level. The South African Education system is currently experiencing soaring rates of unemployment due to the high number of Bachelor of Education (B Ed) graduates and insufficient schools to accommodate the new graduates. Given this predicament, desperation for employment lurks amongst graduates who wish to see themselves in the classroom teaching. The school principals in the studied schools have demonstrated a tendency of capitalising on this desperation by 'hiring' and making false promises to the unemployed teachers regarding the future of their posts. As such, districts should take over and handle the process of employment of post level one teachers- documents pertaining employment (such as banking details, qualifications and so on) should be submitted personally by the candidate. More so, enquiries concerning posts should be sent directly to the district by the candidates. The non-involvement of school staff, including other members of the SGB (School governing body) should be considered. Recent studies on ethical school leadership have revealed the nepotism, biasness and political affiliations connected with processes of employment within schools.

5.4.4 Recommendation Four: Team building

To build and revive trust, schools should consider team-building activities, camps, or workshops for staff members. Although under-looked in schools, the element of trust is a very crucial one that holds the power to propel organisations to greatness. Investing in projects that help to create and foster a healthy working space that is built on trust is a steppingstone towards having resilient township schools (which thrive in the face of multiple deprivations). For schools that struggle with interpersonal relationships like the ones studied, the Department of Basic Education should play a part and implement funding for team-building workshops. Heap (1996) upholds that "the crux of the team-building approach is love and spirituality which results in mutual respect, compassion, and humanity to work" as cited in (Fapohunda, 2013, p.2). As such, team building correlates with, and reinforces the objectives of this study.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a brief overview of all the preceding chapters (i.e., one to four) of this study. Conclusions informed by the key research questions were formulated- based on the findings of this research report. Drawing from conclusions, recommendations that could be implemented by the school principals, teachers, the South African Council of Educators and the Provincial Department of Basic Education were then proposed.

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APPENDIX A: GDE APPROVAL LETTER

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	23 July 2019
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2019 – 30 September 2019 2019/158
Name of Researcher:	Cindi F
Address of Researcher:	1602 Currybush Street
	Protea Glen Extension 2
	Soweto, 1819
Telephone Number:	011 987 1793/ 079 688 3527
Email address:	814553@students.wits.ac.za
Research Topic:	The role of ethical school leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability: A multiple case study.
Type of qualification	Master of Education
Number and type of schools:	Two Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg Central

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

25/07/2019

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted: 1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL Date: 09 July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Fortunate Cindi, I am an M Ed (Master of Education) candidate at the Wits School of Education. I am currently doing research on the role of Ethical Leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability in schools.

My research involves exploring ethical leadership in two schools and how selected secondary school principals and teachers conceptualize and apply it in their daily practices as we know that ethical leadership can form a basis for the reduction in corruption and unethical behavior. The aim of the study is to explore the teachers, principals and HODs conceptualizations of their role as ethical leaders in developing and promoting trust and accountability in their schools. To seek the opinions and perspectives of teachers, principals and HODs about the causes for the lack of trust and accountability in their schools. To ascertain from the research participants why trust and accountability are of paramount importance, and also to determine what could be the barriers or enabling factors (if any) in developing and promoting trust and accountability in schools. Lastly, to determine how teachers, principals and HODs (in their daily practices) develop and promote trust and accountability in their schools. Questionaires will be issued to both teachers and principals and interviews will be conducted during lunch which will take about 15 minutes with each participant. Participants will also be audio-taped, as I may not be able to write everything down during the interview. **Please also note that there will be incentives for participating in the study.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because I am an educator in the school (or neighboring school) which allows for easier access. I am inviting your school to participate in this research on Ethical Leadership. 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. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project. Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

F.Cindi

Fortunate Cindi (1602 Currybush Street, Protea Glen Ext 2, 1819 814553@students.wits.ac.za or 079 688 3527

APPENDIX C: INORMATION SHEET (TEACHERS AND HODs)

INFORMATION SHEET TEACHERS & HOD's DATE: 09 July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Fortunate Cindi, I am an M Ed (Master of Education) candidate at the Wits School of Education. I am currently doing research on the role of Ethical Leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability in schools.

My research involves exploring ethical leadership in two schools and how selected secondary school principals and teachers conceptualize and apply it in their daily practices as we know that ethical leadership can form a basis for the reduction in corruption and unethical behavior.The aim of the study is to explore the teachers, principals and HODs conceptualizations of their role as ethical leaders in developing and promoting trust and accountability in their schools. To seek the opinions and perspectives of teachers, principals and HODs about the causes for the lack of trust and accountability in their schools. To ascertain from the research participants why trust and accountability are of paramount importance, and also to determine what could be the barriers or enabling factors (if any) in developing and promoting trust and accountability in schools. Lastly, to determine how teachers, principals and HODs (in their daily practices) develop and promote trust and accountability in their schools. Questionaires will be issused to both teachers and principals and interviews will be conducted during lunch which will take about 15 minutes with each participant. Participants will also be audio-taped, as I may not be able to write everything down during the interview. **Please also note that there will be incentives for participating in the study.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because I am an educator in the school (or neighboring school) which will allow me to get easier access to the teachers and principals. Would you mind if I ask you some questions regarding ethical leadership? Your name and identity 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. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. Please let me know if you require any further information.
Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

F.Cindi

Fortunate Cindi (1602 Currybush street, Protea Glen Ext 2, 1819)

814553@students.wits.ac.za or 0796883527

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT FORMS



TEACHER'S, HOD'S & PRINCIPAL'S CONSENT FORMS

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: The role of ethical leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability in schools: A multiple case study.

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission to review and collect questionnaires	**Circle one**
I agree that the ethical leadership questionnaire can be used for this study only.	YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview	YES/NO
I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only	YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study.	YES/NO
I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked.	YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped.
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Sign_____ Date_____

APPENDIX E: ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Cindi

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H19/10/07**
PROJECT TITLE	The role of ethical school leadership in promoting and developing trust and accountability: A multiple case study
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Miss F Cindi
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Education/
DATE CONSIDERED	18 October 2019
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	28 November 2022

DATE 29 November 2019 **CHAIRPERSON** (Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Dr S Mthiyane

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ **Signature**

_____/_____/_____ **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX F: TURN IT IN CERTIFICATE

814553:MEd_project_for_TurnItIn.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

10%	6%	2%	7%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

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