

**EXPLORING SERVANT LEADERSHIP AT THREE SCHOOLS
IN JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT: PERSPECTIVES OF
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

TRACE TSHUMA

June 2020

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IN JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT: PERSPECTIVES OF
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

BY

TRACE TSHUMA

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

Supervisor: Dr S.E. Mthiyane

Date submitted: June 2020

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Trace Tshuma, declare that this research report: **Exploring Servant Leadership at three schools in Johannesburg East District: Perspectives of teachers and school principals**, abides by the following rules:

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Researcher:



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STATEMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR

This research report has been submitted with my approval

DR S.E. Mthiyane (Supervisor)

JUNE 2020

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I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study firstly to my parents, Mr And Mrs Nzuma who instilled in their children the importance of education and motivated them to accomplish their best. To them I will always be thankful. Secondly, to my husband Ronald and my kids Anele, Madalitso, Kondwani, Lesley and Novuyo Tshuma for helping me by making endless cups of coffee when the going was hard. For their understanding, I salute them.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

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4 April 2019

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Dear Trace Tshuma

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

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

Exploring Servant Leadership at three schools in the Johannesburg East District: Perspectives of teachers.

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that **clearance was granted**.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,



Wits School of Education

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cc Supervisor - Dr. Sipiwe Mthiyane

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

“The servant-leader is *servant* first... Becoming a servant-leader begins with the natural feeling that one wants *to serve*, to *serve* first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first... The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and the most difficult to administer, is this: Do those *served* grow as persons? Do they, while being *served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become *servants*?” Robert Greenleaf (1970)

“Organizations exist to serve. Period. Leaders live to serve. Period.”

-Tom Peters (2016)

The above quotations crisply capture the notion of “servant hood” and that it is the leaders’ responsibility to serve others and this is what matters the most. The servant leadership theory was coined by Greenleaf (1970) and Greenleaf (1970) further posits that servant leadership is transformative for the leader and the follower. Van Dierendonck (2017) states that because times are changing and the current need for more ethical, people-centred management and leadership, institutions that are inspired by the ideas of servant leadership theory may very well be what we need.

At present, innovation and employee well-being are given high priority and so servant leadership that is rooted in ethical and caring behaviour becomes of great importance (Van Dierendonck, 2017). Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) also posit that servant leadership is very important for hands-on employees and organisations in the process of improving. Yasser, Al- Mahdy and Aisha (2016) posit that the key mission of a school principal is to be of service to both the community

and wider society. Principals, have a major part in helping teachers to realise their potential as far as teaching is concerned (Cerit, 2009). Studies by Ekinci (2015), Insley, et al., (2016) and Yasser, *et al.*, (2016) have investigated the school principals and teachers' perspectives on servant leadership. The findings show that the teachers perceived their principals' servant leadership as lacking. This study explored the perspectives of both, the principals and teachers in the African context.

Servant leadership is likely to affect team effectiveness, Hu and Liden (2011) posit that servant leadership affects the way organisational teams function because it increases members' shared confidence that they could be effective as a work group. Servant leadership gives the opportunity for support and communication at all levels is improved. Schools that have servant leadership, have professional learning communities that are functional and effective because of the well-knit group and team work (Mahembe and Engelbrecht, 2018). A servant leader's primary objective, as posited by Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) is to help people achieve their goals and bring out the best in them. The key characteristics of servant leadership are empowerment, humility, standing back, authenticity, forgiveness, courage, accountability and stewardship (Van Dierendonck, 2017).

In addition, servant leadership is based on the premise that, to bring out the best in their followers, (Greenleaf, 1970), leaders rely on one-on-one communication to understand the abilities, needs, desires, goals and potential of their employees. In view of the heterogeneous nature of the South African population, workplace teams are likely to be made up of teachers from diverse backgrounds in terms of race, culture, language and, in some cases, nationality. Failure to understand individual differences is likely to have bad results for the school (Mahembe & Engelbrecht, 2018). With the knowledge of each of the follower's unique characteristics and interests, leaders then assist followers in achieving their potential. This encouragement is done through building self-confidence (Northouse, 2016), serving as a role model, inspiring trust and providing information, feedback and resources (Chinyerere, 2018). Servant leadership is regarded as virtuous, highly ethical and based on the premise that service to followers is at the core of leadership (Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora, 2018). It is important to realise that, according to Greenleaf (1970), the servant-leader is '*primus inter pares*' (i.e. first amongst equals), who does not use his or her power to get things done but who tries to use persuasion to convince other staff members (Van Dierendonck, 2017).

Furthermore, in the South African context, the Dept. of Public Service and Administration introduced the Batho Pele Policy in 1997 to be implemented by all government departments. This policy meant putting people first in the public sector. In the schooling sector, the policy was to improve public schools by introducing a public-friendly atmosphere (Department of Education, 1997). The Batho Pele White Paper signaled very strongly the citizen-approach to service delivery informed by the Batho Pele principles of : *consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money* and these are also based on the theory of servant leadership (Chan, 2017) which relates to listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisations, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community.

Similarly, Manala (2010) posits that a leader's main concern should be to serve others hence the suggestion that servant leadership focuses on service provision and places others first. It is perhaps for this reason that South Africa adopted the Batho Pele principles to demonstrate citizen value and respect. The government outlined its intentions in the slogan: "We belong, we serve, we care" that it aimed to ensure that all public servants put people first and adhered to the framework of the service part which guarantees that all citizens will get good service from public servants and that public servants should care for the public and serve the customers with dignity (etu.org.za/toolbox/-/docs/-govern/bathopele.html). In addition, the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), Section 10 puts the Batho Pele principles upon which public administration and the Department of Education is required to implement these principles in all public schools. Blanchard, *Blanchard and Zigarmi* (2010) posit that when people lead at a higher level, because their goals are focused on greater good of improving the world. This requires a special kind of leader: a servant leader.

This research study aims to unpack the concept of servant leadership further through the exploration of literature and the perspectives of the school principals and teachers on the subject. The basis of the report aims to unpack the relationship of servant leadership to the Batho Pele principles in the school environment, the impact of servant leadership and the strategies for the enhancement of servant leadership. Consoy (2018) is of the view that the teachers need to find their voices, take up their potential as leaders and speak out on issues affecting them without fear in schools. This argument by Consoy (2018) relates to this study because it speaks to the teachers,

regarding their work after the inequalities of the Apartheid education system, and for them to speak freely of their conceptualisations and experiences of servant leadership and how it is enacted in their schools, and furthermore how this theory could be utilized to enhance leadership, management and teaching in schools.

1.2 Research problem

There are noticeable and distinct differences in the way teachers are treated at work by the principals which results in low job satisfaction, not speaking up for themselves and job dissatisfaction. This causes negative situations in schools and individuals such as resignation, irregular work attendance, conflict, outbursts, isolation and a decrease in performance (Cerit, 2009). Van Dierendonck (2017) posits that leadership is a key factor for engaged employees and flourishing organisations and it should assist in the organisational success of the school. A research study by Consoy (2018)) states that teachers perceive their principals leadership qualities as lacking , may be due to challenges with leadership hence Van Dierendonck (2017) calls for leadership and employee well- being to be held in high esteem. Similarly, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. A. Motshekga states that, “a school stands or falls on its leadership” (KZN Department of Education, 2010, p.3). This places leadership at the centre of all schools, if they are to succeed. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) assert that school principals and teachers need to work hand in glove if education is to be uplifted in South Africa.

Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) explain that it would be hard for a teacher to exhibit extra–role behaviours when the teacher detests the leadership style of the school. This said, the purpose of this research is to explore the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership among the principals and teachers based in schools and what we can draw from the servant leadership theory to improve leadership, management and teaching.

1.3 Purpose and Rationale for the study

The purpose and rationale serves to indicate how the researcher developed an interest in a particular topic and that he/she believes his/her research is worth conducting (Vithal & Jansen, 2010). The rationale of this study is to see what can be drawn out of servant leadership practice to improve leadership and teaching in schools.

There is a high-rise of teacher turnover, absenteeism form work, complaints and lack of teamwork and employee commitment (Chinyerere, 2018). Problems are catapulted by poor leadership and lack of teamwork by both the principals and teachers (Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018). As the study seeks to investigate the servant leadership conceptualisations, experiences and practices from the perspectives of school principals and teachers this will be a journey of self-discovery and personal transformation as explained by (Von Fischer and DeJong, 2017). Most leaders and teachers do not know in depth about servant leadership and more empirical data will help schools to succeed in their academic objectives when a sense of community is established and that leaders will come to understand that the sharing of power in decision-making is effective when the cultivation of good team spirit is enhanced (Kumar,2018). Servant leadership comes out strongly as an effective leadership style hence the results of this study may also be evaluated in terms of developing school principals, teachers and educational policies. As a researcher, it is interesting to explore the perspectives of both the principals and teachers of their servant leadership conceptualisations, experiences and practices as this adds to the body of knowledge of the untested theory of servant leadership by Greenleaf (1970) in the South African school contexts.

1.4 Significance of the study

Servant leadership principles seem to be most appropriate to save the day, since the right leadership is key to flourishing organisations (Kumar, 2018). Research by Chan (2017) revealed that servant leadership is a predictor of organisational and community devoted people and this is corroborated by Lemione (2015) who conclude that servant leadership boosts job performance while providing a range of positive and ethical outcomes and this type of leadership is needed for the modern organisations to succeed. Consoy (2018) also states that servant leadership enhances employee voice which promotes confidence in people to constructively challenge the existing processes with the aim of improving them.

Kumar (2018) did a systematic literature review of servant leadership in organisational contexts to provide answers to how servant leadership works and its application. The studies revealed that there is no consensus on the definition of servant leadership. Secondly, that servant leadership is investigated across a variety of contexts, cultures and themes. Thirdly, that servant leadership is a viable leadership theory that helps organisations improve the well-being of the followers. This study is significant because it falls within the second point above, that of various investigations of servant leadership across a variety of contexts and cultures. This study is one of the few at this level in the Johannesburg East area. The shortcomings of most of the studies are that they are mostly prescriptive and a few are descriptive as revealed by Parris and Peachey (2013). This research project will be more descriptive, empirical and adds to the body of knowledge regarding how servant leadership is enacted and conceptualised in schools in South Africa.

Mahembe, Engelbrecht and Dannhauser (2016) posit that effective leadership is one of the key requirements of successful schools. Mahembe, et al., (2016) further say that leadership approaches that is likely to fit in well in the principal- teacher service delivery is servant leadership. Van Dierendonck (2017) is of the view that servant leadership offers a shift in the way that principals view the teachers in the school. They are no longer seen as “individualistic and self-serving employees but are viewed instead as people who care about and try to attain goals in an environment of trust.

Within this context, effective schools are characterised by the servant leadership behaviours of the principals and teachers. Ekinici (2015) investigated the perspectives of principals’ servant leadership at schools in Oman and recommended that future studies be carried out in other countries to add to the body of knowledge of servant leadership in schools.

This study bearing these ideas in mind, explores servant leadership with the emphasis on the perspectives of the school principals and teachers.

1.5 Aims and objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to explore the servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and experiences of teachers and school principals and seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

- To explore the school principals and teachers’ conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership in their schools.

- To investigate the necessity of servant leadership in the researched schools.
- To explore the challenges that school principals and teachers experience in the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership and possible solutions.

1.6 Key research questions

This study is underpinned by the following main question:

- What are the school principals and teachers' conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership in the researched schools?

Subsidiary research questions

- What are the views of school principals and teachers about the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership at the researched schools?
- Why is it necessary for school principals and teachers to implement the principles and values of servant leadership in their schools?
- How do school principals and teachers think the principles and values of servant leadership could be promoted to enhance school leadership and teaching in their schools?
- What are the challenges (if any) that participants have experienced in the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership and how do they think these challenges could be minimised?

1.7 Clarification of key concepts/terms

For purposes of common understanding, key terms are defined and contextualised.

1.7.1 Leadership

There are a plethora of definitions that describe leadership, however three dimensions are considered essential. Dubrin (2016) posits that leadership is a process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people, to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in an organisation or group. Secondly, leadership is increasingly being associated with values as personal and professional values are expected to predominate (Adams, Kutty and Zabidi, 2017). Thirdly leadership is most often associated with realistic, credible and positive

vision (Vechiotti, 2018).

Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) define school principals as leaders at school, who use the most effective leadership tools to influence and motivate their staff. They are expected to help the educational community move towards this goal.

In this study, leadership refers to the processes whereby school principals influence various stake holders such as teachers to achieve the goals.

1.7.2 Servant leadership

Greenleaf (1970; 1977) coined the term “servant leadership” and he explained the notion of servant hood as the leaders’ responsibility to serves others first. The best test is whether those served grow as persons and become servants themselves. Van Dierendonck (2017) says there is no consensus on the definition of servant leadership currently among academics. However, Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) assert that academics agree that servant leadership is ‘others’ directed and that it is beneficial by awaking and develops the employees.

In this study, a servant leader according to Sipe and Frick (2015, pp.4) “is a person of character, who puts people first. This person communicates well, is a compassionate collaborator, has foresight, is a systems thinker and leads with moral authority”.

1.8 Demarcation and limitations of the study

Bryman (2016) states that demarcating the problem means establishing the boundaries of the problem area within which the research progresses. As already mentioned, the study was confined to the three schools in the Johannesburg east district. A total of nine participants comprising of the three principals and six teachers. This is a small sample and the fact that purposive sampling was used suggests that the findings may not be generalised to a greater population, (Cresswell.2013).

Maree and Van Der Westhuizen (2009) state that one needs to indicate the challenges that affected the research such as time limitations, access to participants, and how one dealt with them. The time allowed for this study was limited which may have affected credibility as discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who posit that prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer reviewing, all makes findings credible but that takes a lot of time hence this research needed to be

complete under twelve months. Secondly, the sensitivity nature of the topic, some people may have had misconceptions that their leadership or work was being questioned. This may have affected the responses given. Furthermore, Bryman (2016) is of the view that response bias occurs when respondents do not accurately represent the whole sample population, this happens when non-respondents' answers would have changed the overall sample. This is relevant to this study as the two teachers from each school, who took part in the study volunteered to do so and they were conveniently available when they were needed. The principals of all the three researched schools agreed to spare two teachers for the interviews because they claimed that the teachers were busy.

1.9 Organisation of the study

With regard to the division of chapters, the researcher discussed the contents of the report in five chapters.

Chapter One is an introduction and orientation which sets the stage for the whole study. Creswell (2013) is of the view that the introduction is the part of the report that provides an audience or the reader with the background information for the research, The details of chapter one are the introduction, problem statement, the purpose, significance of the study, the key critical research questions, organisation of the dissertation and the chapter summary.

Chapter Two represents the body of the literature review with the literature survey. A literature survey will be used to elucidate the conceptualisations and characteristics of servant leadership. The literature review as argued by Creswell (2013) will share with the reader the result of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported, therefore, literature is used to frame the problem to the study. The theoretical frameworks are the servant leadership theory by Greenleaf (1970) and the first model by Spears (1995) and organisational theories like the Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) are used to understand the quality of relationship between leaders and followers (Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2014). The *conceptual* frame work is that of Sipe and Frick (2015) which explain practicing the wisdom of leading by serving through the seven pillars of servant leadership Furthermore, literature will engage with how servant leadership theory can be used to enhance leadership, management and teaching.

Chapter Three represents the methodology of exploring servant leadership at three schools in the

Johannesburg East area with emphasis on the perspectives of the research participants. The research paradigm is interpretivist. This is a qualitative study and the research design is a case study. The research population are a total of three principals, one from each of the researched schools and two teachers from each school bringing it to a total of nine participants. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of the participants and the schools as they were easily accessible to the researcher. The data generation methods were questionnaires to all the post level one teachers from which purposive sampling was used to choose the two teachers who then took part in the semi-structured interviews. The principals completed the biographical information and took part in the semi -structured interviews but did not complete the questionnaire that the teachers completed. This chapter also engaged with Data analysis which is, according to DeVos (2010) the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the collected data. Issues of trustworthiness and Ethical issues will also be in this chapter. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) posit that for a research study to be credible and trustworthy, it needs to be designed in a way as to ensure applicability, dependability and confirmability. Miles and Huberman (2014) explain that in conducting research, the focus must not only be on the quality of knowledge that is produced but the rightness or wrongness of our actions as qualitative researchers in relation to the people studying and these are ethical issues.

Limitations to the study were discussed in this chapter. Creswell (2013) explains that limitations of a study may refer to the challenges that a researcher may face which may slow or hinder the study. The time allowed for this study was limited to under 12 months.

Chapter Four presents the discussion of the findings. Data generated from the questionnaires, semi -structured interviews and documents review was analysed through thematic analysis and coding in order to explore the concept of servant leadership and what we can get in order to enhance leadership, management and teaching from the research participants.

Chapter Five presents the study summary, conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations.

1.10 Chapter summary

As Van Dierendonck (2017) posits that the absolute inadequacy of effective leadership in the different settings has prompted the move to the popularity of servant leadership. Chapter one

endeavours to explicate the research problem and significance of the study and gives an outlook of all the chapters in the study. This said, the purpose of the research is to explore the conceptualisations, practises and experiences of servant leadership among the research participants based in schools and what we can draw from the servant leadership theory to improve leadership, management and teaching. The next chapter presents and discusses the literature review and theoretical frameworks of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a bird's eye view of the entire study. This chapter focuses on the review of related literature on conceptualisations and practices of servant leadership and the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study. In the first section, there is an extensive review of International literature regarding the servant leadership practices of school principals and teachers, followed by the African and South African literature. In the second section, the study is theoretically framed using Sipe and Frick's (2015) pillars of servant leadership model.

2.2 Literature review on servant leadership

This section reviews both international and national literature on the topic. The intention of the review is not only to describe the basic tenets of instructional leadership, but also to critically analyse the published body of knowledge surrounding the school principals.

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of servant leadership

Blanchard, Blanchard and Zigarmi (2010) posit that when people lead at a high level, they make the world a better place because their goals are focused on the greater good and this requires a special leader: a servant leader. Servant leadership is an old concept central to the philosophy of Jesus Christ who demonstrated the fully committed and effective servant leader. The more recent examples of servant leaders are Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa and Mahatma Gandhi (Blanchard, *et al.*, 2010).

Leadership is widely researched because organisational systems depend on the guidance of leaders (Kumar, 2018) and Kumar (2018) further posits that in order to understand the success of the organisation, it is best to study the leaders and followers.

Servant leadership theory is famous and is being implemented in top organisations now, (Northouse, 2016). Servant leadership was coined by Greenleaf (1970) with his foundational essay: *The servant as leader*. Robert K. Greenleaf intentionally sought a descriptor that would give people pause for thought by combining two seemingly contradictory terms, Spears (2004). When people hear the phrase servant leadership, they have thoughts of the inmates running a prison, or

of trying to please everyone, (Chinyerere, 2018). Compared to other leadership styles where the ultimate goal is the well-being of the organisation, a servant leader is genuinely concerned with serving the people (Greenleaf, 1977). Once the people have direction, the leader's duty changes to the job of implementation – the second part of leadership, where the dream happens. The implementation is where the servant part of servant leadership comes into play, (Blanchard, *et al.*, (2010). Leaders then assist followers in achieving their potential when they have knowledge of the followers needs (Dierendonck, 2017). Spears (1996, p.7), Executive Director of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, defines servant-leadership as: "...a new kind of leadership model, which puts serving others as the number one priority. Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decision-making." A more detailed discussion of servant leadership is explicated below.

2.2.1.1 Service to Others

Servant-leadership begins when a leader assumes the position of servant in their interactions with followers. Genuine, real leadership comes not from the exercise of power or self-interested actions, but from the need to help others first. Greenleaf (1970, p. 2) states that this "simple fact is the key to [a leader's] greatness". That which drives a servant leader is to grow and encourage greatness in others and through that the energy then impacts on the positive growth of the organisation.

2.2.2.2 Holistic Approach to Work

Servant-leadership holds that "The work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work" (Greenleaf, 1996, p. 8). People need to be happy at work, meaning that it should not be stressful. A servant leader encourages followers to be themselves just that benefits the long-term interests and performance of the organisation.

2.2.2.3 Promoting a sense of community

Greenleaf was sad for the loss of community in present day society, calling it "the lost knowledge of these times" Greenleaf (1970, p. 28). Servant-leadership needs institutions to provide human services, and only a community can do so hence if a true sense of community is built among followers only then can the organisation flourish. The actions of individual servant-leaders can facilitate the growth of that sense of community (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 30).

2.2.2.4 Sharing of Power in Decision-Making

Greenleaf (1970) posits that by encouraging the talents of followers and letting them do things and trusting them, the servant-leader creates a more effective, motivated workforce and resulting in a more successful organization. As phrased by Cerit (2009), “Leaders enable others to act not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away”. Principals may improve teachers’ job satisfaction through allowing teachers to take part in decision-making, giving autonomy, respecting them, creating a trustable environment and esteeming teachers. It can be observed that the features that improve teachers’ job satisfaction are consistent with the factors of servant leadership, such as esteeming employees, showing sincerity and sharing leadership (Chan, 2017). Most of the people in leadership positions want to make decisions on their own which may harm the organisation. A fresh breath is felt if servant leaders work as a team with the employees.

2.2.2.5 Servant-Leadership attributes

Greenleaf (1970) posits that the above mentioned tenets of servant-leadership can come only from the selfless, “others-directed” drive that lives within the leader. Accordingly, (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006) say those who want to be servant leaders need to critically reflect first as to the real reasons they want to be leaders, because ethics, values and principle make the heart of the theory of servant leadership.

Behavioral theorists have identified ten main leadership characteristics in Greenleaf’s writings, (Russell & Stone, 2002) and these strongly stress personal characteristics over any other leadership style and these are:

Listening: is important for accurate communication and for displaying respect. According to Greenleaf (1970, p. 10) that, “Only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first” When they have listened they then feel what the other person feels and that is empathising. Greenleaf (1970, p.12) wrote, “The servant always accepts and empathizes, never rejects” and “Men grow taller when those who lead them empathize, and when they are accepted for who they are...” (1970, p. 14). **Healing:** is the same as redress or to make into a whole. The servant leader recognizes the need to find wholeness in one’s self, and grow it in others. **Awareness** also important because without awareness, “we miss leadership opportunities” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 19).

Persuasion: The effective servant-leader builds group consensus through “gentle but clear and persistent persuasion, and does not exert group compliance through position power. Greenleaf notes that “A fresh look is being taken at the issues of power and authority, and people are beginning to learn, however haltingly, to relate to one another in less coercive and more creatively supporting ways (1970, pp. 3-4). Servant-leadership utilizes personal, rather than position power, to influence followers and achieve organizational objectives.

Conceptualisation: The servant-leader needs think out of the box and be a strategist who thinks of solutions before the problems occur, they need to be ready always by reading the signs (Greenleaf, 1970, pp. 23-25).

Foresight: This speaks to visionary servant leaders because “Prescience, or foresight, is a better than average guess about what is going to happen when in the future” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 16).

Stewardship: Commitment to the growth of people – Per Greenleaf, “The secret of institution building is to be able to weld a team of such people by lifting them up to grow taller than they would otherwise be” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 14).

Building community: Modernisation has eroded community, the social cement that unites individuals in society and only servant leaders can rebuild it, (Greenleaf, 1970).

The understanding of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970;1977) as a way of life rather than a management technic has slowed acceptance as scholars then ask questions that if it is a way of life, how can it be empirically tested. Greenleaf (1977) was of the view that servant leadership would be difficult to operationalize and apply. Sipe and Frick (2015) provided a framework of the seven pillars of servant leadership which they posit would help in the application of servant leadership.

Van Dierendonck (2017) state that there is no consensus on the definition of servant leadership and that servant leadership is being investigated in different settings and cultures. Van Dierendonck (2017) further say that the different conceptualisations of servant leadership resulted in many measures being used to explore servant leadership.

Lemoine (2015) acknowledges that the multiple conceptions of Servant leadership like those of (Ekinci, 2015) has led to the criticism by Kumar (2018). Kumar (2018) is of the view that the lack of consensus on the definition of servant leadership amongst researchers as they create their own

variations and theoretical models. Lemione (2015) posit that literature has shown that theories from other disciplines are being, used to build on the existing servant leadership theory to further the body of knowledge. One such theory is the Leader-Member exchange theory known as LXM theory was originally coined by Dan Sereau, Graen and Haga (1975). Dan Sereau, *et al.*, (1975) posit that relationships are characterised by mutual trust, respect, and obligation. This theory according to (Lemione, 2015) focuses on the relationship between the leader and follower just like servant leadership.

2.3 The international context

Kumar (2018) conducted cultural, cross- cultural and contextual analysis of thirty nine empirical studies and 27 journals. The studies taken were between 2006 and 2017. Different internet data bases were explored by Kumar (2018) for finding studies relevant to the servant leadership theory. The findings of Kumar's (2018) analysis showed that 44% of these studies were conducted at educational settings, hence it is evidential that servant leadership can be beneficial practice in school settings. Furthermore, Kumar (2018) asserts that this is important, especially considering that the principals and the teachers are at the fore front of education. Another major finding was that all authors were in agreement when they described servant leadership as 'self-less' service to the other and that servant leaders are unique to other types of leaders. Further on, Kumar (2018) concluded that servant leadership is a holistic, futuristic way to manage organisations. With reference to this study of exploring servant leadership, with emphasis on the perspectives of the teachers and school principals, the conclusion that servant leadership is futuristic is vital in that my study adds to the body of knowledge on the exploration of this leadership style into the future.

However, concern must be expressed at the gap in Kumar's (2018) analysis in that the majority of the researchers are available in the western cultural context but not the other world contexts. My study explores servant leadership in the South African context. This is in line with Kumar's (2018) future scope that studies need to be done in other cultural contexts other than the west.

Von Fischer and De Jong (2017) quantitative study examined the teachers' perspectives of their principals' servant leadership and how it correlated with teacher job satisfaction. The data gathering tool used was a survey in the form of questionnaires. The questionnaires were done and

answered on the internet based survey tool 'survey monkey'. The generally held view was that servant leadership is beneficial to schools by awaking, engaging and developing employees' well-being. Von Fischer and De Jong (2017) posit that efforts to create valid research supported instruments to study servant leadership have caused academics considerable difficulty. The reason for the difficulty is explained by Van Dierendonck (2017) who posits that servant leadership covers a wide range of behaviours which are hard to grasp in one or two constructs. This statement resonates with this study because the construct used is that of Sipe and Frick (2015), which makes use of seven pillars of servant leadership.

The sample from Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) study comprised of Principals and teachers from Midwest state in America. Each principal was asked to include the first and last staff member on the teachers' list to eliminate the potential for bias. The teachers were offered the opportunity to participate in the study and asked to complete the surveys. The conclusions that were reached were that first, the teachers perceived that their principals' exhibited servant leader behaviours like healing and communication, motivated them to work harder. Secondly, Servant leader principals loved their jobs. Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) further recommended that the principals needed to focus on their own efforts to implement leadership changes. These changes are the handling of employees, making competent decisions, improving working conditions and praising subordinates for doing work. Another recommendation was the on-going professional development of the teachers and principals (Von Fischer and DeJong, 2017).

These findings resonate with Ekinici (2015) that principals should understand themselves, the complexities and context when implementing leadership changes. The results of the study by Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) suggest that the relationship between the teachers and principals is not as direct as it is assumed. However, concern must be expressed at the failure of the researchers regarding certain issues. The methodological limitation was only involving the teachers only. Teachers' views were elicited yet the principal's views would have provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon at hand. This study, however, adds to the literature regarding servant leadership perspectives of the principals and teachers.

The research by Insley, Iaeger, Ekinici and Sakiz (2016) illuminate the teachers' perspectives regarding the servant leadership behaviours that were displayed, or expected to be displayed, by principals towards the teachers. The data was gathered during focus group discussion with 12

teachers who were in service in primary and secondary schools. The teachers were chosen using the snowball sampling method. The data obtained was analysed using content analysis. When the findings were evaluated, it was determined that the principals were not qualified enough to display servant leadership behaviours that are oriented towards community building, sharing, empathy, active listening, humility and altruism. The suggestion was that principals should receive servant leadership education through instructional programs that should be developed.

The study by Insley, *et al.*, (2016) was a phenomenological qualitative study. Hence the researchers tried to understand the teachers' perspectives. In using this methodology, Bryman (2016) is of the view that the key is how the individuals in the educational sphere comprehend the world through interpreting sense data. Reality is viewed as a social construct.

The methodological limitation of this study by Insley, *et al.*, (2016), was the interviewing of the teachers only. The voices of the principals should have been solicited in order to give a richer picture. Furthermore, in the study by Insley, *et al.*, and (2016) the situation reveals that the principals were bureaucratic managers rather than leaders. The fact that the teachers' views were the only ones that determined the bureaucracy of the principals, it could have been fair to hear the principals' views. The study, however adds to the body of knowledge regarding servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and experiences in the school setting.

Ekinci's (2015) quantitative study determined the school principals' servant leadership behaviours were based on five dimensions such as empathy, altruistic behaviours, humility, integrity and justice. The purpose of the research was to develop a scale describing the servant leadership behaviours of school principals and to evaluate the school principals' servant leadership behaviours according to the teachers' perspective based on the developed scale. The study was conducted using the positivist lens and for data analysis, descriptive statistics of Correlation Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed. The number of teachers' views used in the study were 262, from the implementation of the developed scale.

The results determined that the School Principals Servant leadership Behaviour Scale (SPSLBS) was valid and reliable. The results show that there are significant differences based on factors such as teacher gender, duration of service.

The limitation of this study is that it elicited the perspective of teachers without the perspectives

of the principals. Secondly this study by Ekinici (2015) was quantitative, if the study was qualitative, rich data could have been obtained. Creswell (2013) posits that in the qualitative methodology, the key is to try to understand the participants' perspectives in order to understand and see the world in their eyes.

In the light of the above, this study investigated the servant leadership perspectives of both teachers and the school principals in their respective sin order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. While all these findings highlight the existence of a set of key leadership practices; there is need for further research conducted in the South African context.

2.3.1 The African context

Studies have also been conducted on servant leadership in the African context. Chinyerere's (2018) study honed in on the efficacy of servant leadership and its influence on employee team work, citizen behaviour and organisational commitment in Harare, Zimbabwe. Chinyerere (2018) is of the view that human resources organisational behaviour and leadership challenges have been of major concern in the Zimbabwean retail sector system. Ultimately, the research findings served as a barometer to add to the body of knowledge on conceptualisations and practices of servant leadership in organisations like, the school, that employ people.

This study was viewed through the positivist lens. Hence, a quantitative approach was used to generate data. The conceptual framework that Chinyerere (2018) came up with, had the independent variable as servant leadership characteristics (altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping and organisational stewardship). The dependent variables were team-work, work place spirituality, and organisational citizen behaviour. The research strategy was structured and the survey methodology was used because it provided a systemic way to gather data, analyse information and report. The data gathering instrument was the questionnaire. 2500 respondents were asked to provide responses. The internet software (SPSS21) was used for data processing. It involves the calculation of frequencies, mean and mode. It was used to analyse the variables.

A major methodical flaw was not interviewing the respondents. In my view the study by Chinyerere (2018) would have generated thick rich data if Chinyerere (2018) had used a mixed - method approach or qualitative and elicited the perspectives of management and employees on the phenomenon under study. Secondly, this study was conducted in the retail sector, hence the need

for studies in the school settings involving the teachers and principals.

The findings showed that servant leadership has a significant and strong positive influence on employees, team work behaviour. Chinyerere is of the view that the finding on examining the impact of servant leadership on organisational citizen behaviour shows that leaders who consider the followers interest are able to influence follower activity. Assertion to these results, was found in the study, carried out by Insley, *et al.*, (2016) who assert that leadership is now evolving towards responsibility, persuasion, healing and awareness rather than the command and control style.

The finding that servant leadership influences organisational commitment, Chinyerere (2018) is of the view that his results are congruent to those of Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) who assert that the perceptions of social support from the leader in the work place have also been shown to be positively associated with organisational commitment.

While all these findings, highlight the existence of a set of key leadership practices; there is need for further research conducted in the South African context. With regards to this study, of exploring the servant leadership perspectives of the teachers and school principals, the insights by Chinyerere (2018) are influential for this research and adds to the body of knowledge of servant leadership.

2.3.2 The South African context

The Batho Pele (People first) principles were adopted in South Africa in order for public servants to provide service as outlined in the slogan: “We belong, we care, and we serve” (etu.org.za/toolbox/-/docs/-govern/bathopele.html). The Batho Pele principles were introduced to improve public schools. The Batho Pele White paper (DPSA.1997) showed governments intention to adopt a citizen oriented approach to service delivery informed by the eight principles of transparency, consultation, persuasion, redress, access, courtesy, service standards and value for money.

The South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996 stipulates that the public service needs be governed by values and principles including the following: high standards of professional ethics which must be promoted and maintained; services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias; and transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. These values in Batho Pele policy are like the outcomes of servant leadership earlier presented in this study (Burton & Peachey, 2016).

Studies have also been conducted on servant leadership in the South African context. The empirical study by Mahembe, Engelbrecht and Dannhauser (2016) was to analyse the relationship between servant leadership, affective team commitment and team effectiveness in schools. Moreover, the study identified crucial aspects that positively affected principals and teachers' performance. The study utilised the positivist lens. A non-probability sample made up of 288 principals and teachers was drawn from 38 schools in the Western Cape province of South Africa. Item analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were used to analyse the data. Positive relationships were found between servant leadership and team effectiveness; servant leadership and organisational citizen behaviour. Mahembe, *et al.*, (2016) are of the view that effective leadership is one of the key requirements of successful schools. Mahembe, *et al.*, (2016) further assert that one of the leadership approaches that is likely to fit in with the principal-teacher service delivery and school effectiveness is servant leadership. Mahembe, *et al.*, (2016) further posit that the principal as servant leader is likely to provide some coaching, co-ordination and development. Mahembe, *et al.*, (2016) posit that failure to understand individual differences is likely to have negative repercussions for the school.

The findings by Mahembe, *et al.*, (2016) illuminated successful variables that contribute to this study on the principals and teachers perspectives of servant leadership in the researched school as it adds to the body of knowledge of servant leadership.

Another study by Muller, Smith and Lillah (2018) focused on investigating the perspectives of school principals regarding the impact of servant leadership on organisational performance in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. A quantitative research design was utilised and questionnaires were used to gather data. The conclusions were drawn from logical reasoning of regression analysis. The findings of the study suggested that servant leadership has a positive and significant impact on organisational performance. Muller, *et al.*, (2018) suggested that servant leadership in the school setting may improve its results. Furthermore, Muller, *et al.*, (2018) recommended that leaders need to pay attention to employees in order to promote servant leadership. Muller, *et al.*, (2018) say that leaders need to acknowledge their personal limitation and encourage personal reflections. They further on suggest that leaders should maintain authenticity and must have humility. Lastly, Muller, *et al.*, (2018) assert that leaders should go beyond being care takers of organisations but act as role models and lead by example. Whilst the

study fails to establish a causal link between successful leadership styles and improved performance outcomes; it does illuminate successful variables that could help to improve leadership and teaching at schools.

2.4 Implementation of servant leadership

Greenleaf (1970) wanted people to make sense of the principle and values of servant leadership in ways that made sense to them. That was a long time in 1970 but now that times have changed, Sipe and Frick (2015), using the insights from Greenleaf (1970), posit that practical steps are needed for the application of servant leadership.

Teamwork between leaders and followers as major enabling factors in the implementation of servant leadership (Van Dierendonck, 2017). Emphasis on the needs of followers, where the leader serves those that he leads (Van Dierendonck, 2017) is another enabler to the implementation because once the followers see that the leader genuinely cares about their well-being, they will be happy and will give off their best and copy.

The ethical aspect of servant leadership also motivates followers, (Greenleaf, 1977; Northouse, 2016). Greenleaf (1970) posits that servants that are chosen to be leaders develop the support of their followers because they are committed and reliable. This commitment and reliability makes followers to give of their best within the organisation, (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2010).

Northouse(2016), observed that the need to serve others does not naturally emerge, but needs to be cultivated and this is further explained by Sipe and Frick(2015) who are of the view that there is nobody who is born a leader but that leaders are made, because each person contains the ability for leadership. Service to others is found in all major religious traditions (e.g., in Islam that provide the spiritual and morality-ethics focus to the concept of servant leadership (Kumar, 2018). Caring of followers is not about wanting to benefit from them financially but about improving the community when everybody enacts servant leadership traits (Burton & Peachey, 2013). Sipe and Frick (2015) say the motivation, insight and information are not enough for the implementation of servant leadership but regular practice, accountability and feedback all combined with persistence are enabling factors in the implementation of servant leadership.

2.5 The significance of implementing servant leadership in schools

Consoy (2018) is of the view that given the transformational power of servant leadership, leaders inspire the call to service for employees, furthermore, produces good organisational results such as by building a trusting culture, organizational citizen behavior, team effectiveness and satisfaction (Kumar, 2018). In addition, Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) are of the view that servant leaders are expected to choose to serve first, and to give freedom to subordinates. This is important for the employees to have the sense of belonging.

Chinyerere (2018) posits that servant leadership creates a positive work climate and that servant leadership had a positive influence on school commitment (Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko and Roberts, 2015). Servant leadership also positively influenced followers' commitment to organizational change (Van Dierendonck, 2017). Furthermore, organizations led by servant leaders are positively associated with procedural justice such as in fairness (Chan, 2017) and this fosters trust in the servant leader and the organization (Insley, *et al.*, 2016). Subsequently, trust created by a servant leader facilitates an open climate, builds a helping culture, and is associated with organizational citizenship behaviors (Mahembe and Engelbrecht, 2018). In addition, servant leadership can improve team effectiveness and fairness and this further relates to job satisfaction through organisational justice (Donia, Raja, Panaccio and Wang, 2016) and can enhance leaders' effectiveness (Sousa and Van Dierendonck, 2017)

2.6 Promoting the servant leadership principle to enhance effective leadership- enabling factors

Chinyerere (2018) is of the view that a heart driven by greed will put their own agenda, safety, status and gratification ahead of those affected by their thoughts and actions. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that in Servant leadership, insight, information and motivation are not enough only persistent and meaningful action which is combined with regular practice, feedback and accountability completes the education. As the great minds of old Aristotle cited in Crespo (2016) once said that we are what we repeatedly do. Prochaska, Redding and Evers (2015) are of the view that work on **behavior change** is important because bad habits like smoking and drinking are conquered by following a specific change process. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that everyone must work at

servant leadership and that it's the choice which has to be made by the individuals for themselves and the organisations. This is called the psychology of change. Deep reflections and heart work is necessary to engage in personal change. Chinyerere (2018) posit that if followers see that the servant leader cares for them that gives them motivation to follow as well.

2.7 Challenges that may affect teachers and school principals

Greenleaf (1977) posits that being a servant leader is a question of the heart. The question that arises then is how can one be sure that the change in the behavior of both principals and teachers is real? Sipe and Frick (2015) further explain culture or behaviour change and the application of what has been learnt in real life situations is also challenging.

A study by Ekundayo (2010; 2016) shows that there are chronic and critical challenges impeding the quality of education. Ekundayo (2016) further says that teacher unrests and political interference lead to avoidable wastes in time, finances and destruction of property. Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) assert that working conditions and issues pertaining to remuneration have added to the challenges faced by teachers and their leaders.

The subject of leadership is complex and one of the challenges facing principals is how to motivate teachers in order to accomplish school goals (Mahembe, et al., 2016). Savage- Austin and Honeycutt (2011) cited in Chinyerere (2018) posit that barriers that prevent the servant leadership practices at schools are the schools culture, the fear of change and the lack of knowledge regarding the servant leadership philosophy. The barriers are further explicated as the beliefs that people have, that hinder then opening up to new ideas, symbols, norms and rules (Chinyerere, 2018). Chan (2017) further says that a challenge to the implementation of servant leadership is where people have contradictory beliefs on what is right and wrong e.g. when acts of violence are perpetrated on the weak in the name of religion.

The political climate of a country can be an enabling factor in the implementation of servant leadership principles (Ekundayo, 2016) because if it is policy, then schools will comply as in top-down accountability. However, this is not what is promoted by servant leadership, where the leader does not order people around but works with them and this poses a challenge.

Servant leadership is sometimes criticised for seeming unrealistic, encouraging passivity, not working in every context, sometimes serving the wrong cause and being associated with the

negative connotation of the term servant or slave (Spears, 2002). In support of the negative connotation statement, Sipe and Frick (2015) assert that the servant terminology is an issue because not everyone wants to be a servant as the term exudes weakness. Sipe and Frick (2015) further explain that to promote the principles of servant leadership sound un-achievable but the good thing is nothing happens without a dream. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that from a dream, a mission and vision are born, which then leads to reality.

Van Dierendonck (2011) posit that although servant leadership was coined by Greenleaf (1970), its original principles can be found in the Bible. That is the reason why servant leadership is said to be biased towards the Christian faith and this orientation may pose as a challenge in the implementation because teachers are not employed in terms of their religious affiliation but on a lot more other factors, like qualification and experience.

Servant leadership calls for redress and it may take a very long time for the victims to heal, (Greenleaf, 1970). We can use the healing and forgiveness principle of servant leadership theory, which is easier said than done.

Wong and Page (2007) cited in Sipe and Frick (2015) see authoritarian leadership and pride as the major forces that oppose servant leadership. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that leaders distrust in servant leadership comes from their own lack of confidence that others will follow them if they don't exercise coercive power. Sipe and Frick (2015) asserted that knowing the right principles of leadership does not mean that they will be carried out as it is not easy to replace the old habits of bad behaviour and apply what is learned to the real life situation. Greenleaf (1970) posits that everything begins with the individual, the psychology of change in the individual, only then can servant leadership be engraved into the organisation's operations, climate and culture.

The challenges are explained because this study explores servant leadership perspectives of the principals and the teachers, hence, it is important to understand the challenges that the participants face to better understand their world.

2.8 Gaps in the studies

In the review by Kumar (2018) servant leadership studies in the educational environments are still lacking. This is where this study fits in because it is investigating the teachers' and principals' perspectives at school settings. Further on Kumar (2018) says that the majority of researchers are

available in the Western cultural contexts. This study, of exploring servant leadership was done in the South African context, Johannesburg East District. This locates this study, under investigations across a variety of contexts, cultures and themes spreading it away from the West. The majority of the studies investigating the phenomenon of the perspectives of teachers and school principals, for example, Ekinici (2015), Von Fischer and DeJong (2017) and Chinyerere (2018) all were quantitative studies. This then suggests that studies investigating the servant leadership perspectives of teachers and school principals were lacking. This study is qualitative and is needed to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and see the world in their eyes. Lastly, Van Dierendonck (2017) says the methodological weakness of most of the studies on servant leadership, consisted of leaders estimating their own leadership behaviour. The perspective of the followers is clearly missing.

Thus said, this study added to the body of knowledge on servant leadership in schools by focusing on the perspectives of the teachers and school principals. The results of this study, may also be evaluated in terms of developing school principals and teachers.

2.9 Theoretical frameworks of the study

This study is underpinned by the theoretical framework by Greenleaf (1970). Greenleaf (1970, p 15) which states that “Servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then the conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” There are ten characteristics of servant leadership identified by Spears (2002) are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community.

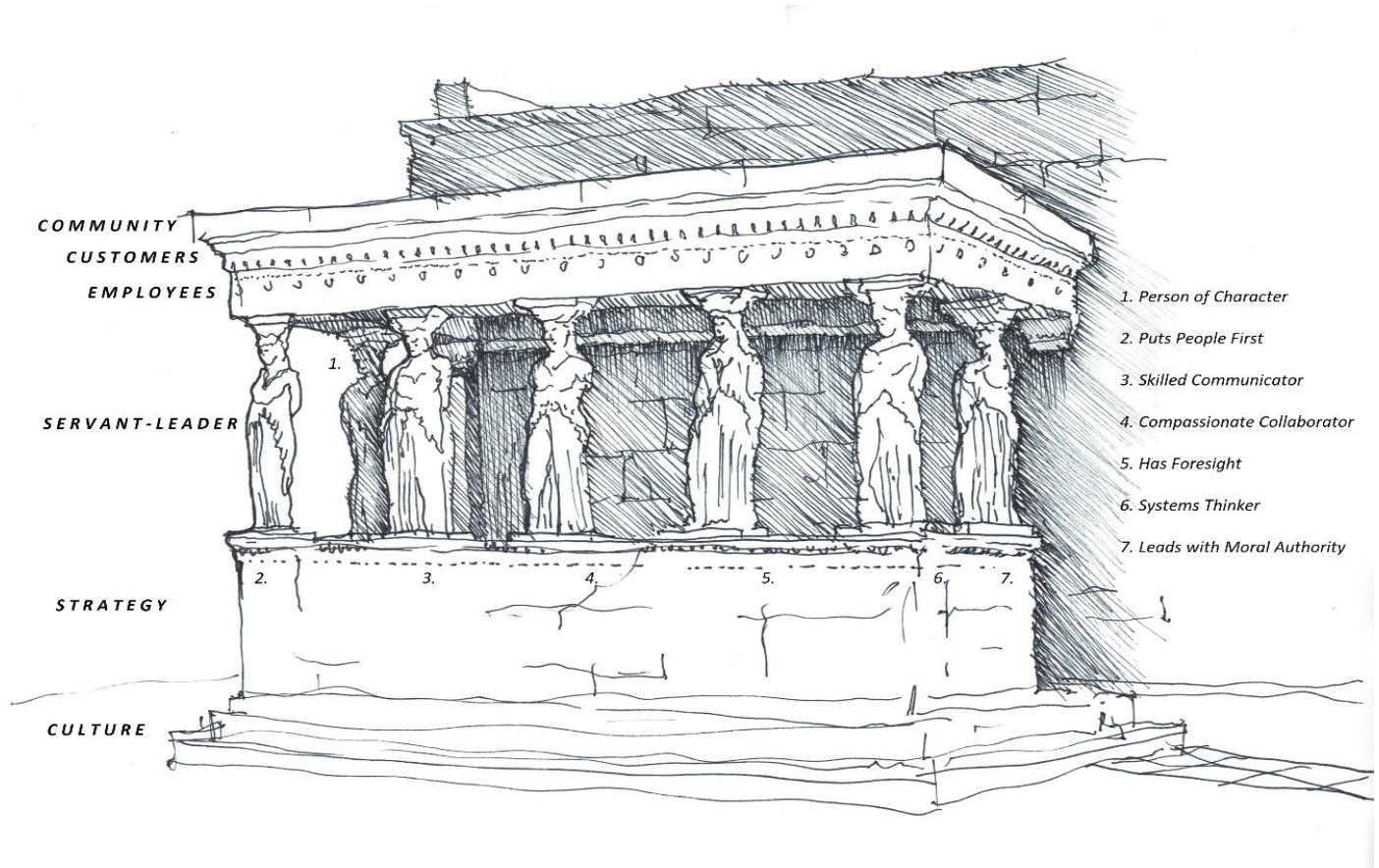
The short fall for spears (2002) model was how does one become and enact these characteristics? This is where Sipe and Frick (2015) standing on these shoulders of Spears (2002) and Greenleaf (1970) thrive to address these questions hence have explained these ten characteristics into a framework that will gather, measure capability and knowledge of servant leaders.

2.9.1 Conceptual model by Sipe and Frick (2015)

This research project makes use of Sipe and Frick (2015) s model which brings forward the seven pillars of servant leadership which they posit are key in putting into action leading by serving. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that people see servant leadership as an enormous giant without any profitable plan. Sipe and Frick (2015) converted Greenleaf (1970) insights of servant leadership into something that can be applied and measured in our daily lives. This theoretical framework is important in exploring the principals' servant leadership qualities from the teachers' perspectives as shown by the definition that follows.

A definition of a servant leader, according to Sipe and Frick (2015, pp. 4) “is a **person of character**, who **puts people first**. This person **communicates well**, is a **compassionate collaborator**, has **foresight**, is a **systems thinker** and leads with **moral authority**.” These characteristics form the seven pillars of servant leadership by (Sipe & Frick, 2015). Pillars are firm and strong. They support heavy buildings hence they need to be embedded on a solid strong foundation of which without these pillars the structure would collapse in this case according to Sipe & Frick (2015) the foundation is made of the culture and strategy. The seven pillars support all the stake holders which can be employees, customers and the community at large. In the case of this research project the employees are the teachers, the parents and learners as the customers and the community comprising of the local, national and global communities. Greenleaf (1977) is of the view that a leader should serve the people.

2.10.2 The seven pillars of servant leadership



Drawing by Luigi Salemi (2019). Originally by Sipe & Frick (2015)

Pillar 1 – Person of character

Leavy (2017) posits that good character is made up of knowing the good habits of the mind, heart and action. Sipe & Frick (2015, p 15) further explain that a person of character is honest, trustworthy and humble, who leads by conscience and is filled with enthusiasm and is committed to the desire to serve others. A person of character is required to maintain integrity, to demonstrate humility and to serve a higher purpose (Blanchard, *et al.*, 2010).

Leavy (2017) is of the view that character can be built hence this is useful in the psychology of change. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that the principals' performance depends on their personal character and this impacts positively on the school organisation. Leavy (2017) further says that when one thrives to be a person of character one needs to make themselves aware that they are not right all the time and must seek advice from others and better still ask themselves if they are able

to meet Greenleaf (1970) best test that of putting and growing the followers. Sipe & Frick (2015) posit that a person of character needs to have patience, growth and positive change. Lack of humility in a person breeds impatience. A humble leader is likely to make better decisions based on broader information and analysis. When things go wrong, normally there is a tendency for people to defend themselves, find blame and react in a habitual manner. Humble people do not overrate themselves or think of themselves less but are accountable to followers [Sipe & Frick, 2015]

Summarily, Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that the making of a person of character in servant leadership requires the maintenance of integrity, showing humility and serving a higher purpose than themselves.

Pillar 2 - Puts people first

This pillar is directly adopted from Greenleaf (1970) theory. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that a person who is a servant leader aspires to help others to reach their full potential. The servant leader serves in a manner that allows those served to grow as persons and by that it shows authentic care for others. Gibran (2019) contends that the joy of giving is a big reward in itself. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that the main competences of putting people first is to display a servant's heart, to be mentor minded and to demonstrate care and concern. There are organisations that chase after cash only regardless of the harm caused to the people. In the school environment, for example, there may be teachers who are not competent in teaching a subject, when parents question this, the leaders should come clean about the lack of competence even if it may make the school look bad. This school may even lose the client if the parent decides so but Sipe and Frick (2015) reckon that people need to be considered before money.

Putting people first is about **showing a servant's heart** as Blanchard, *et al.*, (2010) posit that being a servant is an affair of the heart and not an affair of the head. It's in the actions that people display to each other and to the followers. Many a time leaders say they are servant leaders yet the actions say otherwise. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit and one has to want to go the extra mile for others and these people mostly find happiness by doing this.

Secondly, putting people first is about **being mentor-minded**. Greenleaf (1977) understood a

mentor as one whose aim is to grow the student not a trainer who imparts knowledge by telling the mentees the way things should be. Greenleaf (1977) says that in order for the followers to grow, they need to be given a chance to develop their own knowledge and skills by giving them responsibilities. Green leaf (1977) further explains that the mentor gives responsibility for their own growth and that makes them have the freedom to take responsible risks and they will learn more through mistakes than success. He goes on to say that being mentor minded as a servant leader is to also tolerate the mistakes done by the followers or mentees.

Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest that the mentor understands who the mentoring is for; themselves or the mentee? Secondly, the mentor needs to allow others to find their own ways rather than follow the mentors' way.

Thirdly, putting people first is about showing genuine concern and care. This revolves around prioritising the support of the freedom, health and wisdom of people. Mother Teresa is one of the people that displayed great care and concern to the poorest of India. Sipe and Frick (2015) state that Mother Teresa said that she would not do what she did for a million dollars because she did it out of love, genuine concern and care for others.

Pillar 3- Skilled Communicator

Servant leaders respond to any problem by listening first (Greenleaf, 1970). Sipe and Frick (2015) further explain that servant leaders need to try to understand the situation first before trying to make people understand them first. People would rather talk than listen. They conclude quickly and convince others of their rightness. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that servant leaders listen attentively with genuine interest and they **invite feedback**. This is **done assertively** and with persuasion rather than force.

Skilled communication is not easy, it's a life long journey, and Sipe and Frick (2015) compares this life long journey of skilled communication to the process of physical weathering which takes place when the water persistently falls and weakening the hard matter. Sipe& Frick (2015) are of the view that the direct sharing and attentive listening can increase communication and this gradually changes people.

Communication is the glue that holds relationships together in organisations. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that, that which makes it possible for relationships to be built include being empathetic, truthfulness, immediacy, self-reflection and confrontation.

Reinsh and Turner (2019) suggest that in skilled communication leaders need to confront unacceptable behaviour directly and offer suggestions for improvement and accountability. Secondly, Reinsh and Turner (2019) further say leaders need to identify their conflict management style. This speaks to whether leaders accommodate the conflict, avoid it or compromise as Sipe and Frick (2015) explain. Reinsh & Turner (2019) further say that this includes the most common triggers of conflict avoidance and how to manage a misunderstanding.

Effective communication is a way of **servicing others** while lifting up the vision of the organisation. Good communicators use the servant leader's way of employing power in the form of persuasion. Greenleaf (1977) explains that people should not think that because they are well educated and clever that they are good listeners because listening is demanding. Firstly, leaders have a tendency to choose what they want to hear from who they want to listen to but this is contrary to what Thomas Aquinas cited in Ketteller (2001)'s quote: Respect and love them both who offer positive or negative **opinions** because they contribute to finding the solution or truth.

Leader Member Exchange theory and servant leadership

Working towards being a skilled communicator will not be full without mention of the Leader Member Exchange theory ((LMX). Barbuto and Hayden (2011) posit that leadership happens in every area of human interaction Barbuto and Hayden (2011) define LMX as a special relationship that leaders develop with each follower. The relationships that are developed need to be developed in such a way that there is trust. Barbuto and Hayden (2011) posit that those leaders capable of uniting people in an organisation for the greater purpose for the community will be trusted and respected and this results in stronger dyadic relations. Leader member exchange just like servant leadership has been found to be bring forth positive outcomes for organisations in the same way that considers followers needs. In agreement, Liden, Wayne & Henderson (2016) evidence that when servant leadership is matched with followers who desire it, this has an impact on performance and organisational citizen behaviour positively.

The relation of LMX to servant leadership was tested by Barbuto and Hayden (2011) and they

found that firstly, the majority of the participants perceived that the leaders willing to connect with colleagues on an emotional level (healing) build strong, positive relationships with their followers. Secondly the leaders that put the followers interests ahead of their own will garner great trust and dedication from followers and this will increase the quality of exchanges hence the leaders altruistic calling will be related to LMX. Thirdly, Leaders who are persuasive rather than cohesive will develop stronger relationships with followers hence persuasive mapping is related to LMX. Fourthly, the extent to which leaders prepare their organization to benefit the society will garner support and trust that fosters strong dyadic relations. This can be achieved by reaching out to the community throughout reach projects and facilitating company policies that take care of the surrounding community. Barbuto and Hayden (2011) implied that Servant leadership is a strong predictor of leader-member exchange quality. Barbuto and Hayden (2011) further posit that if leadership educators can successfully develop future leaders to increase their use of servant leadership qualities, then improvements in the quality of exchanges with their subordinates and colleagues can be expected. This speaks to communication all the way mostly because the exchanges will happen when there is communication. Secondly, another way of working towards being a good communicator is by **acting interested** according to Sipe & Frick (2015). They further explain that when talking to someone one needs to stop what they are doing no matter how much they are in a rush. Thirdly, another way of being a good communicator is to be encouraging. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that listening overcomes open-ended questions as the one listened to is encouraged to speak out what they really think by the simple fact that they are being listened to. Fourthly, Sipe & Frick (2015) suggest that clarifying or reflecting back to the talking person the understanding you have of what is being said to you also offers an opportunity for them to correct what may have been misunderstood.

Fifthly, good communication requires leaders who **invite feedback** (Sipe & Frick, 2015). Most leaders claim that they welcome feedback to make them appear as if they are open. All feedback is good if it is taken positively and as a way to improve but the question then arises if the principals see it that way? Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that leaders lose the plot and interpret these attempts as criticisms. They defend their right to their opinions and put up defensive filters. Sipe and Frick (2015) write about how the criticism of a product actually helped a company to improve. This may be because the leaders took their shortfalls and really tried to work on making corrections.

Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that leaders need to be open when they are being given feedback. They need not interrupt but listen first. Secondly, leaders have must be willing to listen without twisting things around and finding fault, as in turning the table. Thirdly, leaders need to be calm even when hearing things that make them cross and be thoughtful on their reactions. Fourthly, leaders need to be clear with their commitment and be truthful on what they have benefitted and the steps they may take going forward.

Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that being assertive as a communication skill makes feedback acceptable and motivating. This involves knowing yourself first before communicating a message one needs to be able to name the feeling that is affecting them at the time. It could be anger, sadness or joy. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that there is a huge difference between the way servant leaders practice assertiveness and the way it is usually taught generally. Servant leaders often ask themselves the question as to what extent they are being assertive. And the real test for a servant leader by Greenleaf (1970): Are those served, while being served become healthier, freer, and wiser and are more likely to be servants.

In conclusion to this segment, Sipe and Frick (2015) say that being a skilled communicator is learning the how to listen, assertiveness and feedback will improve life and it all comes by the choice of leading by serving first. Communication is deemed as the golden thread that speaks to

Pillar 4- Compassionate collaborator

Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that a servant leader strengthens relationships and thrives to create a culture of collaboration by supporting diversity. This is true in the spirit of servant leadership by Greenleaf (1970) who said that people are not perfect alone, they need others.

Crislip and Larson (1994) cited in Sipe and Frick (2015, pp. 81) define collaboration as a beneficial relationship between parties who work towards common goals by sharing responsibility, authority and accountability. Sipe and Frick (2015) offer ways of how servant leaders may create collaboration by: inviting and appreciating the contributions of others; by being fully aware of the quality of the life in the work place; by relating with people who are different and from diverse backgrounds; by resolving conflict in a fair way. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that a collaborative culture includes the following: trust and respect; power based on accountability and expertise, commitment to the improvement of the organisation and shared leadership where all

leaders take initiative.

Core competences of a compassionate collaborator

Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that a compassionate collaborator expresses appreciation, builds teams and resolves conflicts. Firstly, appreciation to the followers can be shown by praising them sincerely and it must be heartfelt. Secondly, on building teams and communities, Greenleaf (1970) believed in the division of labour as in many leaders who serve different roles. Greenleaf's different roles of leaders in a group presented by Sipe & Frick (2015) are as follows: A mediator is one who helps with conflict resolution; the consensus finder is the one who finds the language to state exactly what everybody can agree on; the critic is the one who identifies the flaws in the system and says them and this person can really say hurtful stuff sometimes and their contribution is taken as also beneficial to the group; the meliorator is the person who allows his or her love to show and thrives to find the good feelings. These people are good to have around and no organisation will function without meliorators; Process watchers are those that observe the overall group processes and watch the leaders too. They also take quiet action to address any problems that may arise in the system; the titular head is the appointed leader because the team members need to understand that someone has to be in charge and needs to hold the members accountable to the agreed protocols and this person is also responsible for being the voice for the group to the world.

Thirdly, the compassionate collaborator needs to negotiate or resolve conflict. Sipe and Frick (2015) say that because different people meet up and the differences need not keep them apart hence the need for conflict resolution. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that people are scared to bring out the problems affecting the group because they could be targeted by the bosses as it will be taken like they are challenging power.

Compassionate collaboration will not happen if people are fighting and if not handled well, they can storm out of control and harm both the leaders and the other team members. It is important that people know their conflict style if real progress is to be noted. This can be done by people identifying where they roost. Sipe and Frick (2015, pp. 94) say that the way people act in conflicts can be represented by the birds in the following manner:

Doves smooth over fights in order to avoid hurt feelings and destroying relationships, geese

collaborate and in conflict get together even more so they achieve goals, ostriches avoid- they would rather hide away and wait for the storm to blow over, the hawks fight to win – they attack their opponents, the owls try to find fair and peaceful solutions .

Anger Management

Sipe and Frick (2015) acknowledge the fact that anger can affect the servant leadership responses negatively. Angry people may react spontaneously and in most cases do not listen, Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest ways to control anger by relaxing the face, moving away, blowing and chilling for a while until it subsides. Sipe and Frick (2015) further suggest steps to making peace which are that the parties need to first, agree to the set rules, secondly, they need to share their views on the issue at hand, thirdly, discuss the solutions and fourthly, agree on something and make the pledge of peaceful co-existence.

Pillar 5- Foresight

Greenleaf (1970) posits that foresight is the central ethic of servant leadership and is a very important function. Spears (2002) further defines foresight as the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a given situation enabling servant leaders to understand lessons from the past, what is happening currently and likely consequences of a decision for the future. Sipe and Frick (2015) define foresight as having a sense for the unknowable as in being intuitive. Greenleaf (1970) saw foresight as a survival strategy for the leaders and he further says that getting the future wrong can be a danger to both people and socio-economic statuses. The example given in Sipe and Frick (2015) that of a company that retrenched a lot of the workers in favour of making fewer big cars, did not have the foresight to think of the high economic changes like high fuel prices and the change in demographics, environmental and perspectives.

Ways of exercising foresight

Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that in order for leaders to be able to learn to harness the power of foresight they need to look at the history of the organisation they are involved in and be open to any breakthroughs. Brain storming of new ideas and insights and seeking informed feedback in in the humility of a true servant leader.

As already mentioned that Greenleaf (1970) considered foresight as the most important of all tenets of servant leadership, Sipe and Frick (2015) explain foresight through the eye of courage, vision and creativity as this also a main part in a school as an organisation.

Schools need to have a vision and a servant leader is called to refer to it constantly and refine it where ever something comes. Foresight is a more focused application of creativity and Sipe & Frick (2015) say in order for one to display creativity they need to state the problem and suggest possible solutions. Creativity needs to be grown because times are changing hence the need to be able to compete in the global economy (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Creative people are mostly seen as threats in organisations and these are the people who are more likely to see the big picture and Greenleaf (1970) in agreement says that foresight allows us to see the big picture and maps out where we are going. Greenleaf (1970) further explained that every organisation needs operationalisers, those who are able to keep track of details with integrity. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that servant leaders are called to live what they say so people can see that it's not all talk and no action. Creativity is motivated by rewards in the form of incentives or the show of appreciation. Greenleaf (1977) says for leaders to be able to face the unknown, a lot of confidence is needed. Sipe and Frick (2015) further explain that a lot of confidence is needed because there are a lot of challenges which may face a leader who act on their creativity. These challenges are in the form of opposition and sabotage from the other stakeholders or followers.

In conclusion for the pillar of foresight, Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that foresight, vision, creativity and principled action if practised will become integrated into the very bones of the servant leader.

Pillar 6- Systems thinker

Greenleaf (1970) is of the view that systems thinking is looking at something and considering all the elements in totality as much as possible before taking a swing at it. Sipe & Frick (2015) expanding on systems thinking says a servant leader thinks and manages change strategically balancing the whole with the sum of its parts. A systems thinker according to Sipe and Frick (2015) is one who is comfortable with complexity, one who can adapt to the different situations and one who considers the greater good.

There is a tendency for people to zoom in on an issue and try to analyse and solve it instead of

zooming out to see the issue from different angles and considering all the underlying structures or generative mechanisms before paving the way forward. Sipe and Frick (2015) utilise a systems pyramid which places the current issue that has happened as an event which forms the top of the pyramid. These events are the situations that we see and react to. Underneath the tip in that pyramid comes the strategies, which are created in response to events. The culture comes next which either can influence the strategies put in place positively or negatively. Culture is or lastly the big base of the pyramid represents the beliefs held by the people. Culture and beliefs are the easiest to overlook but they hold the key to change.

Sipe and Frick(2015) reckon that the systems pyramid is important because putting people first will not be possible if the focus is on the things happening at the surface only , here represented as ‘events’. Servant leaders need to go deeper with a focus on the culture and beliefs.

Greenleaf and systems thinking

Greenleaf (1970) cited in Sipe and Frick (2015) lists the requirements for servant leaders with regards to systems thinking. These requirements are that a servant leader needs to see life in all its messiness. Secondly by seeing things as a whole the servant leader cultivates heightened awareness which allows them to recognise the connections between all the different elements between the people, events and possibilities. Thirdly, Greenleaf (1970) said that ethical conduct is central to seeing things as a whole. A leader is required to understand the causes, effects, deeper relationships so they cannot not take the blame in case of any eventuality. A servant leader is responsible and acts ethically and makes best the resources they have at hand.

Systems thinking and complexity

Human life is often linked in many ways that that are difficult to understand and the call for servant leaders to be comfortable with the messiness is hard to fathom. A servant leaders is not comfortable with complexity because he has figured out all the answers but remains with the remaining questions and to keep seeking answers.

Systems thinking and adaptability

Greenleaf (1970) is of the view that leaders need to adapt to any change that may come as they set

goals. Sipe and Frick (2015) say that not one of these pillars need be considered in isolation of the other pillars. This more so visible when a servant leader strives to show adaptability. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that on the pillar of the servant leader being a person of character, the servant leader is humble and in the face of challenges and needs to realise that leadership is spread to everyone. On the pillar of foresight, the servant leader reads the signs and prepares for the future by getting to dig deeper and understanding the patterns and structure. On the pillar of communication the servant leader doesn't harbour information and finds the language to convey information on systems thinking.

Systems thinking and Change

The winds of change affect the organisations and systems as we know them (Van Dierendonck, 2011) hence the need for people to be at least move with the times. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that a systems thinking leader will lead the change in the organisation, in relations and in their own personal capacity. These 3 dimensions need to be considered interdependently for change to be maximised. Organisational change often has a lot of challenges like resistance and fear to change by some because it will be changing the culture of the place.

Firstly, in organisational dimension the servant leader needs to consider the results of that which comes with succession planning and human resources management. Secondly the relational dimension takes effect when there is a new leader who has recently taken up a position and in most cases some feel that they have a lot of work and on the other hand some will be just causing grief because their friends will be gone. Thirdly, in the individual dimension the personal beliefs of the people affect change and some reactions like denial, disbelief and in some cases sabotage as in attempts to make things remain the same. Servant leaders understand this and find harmony towards the shared vision.

Summarily, systems thinking thrives to support the test of a servant leaders that put the served first on whether those served are left healthier and wiser and more likely to be servants themselves.

Pillar 7- Moral Authority

A person who has moral authority is one that is seen as worthy of respect, is seen as trustworthy, is confident and upholds the quality standards with regards to performance. People will grant

moral authority to an individual if they experience that one has the elements of the other servant leadership pillars already discussed. This seems too idealistic as no one can have all the good qualities that identifies with moral authority. The leader needs to be a humble person of character, who puts people first, who communicates skilfully and gives feedback. According to Sipe and Frick (2015) they posit that moral authority is given to a leader that behaves as a person of character, who puts people first through caring, mentoring and serving. The third pillar being that the leader who is granted moral authority will be a skilled communicator who takes all feedback and uses it for good. The fourth pillar speaks to collaboration and team work, the person who has moral authority is able to honor diversity and handles conflict

Sipe and Frick (2015) see a servant leader as one that values moral authority over positional authority and leads by example. Sipe and Frick further view the moral leader as one who first, accepts and allocates responsibility. Secondly, this leader shares power and control. Thirdly, this leader nurtures a culture of accountability. Servant leadership is all about the actions of the leader in relation to the followers.

Moral authority and delegation of responsibility

People find it hard to trust other people to do what they are responsible for. This shows a victim mentality. People with moral authority are able to ask others for help in the areas where they are lacking. These people are always on the lookout for any creative contributions that may come through from anywhere. On allocating responsibility the servant leader treats the followers as partners because even if they give clear instructions on what is to be done they remain open to offer their help if the follower- partner needs it, just like what a servant would do. Greenleaf (1977) is of the view that those who pose a challenge to servant leadership are the strong natural servant leaders who choose not to do anything and follow authoritarian leaders for various reasons.

Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest that there are steps which may help in allocating responsibility. These are first: to clarify on expectations; secondly, to provide the resources; thirdly to agree on a deadline and fourthly, the availability of the leader to help the followers.

Moral authority and sharing of power

Sipe and Frick (2015) see a servant leader sharing power with everybody as firstly brought about

by Foucault (1980) and this may lead to the success of the mission. This speaks to collaboration as well when people come together and agree to do something. The example can be that of a school outing, where the many people can give out the water bottles instead of one person doing all. The task at hand gets accomplished much faster and everybody would be happy. This all starts with serving a common vision that the organisation and its people has created. This vision it has to be one that is supported by all employees and not the chosen few or the executives. In most cases, this is not the way things happen in some organisations.

The solution Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest is that right from the start all stakeholders need to agree and support a common vision instead of the top leadership trying to win the people into a venture they would have decided on their own.

Moral authority and accountability

The culture of accountability needs to be created and Greenleaf (1977) cited in Sipe and Frick (2015) believed that instead of the rules coming first in an institution moral principles should come first. The story of the security guard ,Mr. Mukendi, at Balfour Park mall who picked up a handbag with all expensive gadgets and cash, he went out of his way to look for the lady and gave back all the stuff intact, (North -Eastern Tribune Newspaper, 2017). If this man was not principled he could not have bothered to do so because it is common knowledge that guards earn very little.

Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that an organisation needs to align similar policies with servant leadership if it is to be enhanced. For example a company may start by calling all employees colleagues or partners. All goes back to the hiring stage where people are hired because they are honest and give of themselves, not teaching them to be honest on the job. For people to be accountable they need to know their roles hence the principal in the case of the school need to set quality standards for performance. The leader is then required to let the followers use their own creativity and only step in when necessary. This then shows that the leaders need to be exemplary, because things are easier said than done.

The culture of the school is very important as it has to be the one that accepts and grows accountability. All this is very challenging for leaders especially if they have to deal with conflict.

Tensions may occur which may hinder the progress and things may not move as planned because of this. Leaders have a tendency to demonise and get their own way by hurting others by virtue of their position which is not congruent to Greenleaf (1970) servant leadership.

Greenleaf (1970) says that servant leaders encounter difficulties and do get cross but they are sustained by the spirit, the aspect of inner strength that wills the leader to get up and continue acting as a servant leader in spite of the difficulties faced which include disappointments.

Implementation of the seven pillars

In the implementation the pillars of servant leadership, Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that there is no single map to be followed as organisations vary in geography. The profile of implementation needs to be considered so as to see what needs urgent attention before the change process begins. Sipe and Frick (2015) sight lack of knowledge relating to the change process, impatience and incongruence as hampering servant leadership practices.

Cohen and Sherman (2014) are of the view that for change to be seen, people need to change their perspectives. Cerit (2009) says most organisations kill the spirit and block hope by the way some leaders treat people. Change may be coerced but this will see people doing things they don't want to do and often such people complain and may cripple any new ideas passively. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that their framework links change to widely held values and beliefs and the ethic of servant hood lives in the hearts of most people as a value and belief.

2. 10 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed the literature and the theoretical frameworks that under pinned this research study. The first part is a thorough literature review of servant leadership coined by Robert Greenleaf (1970 relating to servant leadership conceptualisations, views on implementation, the promotion and the importance of servant leadership in enhancing leadership and management in learning organisations.

Thereafter, the theoretical framework by Sipe and Frick (2015) and the LMX theory of the relationship of the leader and the follower were presented and discussed. Sipe and Frick (2015) model coined from Greenleaf (1970) underpinned my study because it is comprehensive and

clearly shows and elaborates on the enactment of servant leadership practices required in schools. The following chapter will focus on the research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN and METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The literature study in chapter two endeavored to explore the conceptualisations of servant leadership theory from the different sources at schools and how it can be used to enhance leadership, management and teaching. In chapter 3, the following aspects are given attention: the paradigm in which the study falls in, the research design, the methodology used to conduct the research, the sampling used and the data generation methods.

3.2 Paradigms in research

De Vos (2010) states that it is important that research is conducted within a specific paradigm. Similarly, according to Creswell (2014) and Bryman (2016), there are four research paradigms and these are: namely positivism; interpretivism; emancipatory and pragmatism. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) also posit that a research paradigm represents a worldview that defines, for the researchers who hold this view, what is acceptable to research and how this should be done. Working within a paradigm determines choices such as the following: What kind of questions are supposed to be asked? What can be observed and investigated? How to generate, produce or collect data? How to interpret the findings? Some researchers such as (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014) state that answers to the above questions reflect a belief about the nature of social “world” and these beliefs are then taken to define a particular paradigm. The chosen paradigm for this research is the interpretivism or social constructivism because the study entails the understandings, experiences and practices of the teachers and principals of servant leadership. Reality is multiple as seen through the many views of different beings (Creswell, 2013).

3.2.1 Interpretivism

Neumann (2014) states that the reason for research in this paradigm is to understand and describe meaningful social action and Creswell (2014) explains that human beings construct meanings as

they engage with the world they are interpreting and for this, qualitative researchers tend to use open ended questions so that participants can share their views. Neumann (2014), Creswell (2014) and Bryman (2016) state that the human nature of interpretivism is that social beings create meaning based on their social and historical perspectives. Bryman (2016) further says that we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed on us by our culture and so the qualitative researchers seek to understand the setting of participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. Neumann (2014) states that the process of qualitative research is largely inductive with the interpretation of what they find being shaped by the researchers' own experiences and back ground. Creswell (2014) similarly says that good evidence is embedded in the context of social interactions and an explanation that is true resonates or feels right to those who are being studied. Neumann (2014) states that values are an integral part of social life: no group's values are wrong, only different. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) states that the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life settings and these subjective meanings are negotiated socially or historically, furthermore, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others hence social constructivism. For purposes of this study, the interpretive paradigm was utilised.

3.2.2 Ontology

Creswell (2014) states that ontological issue relates to the nature of social reality and Neumann (2014) is of the opinion that the nature of social reality for interpretivists are fluid definitions of a situation created by human interaction. Creswell (2014) further states that the ontological assumption is that multiple realities are socially constructed. For the critical social science the nature of social reality is multiple layered and governed by hidden, underlying structures: for the pragmatic/postmodern the nature of reality is chaotic and fluid without real patterns or master plan: for the feminist the nature of reality is gender- structured and there are power relations that keep people oppressed. In this research of servant leadership, knowledge was elicited from school teachers and principals in order to understand and make meaning of their servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and experiences. Since each of the participants had their own world view, the views were diverse.

3.2.3 Epistemology

This research of servant leadership is a *qualitative* study. Creswell (2013) posits that the epistemology seeks to answer questions of what counts as knowledge and how to justify it. It also seeks find the relationship between the researcher and that being researched. In conducting this type of a study, the researcher tries to get as close to the participants and assemble evidence based on individual views to get the subjective experiences of people. It becomes important for the study to be conducted in the field, hence for this study of servant leadership, the researcher went to the schools to generate the data. This is important for contexts and understanding what the participants are saying. The longer researchers stay in the field or get to know the participants, the more they know what they know from first-hand information.

3.3 Research design

According to Creswell (2013), the research design is the plan or schema that constitutes the research study.

A case study was used for this study, Bryman (2016) describes a case study, as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The case was the three school principals and nine teachers. It was a case of exploring servant leadership with the special emphasis on the perspectives of teachers and school principals in the Johannesburg East district. Rule and John (2011) assert that a case study can shed more light on the phenomenon and provide a thick, rich description of the case and also illuminate its relations to a larger context. The lived experiences of the participants were examined (Cohen, Manion and Morisson, 2011) and the researcher was provided with a wide variety of raw data (Rule and John, 2011). Bryman (2016) postulates that case studies can establish “cause and effect” which is the “how and why”. One of the strengths of case studies is that they observe effects in real contexts. Therefore, the context was a powerful determinant of cause and effect. Most crucially, case studies emphasise the individual unit and it allowed me to be in the context of the study (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, the rich contexts that I encountered required me to use several research methods to elicit data (Bryman, 2016). Thus a case study design was deemed appropriate for the phenomenon being studied as it adheres to the principle of *fit for purpose* (Rule and John, 2011).

However, some critics such as Cohen, et al., (2011) argue that case studies are flawed because they do not allow for the generalisation of the study. Scholars such as Rule and John (2011) counter this by proclaiming that the data obtained from case studies are precise and give a voice to the participants. It also retains the holistic and important characteristics of real life events. Rule and John (2011) further state that case studies may illuminate other, similar cases, thereby providing some level of generalisation. In the light of the aforementioned benefits, the case study offered the researcher a close-up and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. It also provided the researcher a wealth of descriptive data about the school principals and teachers in their unique, natural environments. This helped the researcher to explore their interactions, attitudes and characteristics regarding servant leadership practices, conceptualisations and experiences.

3.4 Research methodology

Gough (2000) opines that the word ‘methodology’ is derived from the Greek words *Meta* (with, after) and *hodos* (the way). It is also referred to by other monikers such as *methodos* (a following after) and *logos* (reason, account). Thus, methodology is basically the principles that guide the theory of producing knowledge. Neumann (2014) contend that the quantitative, mixed methods and qualitative methodologies are the three approaches that researchers use to help them answer their research questions and find solutions to their research problem. De Vos, et al., (2010) state that quantitative studies focus on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory hold true. The quantitative approach is generally viewed through the lens of the positivist paradigm.

The mixed methods research approach generates, analyses, and mixes both quantitative and qualitative methods in a research study (Creswell, 2013). The assumption is that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods provides a better understanding of the research problem ((Maree, 2011). However, Bryman (2016) also points out that this methodology has certain flaws, such as being very expensive and time consuming in generating and analysing the data.

This study used the qualitative research approach which is located in the interpretive paradigm. Slavin (2007, p.121) defines qualitative research as, “research that emphasise elaborate description of social or instructional setting, intended to explore social phenomena by immersing the investigator in the situation for extended periods”. In the same vein, De Vos, et al., (2010) maintain

that the qualitative approach is holistic and tries to comprehend the meaning that people attach to their daily social lives. Thus, it produces descriptive data in the participants own written or spoken words. As a result, it gave the researcher an in-depth and rich description of the experiences of school principals and teachers regarding their servant leadership practices and experiences.

There are a few important characteristics that pertain to qualitative research. Maree (2011) states that qualitative research maintains the “empathic neutrality”, or the authenticity of the natural setting as the source of data. In other words, the researcher was able to observe, describe and interpret the setting as it was. In addition, Neumann (2014) mentions that the researcher acts as the “human instrument” of data generation, and this required the researcher to display a certain amount of skill. Similarly, Nieuwenhuis (2007, p. 42) call for “theoretical sensitivity” from the researcher. This concept referred to the skill and ability of the researcher to critically synthesise the data. The researcher’s theoretical sensitivity was further developed through academic literature, professional experiences and personal experiences. This is corroborated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who posit that human beings are the most appropriate agents for naturalistic inquiry as they are cognisant of the contexts, process data and can adjust responses when required.

3.5 The context of the study

The context of the study supported the phenomenon being researched. An interpretive perspective was deemed relevant and in order to engage with the participants in their natural settings. Maree (2011) posits that the phenomenon is embedded in their unique contexts. Therefore, the researcher scrutinised the schools’ contexts in order to get a better understanding of the principals and teachers’ practices.

3.5.1 Selection of participants

The research design, research problem and research questions guided the researcher in the selection of the sample for this study. Maree (2011, p. 79) defines sampling as a process used to select a portion of the study population for study. Bryman (2016) further explains that there are two major groups of sampling methods. In probability sampling, the sample is representative of the larger population; whilst non-probability sampling does not purport to represent the larger population but a specific group (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The types of non-probability sampling strategies explained by Neumann (2014) are first, convenience sampling; the strategy is to get any

cases in any manner that is convenient. Secondly, in purposive sampling (Neumann, 2014) says that the participants are intentionally selected for a purpose. For this study, the school principals and teachers were **purposively** selected in order to understand their perspectives on servant leadership. That is the reason why the other employees of the school, cleaners and ancillary staff, were not selected because this was a case study involving the principals and teachers in their school settings only. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) posit that in the school setting the leader is the principal and the teacher is the follower. This is important as this study explores the perspectives of the principals and teachers on the phenomenon. Furthermore, the selection criteria of the key participants and the research sites were that they are ‘information rich’ sources (Patton, 1990, p.169). The district was chosen based on the convenience to where I live and work. Consequently this had a limited impact on the researcher’s time and expenses.

The research schools were also conveniently selected. . Nieuwenhuis (2007) says the sampling decisions are not only restricted to the selection of participants but also involve the settings, incidents, events, and activities to be included for data generation. Convenience sampling, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 114), “is a sample which is available and accessible at the time of the study.” The reasons for choice being that all the three schools are close to my place of work and it is easy to gain access to the participants needed for the study due to the limited time for the research and that it’s easier to work with participants that are not restricted in any way in order to get in-depth knowledge.

The principals and the teachers were purposefully selected for the research because of the lack of research on servant leadership schools in the South African context of the Johannesburg East District. Secondly, Van Dierendonck (2017) asserts that most of the qualitative studies on servant leadership involved the principals assessing their own leadership style. This research includes the perspectives of both leader and the led. This gap was fundamental in the planning for the research. Ultimately, the teachers and the school principals were the primary focus of the study as the researcher sought to gain an in-depth understanding of their perspectives on their servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and experiences. In the light of this sampling strategy, no generalisations were made to the population of school principals and teachers in the Johannesburg East District.

3.5.1.1 Profiling the three schools

The data that is presented and discussed in this chapter was generated in each of the three schools. In this case Creswell (2013) refers to as case study locations. Bryman (2016) posits that the researcher needs to be familiar with the setting in which the participant works or lives in order to understand what is being said in the shoes of the interviewee. The first section profiles the three schools, this also helps in establishing a greater understanding of the contextual background of the organisation. The second part will profile the participants in this case a total of nine teachers and a total of three principals.

Beta Primary School

Beta Primary School is a small independent catholic school situated in the East of Johannesburg. It opened its doors in 1939 and Fr. Phillip Erasme was headmaster. It was named St Paul's Parochial. The schools demographics have changed considerably and 99% of the learners are now black as compared to the apartheid era where the whole school was all white. The school was recently renovated and an additional six classrooms were added besides the counselling room, remedial office and class room, Art Centre and the Art therapy room. There is a library and a well-furnished computer center that has new computers and internet.

The learners come from as far as Soweto and Alexandria Township but some live in and around the school. The ratio of the black teachers to the white is 1:3. There is a very low staff turnover as some have been in the school for more than 20 years. There are 300 learners and 21 teaching staff members. Fees are R 42000 per annum excluding the aftercare and transport. The children are mostly from the middle class families and most are dropped off by parents. Each child is set a goal of becoming fully alive which means that learners are guided to develop gifts their gifts that will help them develop good citizen behaviours. The catholic ethos promote respect, honesty, acceptance, fairness, integrity and compassion among all stakeholders. The school motto is "*Through learning we honor God*". School adopted the pay it forward mentality through various community outreach projects like donating to the soup kitchen and visiting old -age homes just to mention a few. The gardens and fields are well manicured and pleasing to the eye. Lush green grass adorns the soccer field and there are a range of sporting activities which include soccer, cricket, basketball, tennis, swimming, dance and marimba.

The school had sponsorship from the Assumption Sisters , Sisters of St Peter Claver, the bank of Ireland, the European Union, JCI , the Independent newspapers, Misesan Cara -Ireland and the latest being Anglo – American Chairman’s Fund in 2015.

Alpha Primary School

Alpha Primary school is a private school owned by an individual and are registered with the Department of Education as required by the laws of South Africa. Alpha primary school is located in the Johannesburg District in Orange Grove. It moved to the current location from Hillbrow. The school premises are rented is at now is rented from a company that sold machinery long ago. The infrastructure is in a bad condition and the furniture is old and broken.

There are no play fields and gardens. Books are not in a good condition too .All the teachers and learners are black. There are about 400 children and 15 teachers. The principal is fairly new and has been in the school for 4 years now. He seemed to have been responsible for turning the school around when it was on the brink of closure after the co- owner’s sudden death. . A few challenges like nepotism in the employment of teachers and favouritism are some of the challenges that he faces. The relatives that were employed by the late principal to teach, did not possess any teaching qualifications.

The school charges R500 fees per month per learner. There is a visible vision and mission statement which are hung near the reception. The vision advocates the development of the Ubuntu philosophy and the relevant policies that will sustain teaching and learning. Alpha primary School does not have a web site and hence is not visible even when it is Google searched. The teacher pupil ratio is 1:27. Learners are often cramped up in some classrooms as the sizes differ considerably. The principal’s desk is located in one of the first classrooms facing the reception.

The learners that attend are from everywhere, with some being foreigners without proper documentation. There is a high staff turnover when the teachers move to greener pastures or when contracts are terminated. Despite some challenges that have been highlighted, the school seems to function. This is seen by the sense of purpose and order when classes begin up to the end of the day. The school entered the Spelling Bee organized by the Gauteng Department of Education and came second. They have a soccer team that practices at the local community playground and they have started taking part in district athletics and debate.

Lucy Primary School

Lucy Primary school is run by a Non- Governmental Organization. The school is located in Orchards in the Johannesburg East District. This school was established in March 2018. It is situated 12 km from the Johannesburg city Centre. Lucy school has beautiful flowers and lawns and the atmosphere seems relaxed and clean. Lucy school prides itself in providing a dynamic, relevant education for the disadvantaged learners who have needs ranging from poverty and other socio- economic challenges. The learners come from as far as Soweto, Diepsloot and Alexandria townships. The essence of Lucy School is tangible in the laughter and vitality that fills the school especially during break time and meal times. The Non – Governmental Organisation pays the taxi drivers who transport the assistant teachers who travel with the learners. The highly experienced teachers are also hired by the N.G.O. there are 10 teachers and 10 assistant teachers. Resources for teaching and learning are provided by the N.G.O. things like pencils cases, rulers, textbooks and writing materials. The kids are encouraged to look beyond their own circumstances and do the best they can. Two co- coordinators who are trained by the N.G.O are responsible for the distribution of materials and helps the principal with admin work which includes attending to all issues ranging from helping the cooks dish out food and supervision of the children playing, to being the first Aiders if any injuries occur.

There are about 180 learners on the register but full attendance is not always met because of the challenges that some kids may have in missing their transport to Lucy school. At one point a learner did not come to school for some days citing that the mother was too drunk to take them to the already hired transport that leaves at the agreed time. This back ground and some other underlying structures may be the cause of the academic struggles that some face. The programme at Lucy school is meant to fill that gap both academically, physically, psychologically and socially.

The learners are English second -language speakers hence the need to have the assistant teachers who can communicate with them in their mother tongue like Sipeedi, Sotho and IsiZulu. The vision is in line with growing the child in preparation for the future. The vision statement highlights the commitment to produce well educated, skilled and developed people. The school aims to achieve this by prioritising learning and teaching, teacher development in their skills and collaborating with all stake holders. Staff development is of the highest quality as seen by that Dr. Emsie Rheeders came to train the teachers on the ultimate solution to barriers versus solutions in July

2018 when the school opened its doors. The N.G.O goes to great lengths to ensure that the children are happy and get all the benefits that may help in giving them a better future for themselves and the world at large. The physical trainer takes all the kids for physical education and sports. The school presently has Grade R to grade 3 only and is expanding in the years to come. The teacher learner ratio is 1: 18. To cap it all, at the end of the year the N.G.O provides gifts for these learners and a blast of a party is held in all pomp and style. The learners get to take all the material that has been left over like crayons pencils cases and writing books.

3.5.1.2 Profiling the participants

The following segment summarises the profiles of all participants from the three schools. This information was retrieved from the questionnaire section A on the Biographical data. The first table will profile the principals and table 2 will profile the teachers. The profiling gives a greater understanding of trying to understand their professionalism and their notion of the world as they see it.

Table 1: Principals' profile

Categories	Mr. Nkosi (Alpha)	Mrs. Green (Beta)	Mr. Nzuma (Lucy)
Race	African	White	African
Gender	Male	Female	Female
Age group	50- 60 years	50- 60 years	40-50 years
Professional qualifications	Diploma in Education	Diploma in education	B.Ed. – Honors
Teaching experience	30	25	23
Principal experience	10	3	1
Motto in life	Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them.	Be still and know that God is with you.	Nothing is impossible and never give up.

Table 2: Teachers' profile

Categories	Ms. Elma	Mr. Ndlovu	Ms. Maria	Mr. Fats	Ms. Zukie	Mr. Nqobile
Race	Colored	African	White	African	Indian	African
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female
Age Group	20-30	20- 30	31-40	20-30	31-40	40-50
Professional Qualifications	No teaching qualification	Diploma In education	BA + PGCE & Special needs Ed.	Master in Education	B.Ed. Foundation phase	Diploma in Education
Teaching experience	4years	10 years	12 years	6 years	9 years	23 years
Duration at study school	1year	6 years	4 years	2 years	6 years	13 years
Motto in life	What goes around comes around.	Those who laugh last, laugh the longest.	Be mindful of other people!	A person is a person because of people.	We learn every day.	Truth will out.

The duration of the participant at a study school may add to the body of knowledge especially pertaining to the culture. Cohen and Sherman (2014) are of the view that when a person is new at a place they try to see and learn the way things are done in that organisation.

3.5.2. Venue for interviews and documents review

The interviews for the principals were conducted in the respective school principal's offices to allow for privacy. This could be considered a comfortable environment, allowing the principals to operate in their natural setting which formed part of their work context. The interviews were conducted after hours to minimise any disruptions to teaching and learning. However I did visit the schools on prior occasions to familiarise myself with the culture and activities of the schools. In addition, the documents review of the staff minutes and school policies were also performed. This was done in the office block using the schools' equipment.

3.6. Data generation methods

Qualitative research has a variety of methods that can be used to generate data. These data generation methods include observations, interviews, documents and artefacts review, questionnaires and so on (De Vos, et al., 2010). However in the context of this study, qualitative semi- structured interviews, questionnaires and documents review were employed. The data generation took a period of five weeks to complete.

Kvale (2008, p.11) defines qualitative interviews as an attempt to understand the “interviewees lived world with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena”. **Semi structured**, face-to -face interviews were employed with the teachers and school principals. Semi -structured interviews were useful to this study because of the complex nature of the topic. In semi-structured interviews, the interview schedules, “take the form of a few major questions, with sub-questions and possible follow up questions” (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The researcher was guided by the interview schedule, but the researcher deviated from it when the need arose. There was flexibility as the researcher followed up on interesting avenues that emerged. The researcher focused on a range of themes which allowed for the researcher to gain an insight into the participants’ beliefs, perceptions and accounts of the research topic. Each interview was limited to a few questions that followed a logical sequence. Moreover, open -ended questions were asked to allow the participants to speak freely. The questions were neutral rather than leading and ambiguous questions were avoided (De Vos, *et al.*, (2010).

The interviews with the school principals and the teachers were held at the school premises. They were done at a time convenient to them and lasted for approximately **40- 45 minutes**. A digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews as it removed the burden of note taking (Kvale, 2008). The digital voice recorder enabled the researcher to listen carefully to the interviewees and probe their responses. Nevertheless, the interview research method does have some criticism levelled against it. (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011) pointed out that it is open to interviewer bias and it is an artificial construction. However, semi -structured interviews proved invaluable to my study as the participants were able to tell their own stories about their experiences in relation to servant leadership (De Vos, et al., 2010; Kvale,2008).

Questionnaires were used as the secondary data generation method. Bryman (2016) states that questionnaires are another method to generate data. In this study all the teachers at the study

schools were asked to complete the biographical information sheet and the servant leadership questionnaire. De Vos (2010) is of the view that the biographical information sheet is used to record information which is useful for contextualising people's answers, showing their age and experience and level of education. The three principals did not do the servant leadership questionnaire given to the teachers. The reason being that the teachers were answering about their understandings of the servant leadership style of the principal. It is important to state that the three principals completed the biographical information sheet and did the semi-structured interviews. The teachers completed the biographical information and the servant leadership questionnaires and then only two teachers per study school proceeded to do the semi-structured interviews.

Wilson and McClean (1994) cited in Cohen et al (2011) further say that the questionnaires have the advantage, in that the responses are gathered in a standardized way hence they are more objective more than the interviews. Secondly, questionnaires are generally quick to generate data and more information can be collected if the return rates are improved. Thirdly, Wilson and MacLean (1994) say the questionnaire is able to be administered without the presence of the researcher. In this study, the researcher gave the questionnaire to all the teachers. The questionnaires were brought back after completion and were collected by the researcher from the teachers. This gave the teachers the advantage of reading through the questions privately and at their free time.

The third method to be used in this study was the **documents review**. Creswell (2013) posit that documents consist of public or private records that are collected by a qualitative researcher. Creswell (2013) further explains that documents can include newspapers, minutes of meetings, personal diaries and letters. Lusthaus, Adrien, Anderson and Carden (1999) define documents review as a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. An example of the documents that will be reviewed for this study are staff minutes of meetings and other documents available at school on servant leadership such as school policy documents. Merriam (2009) posits that documents reviews are important for corroborating data from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. These show a record of any experience that give context to the information provided by the interviewees. Creswell (2013) say that the advantage of these records of experience are in the language and words of the participants. Creswell (2013) further say that

another advantage is that the documents are ready for analysis without the necessary transcription that is required with interview data. In all this, observation will be used throughout because the researcher will be close to the participants and will note reactions useful for the study (Merriam, 2009). Lusthaus et al (1999) further say that documents reviews gather background information, and the researcher may determine if the implementation of a program, in this case servant leadership tenets is reflected in the school policy. Lusthaus et al (1999) are of the view that the disadvantages of the documents reviews are that information may be disorganised, biased, unavailable or out of date. Another disadvantage that Lusthaus, *et al.*, (1999) present is that documents reviews are time consuming, inauthentic and incomplete. Creswell (2013) posits that not all minutes from the school are accurate because board members may not review them for accuracy and in some cases omissions and misinterpretations may occur.

In this study, the researcher sampled the minutes of the staff meetings and school policies. These documents were able to shed light on the principals' and teachers' servant leadership practices. The time frame for the selection of the minutes was 2018-2019. This was because, the data needed to be relevant and cutting-edge. The documents review allowed the researcher to triangulate what the school principals and the teachers articulated in the semi-structured interviews. Creswell (2013) contends that documents reviews is advantageous because it is in the language and words of the participants, and there is no need for transcriptions. However, the negative aspect is that it is difficult to verify the accuracy of the information (Creswell, 2013).

3.7 Data analysis

De Vos (2010) posits that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the collected data. Patton (2002) cited in DeVos (2010) states that qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. It involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting important things, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. This study used the thematic analysis framework of DeVos (2010) when analysing data which is as follows: planning for the recording of the data; data collection and preliminary analyses; organising the data; reading and writing memos; generating of themes, categories and patterns; coding the data; testing the emergent understandings; searching the alternative explanations and representing, writing the report. (Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) posit that in planning for the recording of the data all the ethical considerations need to be abided by.

The semi-structured interviews were digitally voice recorded and thereafter transcribed *verbatim*. Briggs, *et al.*, (2012, p.262) mention that the reason for recording the interviews is that, “all nuances of the answers can be retained and the richness of individual statements is not lost”. After the transcription process, the transcripts were read and qualitative content analysis was performed. Maree (2011) asserts that content research is used for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use. Firstly, the text was coded. This means that the words, phrases and sentences were placed into categories. These categories were subsequently compared in order to establish a link between them. This process enabled the researcher to draw theoretical conclusions from the text (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Lastly, the researcher explained the conclusions in written words to provide answers for the research questions in this study. The same process was applied to the documents reviewed, which are the staff minutes and the school policies.

The questionnaire data was analysed with the help of Google forms software which uses the colour codes. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) posit that codes should be kept as discrete as possible and that coding should start earlier than later as late coding may cripple the analysis. This was done to enable the researcher to get the information quickly.

3.8 Issues of trustworthiness

Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) posit that for a research study to be credible and trustworthy, it needs to be designed in a way as to ensure applicability, dependability and confirmability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that qualitative research can never be completely value-free but it is important to enhance credibility and trustworthiness of the research. Researchers do have their own bias and subjectivity and strategies have been suggested to counter that. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) further explain that using firstly, unobtrusive measures: The gathering of data from the natural environment and the more time spent in the setting and deeper the situation is penetrated the closer the researcher gets to authentic data; hence the participants need to be open, relaxed and trusting. They also need to be reassured that all information revealed will be treated confidentially.

Secondly, the use of multiple methods of data generation allows for triangulation and increases the study’s credibility. Trustworthiness and credibility will be increased by the use of different methods such as interviews and the face sheet questionnaire. This helps to ensure correct

interpretation of data, (Cohen et al, 2011).

Thirdly, participant validation: Researchers need to do member checks by verifying understanding with those observed. Triangulation of observations with what emerges from other sources, such as interviews or documents, (Cohen et al, 2011).

Fourthly, triangulation: for qualitative researcher's triangulation means a number of strategies employed to ensure that what is presented as research findings is credible and authentic. Triangulation is only possible if data generation methods and instruments, sources of information and researchers are being used to 'measure the same thing', thereby increasing the trustworthiness and validity of the researchers' findings. Observations and interviews when combined are the most common form of triangulation and when writing up the findings the researcher should relate the empirical data from the different methods, sources to one another thereby providing a theory rich description of an emerging reality as seen through the eyes of the participants (Cresswell, 2012).

Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that transferability is when findings can be applied to other contexts and Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that in order to ensure that data can be transferable to other contexts the data must provide rich and detailed explanations of the data generated, so that other researchers can use it in other contexts. This study will detail meanings from interviewees who will share with me their conceptualisations, experiences and practices of servant leadership, which might be an important factor to consider if the study is to be applied in another contexts.

Dependability

For data to be dependable, it must show consistency and could be repeated if similar conditions were provided (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As the data gathering is going on the researcher will seek the advice of the research supervisor to check if the data is consistent.

Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that confirmability is ensuring that the findings are grounded in the data and gauging the degree of biases present to demonstrate that the data and findings were derived from events, rather than being solely from researcher construction. The researcher will consult with the supervisor on this, to check if the findings are grounded.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that the activities that make it more credible that findings were derived from the data are prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation, peer reviewing and negative case analysis. In this study, after the semi -structured interviews are done, the follow up interviews to clarify the emerging themes are closely followed up and this is the prolonged engagement which makes sure that the points given are still the same.

3.9 Ethical issues

Miles and Huberman (2014) explain that in conducting research, the focus must not only be on the quality of knowledge that is produced but the rightness or wrongness of our actions as qualitative researchers in relation to the people studying and these are ethical issues. Miles and Huberman (1994) further explain that ethics are important to consider as field work is unpredictable and considering ethics is a way of protecting both the researcher and the participants. Creswell (2013) posit that prior to conducting the study, the type of ethical issue is to seek the university approval on campus, and this is addressed by submitting ethics forms to the Research Committee at Wits University. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) posit that there are ethical issues that need to be considered when doing research which are:

Informed Consent: the people being studied were given full information about what the study will involve and they consented freely without being coerced. That is the reason why one pulled out without any hustles because they knew their rights. This research project involves adults who are able to make decisions and choose whether they want to be part of the interview or not. Creswell (2013) adds that norms and cultures of indigenous societies need to be respected and this can be addressed by the researcher finding out about cultural and other differences that need to be respected. In this study of servant leadership, the interviewees will be given two consent forms, the first being a letter asking them to partake in the study and the second asking the interviewees informed consent to be interviewed and audio taped by means of a mobile cellphone for validity and reliability purposes.

Harm and risk: The study needs not hurt people involved. Harm to participants can come in many ways, from blows to self-esteem, threats to ones interests, being sued or arrested. The implication for analysis is that if harm is expected, access and data quality may suffer. In this study:

Honesty and Trust: The researcher need to ask themselves if they are telling the truth and if there is trust between them and the participants. Some researchers coax, persuade, pressure and to some extent blackmail participants into providing information they might otherwise prefer to shield. Implications for analysis are if people feel betrayed when they read the report, it becomes impossible for them to accept it as a reasonable interpretation of what happened and these feelings of betrayal will make any continuation of the inquiry problematic. So, when in doubt the researcher needs to tell the truth. Creswell (2013) explains that in analysing the data the ethical issue might be to side with the participant that is going native, and this can be addressed by reporting other perspectives or contrary findings.

Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity: the researcher needs to ask themselves the ways which the study will intrude on people, how the information will be guarded and how identifiable the individuals are. All the issues mentioned above are dealt with by the Ethics committee of Wits University which makes sure that the researcher has complied with the requirements to get clearance to do research. For this study of servant leadership, in relation to confidentiality, the study will be conducted in the school premises to limit unforeseen events and giving them a familiar environment which is comfortable, (Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2012) says for assurances of confidentiality, the researcher assured the participants of confidentiality by using pseudonyms. For anonymity, the teacher's identities were known to the researcher only and pseudonyms were used. In the three schools, the permission from the board of governors was sought. All the participants signed consent forms, to be interviewed and audiotaped.

3.10 Demarcation of the study

Maree and Van Der Westhuizen (2009) posit that demarcating the problem means the establishment of the boundaries of the problem area within which the research progresses. Moreover, demarcating the problem helps to make it more manageable. In the context of this study, the research focused on exploring servant leadership conceptualisations, practices and experiences of the three school principals and six teachers in the Johannesburg East District in Gauteng. The research was limited to the Johannesburg East District schools because the researcher was familiar with the locality as the researcher resides and works in the area. Since generalisation was not the purpose of this study, the schools were purposefully selected because it was convenient for the researcher in that they were in the local area. The data sources were deemed adequate and

information rich. This is consistent with qualitative research.

Researchers need to consider the Hawthorne effect because if human beings are the participants in the research the results may become distorted because of the perceived special attention given to some subjects and this may influence the participant's feedback (Merriam, 2009; Maree & Van Der Westhuizen, 2009). The participants may have had something to hide concerning their leadership style of their schools and hence their responses may be what they want to reveal. Personal feelings may have influenced the responses too as the responses from the teachers were very negative about their principals. The focus of the study was on the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership and what could be drawn to enhance leadership, management and learning with a special emphasis on the teachers and school principals' perspectives.

3.11 Limitations of the study

Creswell (2013) explains that limitations of a study may refer to the challenges that a researcher may face which may slow or hinder the study. The time allowed for this study was limited which may have affected credibility as discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation and peer reviewing all makes findings credible, but that takes a lot of time. This research needed to be complete under twelve months.

Secondly, the sensitivity nature of the topic, some people may have misconceptions that their leadership or work was being questioned. This may have affected the responses given. Maree and Van Der Westhuizen (2009) state that one needs to indicate the challenges that could affect the research such as time limitations, access to participants, and how one intends to deal with them. The researcher reassured the participants that the research was purely academic and was intended to add to the body of knowledge of servant leadership in education. Another limitation was that the school principals and teachers are generally busy people. The researcher did anticipate that they would not have much time for the research. To alleviate this problem, the researcher negotiated with them to conduct the interviews after school or at a time convenient to them.

3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter pays attention to the approach used to conduct this empirical study. The chapter shows the study is interpretivist and is a qualitative study, which makes use of the case study design. The data generation methods were the questionnaires, semi- structured interviews and documents reviews and reasons were given for their adoption. Ethical and issues of trustworthiness are also explicated in this chapter. The data generated was analysed thematically. Finally, the limitations and demarcation of the study were discussed. This then, makes way for the data presentation and discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The last chapter outlined the research design and methodology that was used in the study. In this Chapter the findings from the study are presented, analysed and discussed in relation to the servant leadership practices in three schools with special emphasis on the perspectives of teachers and school principals in the Johannesburg East District. The data was generated through questionnaires, documents reviews and semi -structured interviews of two teachers and one principal per school. This makes a total of nine participants that were interviewed. The key research question is:

- What are the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership in the study schools?

The subsidiary questions are:

- What are the views on implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership?
- Why is it necessary to implement the principles and values of servant leadership?
- How do school principals and teachers think the values and principles of servant leadership could be promoted?
- What are the challenges that participants have experienced in the implementation of servant leadership and how do they think these challenges could be minimised?

Themes and subthemes are used to present the findings. These themes are from the data generated from the field. Literature and theoretical and conceptual frameworks presented in chapter two are also used to analyse the findings. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants and their schools, pseudonyms are used in the discussion. To ensure that, which had been said by the participant is not lost, verbatim quotations were made use of in the

discussion.

4.2 Presentation of findings

As discussed in chapter three, in relation to how the data will be presented, the data in the study is presented thematically based on the content analysis of the interview transcripts, questionnaires and documents review. The five themes emerged namely, the conceptualisations of servant leadership by the principals and the teachers which also includes practices and experiences; views on implementation of servant leadership; the importance of implementing the principles of servant leadership; promotion of servant leadership; challenges faced in the implementation of servant leadership and how they can be reduced. The findings from the 3 principals will be presented followed by the 6 teachers.

4.2.1 Principals' conceptualisation of servant leadership practices and experiences

The findings from all participants, 3 principals and 6 teachers show that they seem to have a perception of servant leadership as service to others and leading by example. Some of the understanding is congruent with the theory by Greenleaf (1970) on servant leadership but one was not congruent with the theory by Greenleaf (1970).

To confirm this statement **Mrs. Green said:**

*My personal understanding of servant leadership is obviously just **leading people by serving them with dignity and respect** that is when you are put in a position to try and lead the people. But more so by leading them you **need to set an example** and if you are willing to set an example if you are willing to serve others and also get your hands dirty then people. Uhm... Well. You hope that people **will follow your example**.*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary)

Similarly, the principal of alpha Primary school, Mr. Nkosi shared the same sentiments when he said:

*Servant leadership is where the leader is **not a master** but somebody who **serves those he leads**, one who doesn't impose his values and principles on those they are leading. **Sharing** whatever you know **to equip them to work**, to **serve and encourage** them in their different responsibilities to lead, you are actually leading through them.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary)

The statements above seem to be congruent with the theory of servant leadership brought by Greenleaf (1970,p 2) stating that service to others is the key to a leaders greatness and a servant leaders' greatness is the primary motivation and the purpose is to encourage greatness in others.

The other principal presented a different perception. Mr. Nzuma said:

*I believe servant leadership is just one of those fancy styles that people are fascinated about for a while ...Uhm... uhm... **People choose to live that way and practice serving** but in the real world these things are not easy... It's all talk and no action and eventually disappears. It seems too nice to be real... (Chuckles)... there are really plenty of these styles to choose from... Seriously! The term **servant doesn't feel right** too makes it a bit... You know... lowish. Am sure.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary)

This study also used documents reviews and questionnaires besides the one on one interviews. The principal of Beta school allowed the researcher to do the documents review of the schools' staff minutes and policies at the school. The principal of Alpha did not grant me access to policies and he claimed that they were working on the policies in preparation for the Department Of Education visit. Some minutes were given to the researcher. This raised the suspicion that there could be issues surrounding the availability of the policies and that staff meetings may not have been held regularly. Lucy Primary school allowed the researcher access to the policies but not the minutes. This begs the question as to why the minutes were not provided. This could suggest that either there was no structure for the meetings or that the principal was hiding something, that he didn't want the researcher to find out. The reason given was that the official school business was safer within the schools walls.

To a large extent, the findings from the interviews with the school principals corroborated with the documents analysed. Beta school and Lucy primary seemed to have adopted policies which have similarities to those of the Department of Education. The policy on the duties of the principal, section 3.4.2 on the development of immediate school community speaks to the application of the

Batho Pele principles of service delivery of 1997. The question that comes then is whether they know these Batho Pele principles. Manala (2010) cited in Muller, et al., ((2018) is of the view that the Batho Pele principles have their base from servant leadership philosophy. The majority of the principals conceptualised servant leadership as *service with respect* towards people and *equipping* them by *sharing* knowledge. Servant leadership speaks to the Batho Pele policy that calls on the demonstration of citizen values and respect in the form of consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, openness, information, transparency, redress and value for money.

To a large extent the findings from the semi structured interviews corroborated with the staff minutes of Beta school where on the 2nd of October, 2019, Mrs. Green welcomed the staff warmly after the holidays and encouraged them to be there for one another. In the minutes of the 9th of October, 2019, Mr. Nkosi, the principal of Alpha school encouraged teachers to take up computer courses so as to move with the times. This is in line with their understanding of servant leadership as service with respect and encouraging people to be better (Greenleaf, 1970).

Literature on servant leadership strengthens the findings from the three research methods used in this study to generate data. The view that principals should be servant leaders is supported by scholars such as Van Dierendonck (2017) who contend that servant leadership is demonstrated by developing people, by showing humility, being genuine, stewardship and providing direction. Spears (2002) provided the first model of servant leadership from Greenleaf (1970, 1977) writings which show the ten characteristics of listening, empathy, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight which one is the commitment to the growth of people.

Savage-Austin and Honeycutt (2011) posit that a schools level of servant leadership is based on the principal's demonstration of the servant leadership behaviours some of which are mentioned above.

From a theoretical view, Mrs. Green and Mr. Nkosi's statements in the interview seem to be congruent with the servant leadership theory coined by Greenleaf (1970, p2) which states that service to followers is topmost and that encouraging greatness is the basis motivation for servant leaders. As seen in Mr. Nkosi statement in the leader who is not a master but shares and encourages. Greenleaf (1970) is of the view that servant leaders don't keep power but give it away, of which Mr. Nkosi referred to it as leading through the followers. Furthermore, Greenleaf (1970, 1977) conceptualised servant leadership as a way of life. This posed problems as to how it could

be empirically tested if it is a way of life and this led to scholars like Sipe and Frick (2009,2015) seven pillars of servant leadership which provides a way to test servant leadership by a set of structures.

From a conceptual perspective, Sipe and Frick's (2015) model speaks directly to servant leaders and expands on Spears (2002)'s model. Sipe and Frick (2015, p4) define a servant leader as a person of character, who puts people first. He is a skilled communicator, a compassionate collaborator, has foresight, is a systems thinker and leads with moral authority. Sipe & Frick (2015) refer to these characteristics as the seven pillars of servant leadership needed by principals to enhance leadership, management and teaching. In discussing the principals responses with reference to Sipe and Frick (2015) Mrs. Green made reference to pillar 1 that speaks to the 'person of character' when she stated '*leading people by serving them with dignity and respect*'. Mr. Nkosi's understanding of a servant leader speaks to pillar two in the frame work by Sipe and Frick (2015) of putting people first when he stated that he serves those he leads by mentoring them and showing a servants heart.

The third principal, Mr. Nzuma expressed a slightly different perception and did not like the term 'servant'. Van Dierendonck (2017) contends that there is no consensus in defining servant leadership but all have one thing in common and that is service. Mr. Nzuma seemed to belittle servant leadership is explained by Johnson (2001) cited in Cerit (2009) posits that servant leadership is criticised for being associated with the negative connotation of the term servant. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that not everyone wants to be associated with servitude and weakness as the term servant is commonly known. Lemione (2015) explains that Robert Greenleaf intentionally sought a descriptor that would give people pause for thought by combining the two seemingly opposite terms. Mr. Nzuma's view that servant leadership is a way of life is in line with Greenleaf (1970, 1977) conceptualisation of servant leadership. From the way Mr. Nzuma stated it would seem that he does not take servant leadership seriously when he says that servant leadership is just one of those styles that will soon expire and that it is too good to be true. For this reason it seems that Sipe and Frick (2015) provided a framework with the pillars to operationalise servant leadership and possibly change the view of servant leadership being seen as idealistic.

My findings are similar to those of Insley, *et al.*, (2016) that servant leadership is perceived as a leadership approach that expresses school principals' efforts to sincerely assist in solving teachers'

problems, encouraging them, caring about them, showing empathy, treating them equally, trusting them, and treating them with modesty as Mrs Green used the term ‘ respect’.

In summarising this theme, the key finding that emerged was the important role that school principals play as serving the needs of the people. This could be done by sharing, encouraging respecting the people and the modelling best practice.

4.2.1.1 Teachers’ conceptualisation, practices and experiences of servant leadership

All the teachers conceptualised servant leadership as one which considers people first and servant leaders need to demonstrate servant leader qualities like sacrifice, team-work, justice and empathy for the followers. The findings from the all the teachers suggest that they seem to have a perception of servant leadership as service to others and modelling of best behaviours by the principals.

For instance the teacher from Beta Primary school said:

Servant leadership is putting the needs of others before oneself and looking to benefit the whole group. (Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary)

Similar sentiments were expressed by the teacher from the same school who said:

*Servant leadership is the opposite of the command and control style where the leader goes **all out for those they lead**, putting their welfare above all else. Something involving the Batho Pele policy someone said.*

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

The teachers from Alpha Primary school further added that:

*Servant leadership is an element of **sacrifice** on the leader’s part for the organisation starting with the workers which includes **community building** because nothing exists in a vacuum and **not imposing** ideologies and religion.*

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

In a similar vein, Elma of Alpha Primary school said:

*Servant leadership involves the treatment one gets from work as in **fairness, forgiveness and a deeper understanding of another person**. It also involves **unity** at work for the common goal which is the learners.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher, Alpha Primary)

The teachers from Lucy understood servant leadership in the same vein as the other participants when Zukie maintained that:

*Servant leadership is not self-centred. It considers other people as well and **supports followers** so they reach greater potential. Leader is not only about what they are, therefore **put themselves in their shoes**, help them grow. Teachers need help as in advancing themselves. **Sharing information** with all stake holders.*

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary)

Similarly, in other words Nqobile of Lucy Primary conceptualised Servant leadership as:

*Involving one who has the qualities of a good leader, the way a leader deals with people. Which includes **fairness, with people and sharing information** on the happenings in the organisation.*

(Mr. Nqobile, Teacher, Lucy Primary)

For triangulation, this study used documents reviews of the staff minutes and policies. The minutes of the 18th of August, 2019 at Beta Primary School, the principal stated that **the ethos of the school** need to be up held at all times, for the smooth running of the school and that teachers need **to support each other** and show **empathy**. On another point the teachers were to meet in their **teams and share ideas** on the next fundraiser. The minutes of Alpha primary school dated the 30th of August, 2019, the teachers suggested that names be put in a hat for the new parking sport so it will be **fair** instead of the principal choosing his friend. The findings from the minutes corroborated with the findings from the interviews and the questionnaires

To a large extent, the findings from the 'Duties of the principal' Section 3.3.2 (c) stipulates that the principal needed to ensure that teachers got all the **support** they needed uniformly and **fairly**. Section of 3.7.3 speaks to the application of the Batho Pele principles.

The findings seem to suggest that there are structures in place for servant leadership to be enhanced but then it begs the question: Is all that in the policy being enacted?

From a literature perspective, the view that servant leadership is defined in terms of self- **sacrifice** and the willingness to do unrequited favours is supported by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006). Similarly, Miers (2004) cited in Cerit (2009) also contends that servant leadership has an element of sacrifice. Mr. Ndlovu conceptualised servant leadership as one who sacrifices for the organisation. On a similar vein, Mr. Fats from Beta School spoke of servant leadership as involving one *'who goes all out'*. This seems similar to someone who gives of their best because one doesn't go all out without an element of sacrifice. In support of this view, Van Dierendonck (2011) posit that the commitment of servant leaders makes the followers give of their best or sacrifice for the organisation.

Mr. Ndlovu, teacher from alpha school and Ms. Elma, teacher from Alpha school spoke of servant leadership as **community building** and one which encourages unity in an organisation. This is supported by Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) who posit that servant leadership can improve team effectiveness and helps build community. This speaks to servant leadership theory by Greenleaf (1970) he lamented the loss of togetherness in people due to the stresses of the current life.

Ms. Maria from Beta school, Fats also from Beta and Ms. Zukie from Lucy school conceptualised Servant leadership as putting the needs of others before one's on. In the words of Fats who said that *'putting their welfare above all else'* is in sequence with what Greenleaf (1970) calls service to others and not being self-centred. Ms. Elma also added that she views servant leadership as including *'a deep understanding of other people'*. This is important because Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) are of the view that because people have different back grounds and cultures, the failure to understand the individual variations are likely to pose negative outcomes for organisations. On that note Greenleaf (1970) stated that a deep understanding of each person will help the followers achieve full potential.

Mr. Fats, Mr. Ndlovu and Ms. Zukie conceptualised servant leadership as the opposite of command and control, not imposing ideologies, and not being self-centred respectively. According to Greenleaf (1970) good leadership doesn't come from the exercise of power or self-exaltation but from the need to assist others. Furthermore, Van Dierendonck (2017) is of the view that servant

leadership doesn't use power but makes use of persuasion to convince other staff members. On that vein, Sipe and Frick (2015) said that sharing power is encouraging the talents of the followers by trusting them to do things.

Mr. Mahlahla from Lucy School and Ms. Elma from Alpha School conceptualised servant leadership as the qualities of a good leader as in fairness. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) are of the view that servant led organisations are associated with procedural justice or fairness. This fairness according to Parolini, Patterson and Winston (2009) gives followers a sense of belonging. Sendjaya and Perketi (2009) posit that with a sense of belonging among other factors like fairness and sharing power, then followers begin to trust. Kumar (2018) is of the view that when people have trust they are then able to foster an open environment and help each other as servant leadership begs of us. From a theoretical view, all the teachers' responses seem to be congruent to the servant leadership theory by Greenleaf (1970).

From a conceptual perspective, Sipe and Frick's (2015) model speaks directly to the participant's conceptualisation of servant leadership practices. In discussing the teachers' responses with reference to Sipe and Frick (2015), it would seem Ms. Maria, Fats, and Ms. Zukie made reference to Pillar 2 of putting people first when they spoke of servant leadership as the focus on the needs of others. Ms. Elma, and Mr. Ndlovu made reference to servant leadership as that which fosters team work and support and this speaks to pillar 3 of compassionate collaborator. Issue of fairness was spoken by Ms. Elma and Mr. Nqobile and it speaks to pillar 1 that of the person of character. Finally, Ms. Elma spoke of deep understanding and that refers to pillar 6 that of systems thinking in servant leadership.

In summarising this theme, the key finding that came up is that of modelling best practices that which the teachers expect and what the principals ought to do in servant leadership. These practices include caring for the needs of others first, fairness, not command and control, teamwork deep understanding and respecting each other. That is how all the participants seemed to conceptualise servant leadership.

4.2.2 Views on implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership

4.2.2.1 Principals' views

In this theme, the findings that emerged indicate that the principals of the researched schools view

communication, social and emotional support and the demonstration of modest behaviours as implementing of the principles of servant leadership.

4.2.2.1.1 Communication

As such, Mr. Nkosi principal of Alpha primary school said that he communicated persuasively with the teachers:

*'I am requesting you teachers to come and help me teach the kids over the holiday but there is no money.' Nobody responded. But I kept on **begging** them to come. In the next meeting, I said that I knew holiday time was a time for them to rest but I would like those willing to **sacrifice** that time to come and two teachers agreed to come and they did come to work over the holidays.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

In a similar vein, Mrs. Green said:

*Open door policy – I think also allowing parents and teachers to come see me if they have an issue that we are willing to listen. I would say **giving people voices...***

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta primary School)

In addition to this Mr. Nzuma of Lucy School had this to say on communication at his school

*If one does not **speak strongly** to such people ... those who dress disgracefully, they keep on doing it as if they just want to see how far one can get.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

Similarly the review of the minutes at Alpha primary school corroborated with what Mr. Nkosi stated. On the 23rd of August, 2018, it was written that the principal asked people to come over the holiday. The minutes of the 30th of August confirm that too. It would seem that no one agreed to come and teach because no names were recorded. It seems Mr. Nkosi begged teachers to sacrifice their time. Eventually, a teacher came to help Mr. Nkosi. This suggests that there could be power issues at play because this particular teacher was in line for a promotion to HOD hence he did not want to alienate the principal. Also the fact that this particular teacher took a long time to decide to come, seems to signify that something interesting happened. Sacrifice, according to Consoy

(2018) is when one does a favour willingly without expecting a reward hence the begging of people to sacrifice is not in line with servant leadership. Mr. Nkosi further said that he got **positive feedback** from the teachers when he asserted that:

Teachers were saying that they wished I was there all the other years they said this after one meeting that we had. The teachers are even staying late because they enjoy being here catching up on all the work.

Similarly, the review of the minutes at Beta primary school corroborated with what Mrs. Green stated. The minutes of the 6th of June 2019, Mrs. Green said that *people needed to be open with one another and be careful of hurtful gossip* and that they should be *free to approach the office* if there is a need. It seems though that there seems to be problems here because if indeed people were free then there would have been no reminder of the gossip and such. The minutes of the 13th of January, 2020 speak otherwise when Mrs. Green said that *teachers are not to speak to one another or the kids when going for line up or assembly because they need to respect*. This begs the question: What if it's something important? This goes against the policy on the Duties of the teacher which stipulates that the teacher should reprimand learners immediately when they play irresponsibly. Furthermore, schools are human institutions which require the occasional greeting or compliment. Mrs. Green does seem to have issues around communication because in the staff meeting of the 13th of January, 2020, she stated that all meetings held at school will have to have a witness sitting in to watch the process.

To a large extent the policy documents on the Duties of the principal, section 3.4 corroborates with the interview data provided by the principals. It stipulates that: *principals are to communicate with every employee and are to increase the level of interpersonal skills. It is the duty of the principal to foster the clear flow of information among all stakeholders. Section 3.4.2 speaks to the Batho Pele / putting people first principle*

Findings from Lucy School seem to suggest that Mr. Nzuma has challenges communicating with some teachers. Firstly, he indicated that he had to speak strongly for the teachers to listen. That statement shows that he may have spoken to the concerned parties before speaking strongly. There seems to be some underlying structures when he said that they keep on doing the same thing and it seems he feels that they are taunting him to get a bad reaction. This is corroborated by the data from the interviews from Ms. Zukie, teacher at Lucy School who asserted that there was a day the

principal exchanged ugly words with a teacher in a meeting which resulted in Mr. Nzuma walking out of the meeting.

Literature supports the importance of communication in the implementation of the principles of servant leadership. Greenleaf (1970) is of the view that servant leaders are great listeners and this is the basis for communication. In agreement Insley, *et al.*, (2016) states that communication skills form the bedrock of servant leadership. Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that communication is the glue that holds our relationships together and it all starts with the skill of listening hence it speaks to empathy, respect and openness.

From a theoretical perspective by Sipe and Frick (2015) model, skilled communication speaks to pillar 3 of the frame work. Sipe and Frick (2015) explain that a skilled communicator listens and speaks clearly, is able to persuade people and invites feedback. Mrs. Green, Principal of Beta Primary school spoke of open door policy and giving people voices. In a similar vein, Grant (2009) says that teachers must find their voices, and take up their potential as leaders and promote the free culture in schools. Principal Nkosi of Alpha school and communicated persuasively when he begged the teachers to sacrifice their time repeatedly. Seemingly, Mr. Nzuma said that he spoke strongly for people to listen and this refers to assertiveness in Sipe and Frick (2015) model. Ekinci (2015) in agreement with Sipe and Frick (2015) on communication being the basis for building relationships. Furthermore, Sipe and Frick (2015) standing on the shoulder of Greenleaf (1970) posit that effective communication is a primary way of serving others while lifting up the vision of the school.

In summarising this subtheme, the key finding that emerged was the importance of communication in the implementation of the principles of servant leadership. Communication does impacts on the school as an organisation.

4.2.2.1.2 Social and emotional support and the demonstration of modest behaviours

Crucially all three principals viewed the demonstration of modest behaviours and social and emotional support as implementing the servant leadership principles. On **leading by example** which Sipe and Frick reckon to be non- verbal communication, Mr. Nkosi of Alpha school asserted that modelling appropriate behaviours was shown by observing punctuality. He said:

*By making sure that one is in class on time (**punctuality**) and not waste learner's time*

*that's giving them value **for their money**).*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

Similarly, Mr. Nzuma said that actions spoke louder than words so by displaying goodness, then people emulate so by displaying goodness, then people emulate...

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

This view was echoed by the principal of Beta primary, Mrs. Green who added the notion of showing appreciation to the teachers even though it's their job as her view of encouraging servant leadership.

The findings from the interviews corroborated with the minutes of the meeting held at Beta Primary school on the 30th of September, 2019. Mrs. Green said that she had put some chocolate slabs in each of the teachers' cubby holes. This seems to show people that she cares. On the other hand, there are a lot of generative mechanisms at play hence the small tokens of appreciation may not be appreciated if the teacher still feels unappreciated. This incentive may very well act as a motivation as it shows that the principal may be thinking of others. There were no minutes at Lucy school and from what seemed to be going on at the school, it's most likely that Mr. Nzuma referred to his own actions since he was the leader who had a shouting contest with his teacher and walked out of a meeting. His actions don't seem to display any servant leadership entity.

From the literature perspective (Chinyerere, 2018) posits that if followers see that the servant leader cares for them that gives them motivation to follow as well. From this, it brings forth the idea that anyone can be a servant leader as long as they care and motivate the followers and it all starts win the heart and mind. One has to decide whether they want to do it or not. However, as noted by Sipe and Frick (2015), the need to serve others does not naturally emerge.

In addition, servant leaders hope to inspire their followers to enact servant leadership behaviours (Kumar, 2018), so if the heart of the leader does not have what it takes to motivate people then it will be difficult to implement servant leadership. Punctuality, and appreciating people all speak to social and emotional support, (Ekinici, 2015).

Drawing on Sipe and Frick's (2015) model, the pillars of servant leadership, these school principals understood the importance of service in implementing servant leadership. Pillar two of

Sipe and Frick's (2015) states that putting people first, shows a leader who shows concern and care and is mentor minded as in demonstration of modest behaviours. Furthermore, Sipe and Frick (2015) 's model places appreciation as mentioned by Mrs Green of Beta primary school under Pillar four that of 'compassionate collaborator'.

4.2.2.1.3 Building relationships

The findings that emerged were that the three principals strove to build relationships by being humble and deep understanding of others. Mrs. Green aired her sentiments when she said:

*To **build relationships** and not always think that you are stuck in **the ivory tower** you need to come down to everyone's level. It's working together and try to get everyone on board. In building community at staff meetings we share experiences personal and professional and we pray for one another. One staff member takes the minutes when it's their turn.*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Mr. Nkosi brought the notion of humility in building relationships and he said:

*On the issue of **humility**, emphasis is that all human beings make mistakes and when that happens even a principal needs to apologise. Don't think that you are better than other people. Thing is you are just privileged to be in that position of principal at the time. **Respect** of other people is important because they can have the potential of being better than you.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha primary School)

Mr. Nkosi and Mrs. Green both acknowledge that their position of principal doesn't make them better than the rest. Mrs. Green of Beta primary admits to making some mistakes when she said:

*I have made decisions and didn't think them through or **did not discuss with the person** and that's something I should be more aware of so that it's easier coming from below.*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

The principals understood that being humble helps avoid conflict because when one acknowledges that they are wrong that is the first step taken in conflict negotiation.

Furthermore, Mrs. Green brought in the issue of a deep understanding of the people as paramount in building community when she said:

*It is treating people with **dignity and respect** because we are from different backgrounds, social backgrounds and past experiences... **diversity** is very important.*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

In agreement, Mr. Nzuma who seems to have challenges at his school had this to say:

*Many a time it's difficult when one does not want your help for some reason. Some people are trouble makers. This makes it very difficult to help. But as principals we need to endure and find ways to **build relationships**.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary)

For triangulation, the findings from the interviews corroborated with the findings from the documents review of the staff minutes at Alpha primary school and Beta school. At the start of the staff meetings at Beta primary school, a teacher leads a reflection and this is where they pray and share experiences. Most of the minutes have a reflection and prayer. Similarly, Alpha school does the same. The teachers meet for a few minutes to pray before the start of lessons. This then begs the question: Are the teachers doing all this willingly or is it that the principal said they should be done?

There seems to be issues at Lucy school. Due to the unavailability of the minutes to the researcher and the fact that Mr. Nzuma said that there were some trouble makers speaks volumes. Relations seem to be tense and the fact that Mr. Nzuma as principal is not in speaking terms with some teachers. In the follow up interview, Mr. Nzuma signaled that he will not stop trying to build good relationships with the teachers even if some don't respond when he greets them.

Literature supports the principals' view on humility and understanding of people as important in building relationships. Green leaf (1970) is of the view that the knowledge of each person's abilities by the leader goes a long way in helping them achieve. Similarly, Mahembe and Engel-Brecht (2018) posit that the understanding of diversity has positive outcomes for the school. Mr. Nzuma seems to know his staff well when he mentioned the issue of some trouble makers. Cohen, et al., (2011) provides a view that these trouble makers may not really be troublemakers but are people who see the world differently and begs to be understood. Ekinci (2015) is of the view that principals who have a good relationship with teachers build school community, are humble, have

respect and support the teachers.

From a theoretical perspective, Sipe and Frick (2015) placed the building of relationships and the negotiation of conflict under pillar four that of compassionate collaborator. The demonstration of humility speaks to pillar one, person of character. The deep understanding of the followers speaks to pillar six, that of the systems thinker.

In concluding this theme, the key finding that emerge is that all three principals view communication as important in the implementation of the principles of servant leadership. Communication then finds its way in the demonstration of servant leadership behaviours as in building relationships, respect, humility and negotiating conflict.

4.2.2.2 Teachers perspectives, and experiences from Alpha Primary School

The teachers' views from the three schools will be analysed in relation to their principal. Also emerging from the findings was that the teacher's perspectives centered on fairness and procedural justice; communication and team / community building.

Fairness

In this regard, on fairness Ms. Elma, teacher from Alpha Primary School said:

*I believe in **fairness** and being firm. Also speaking out (**employee voice**) even if I get criticised for the truth. ... There is **favouritism** in that school in terms of resources. The principal allows other people to sit on the one computer the whole day while others don't get the chance to use it.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

Mr. Ndlovu shared the same sentiments as Ms. Elma and he said:

The unfairness I have seen is the use of the internet. The chosen few use the internet.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

In looking at what the Alpha primary school teachers said, it seems that they view their principal

as not being fair in that he seems to treat the chosen few to use the computer. The other thing that came up is that there seems to be one computer for the whole school.

Ms. Elma further went on to say:

Unannounced visits by the leadership is also unfair on my part ... you can't just walk into the classroom at any time and tell me that you are doing a class visit, that is unprofessional. I feel I need to prepare for that class. They just budge in the full classroom even if there is no space for them to move around because the class is full full!

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

That which seems to come to light is the fact that Ms. Elma feels that she is a victim. Due to the absence of the school policies which may have shed some light as to why that was being done , it then looks like there is unfairness and lack of respect in the school on that regard. It's only fair for Ms. Elma to prepare the class especially by moving the class to a bigger venue so the kids and principal will move around and do their class visit

Still on fairness, Ms. Elma further added that:

*There are **double standards** in the school I believe the principal should unite the people and understand each other instead of being two faced. In a meeting he comes and are also wanting that and have been fighting for an increase. All this happened when tells the HOD that he will be getting **an increment**... he forgets that other teachers the teachers had written a letter to the directors requesting money and the principal refused to take the letter forward.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

Mr. Ndlovu from Alpha Primary had a very interesting contribution when he said something positive about the principal on fairness. He said:

*I am **demotivated** by the salary I get... I then asked with a painful heart if I can have an increase, at the end of the month. I will be getting the money. That goes to show how*

transparent and fair the principal is.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

It seems Mr. Ndlovu is the teacher who was given the increment and all the others were not. His story of the principal changed to that his principal was transparent and fair because he got the increase he always wanted.

For triangulation, the questionnaire data shows that the majority of the teachers' views were that the principal was not fair in his dealings at school. This came from the section B. 1 and B. 14 which asked that:

Did they believe that the school principal acts with fairness when handling school matters?

The documents review of the minutes of the 17th of August, 2018 corroborated with both the questionnaire data and the interviews. It was recorded that Mr. Ndlovu was going to be rewarded because of his long service and that he came during the holidays to teach with the principal hence he was getting the money end of the month. In looking at the side of the principal there could be reasons why Ms. Elma seems to be angry with the principal and on the other hand Mr. Ndlovu is willing to give credit where it's due.

Literature strengthens the findings from the three research methods used to generate data. Ekinici (2015) determined that the principals' servant leadership behaviours included fairness and integrity. Similarly, Spears (1998) posits that servant leadership is a move in leadership based on ethical behaviour. Insley et al(2016) is of the view that teachers' perceptions about their principals' servant leadership behaviours are also important indicators about their principals' level of servant leadership because it shows what they are not doing or doing right , and everybody benefits. In line with what Greenleaf (1970) stands for, leaders are called to give a greater priority to the needs of the others. In this case, Mr. Nkosi would be reflecting on his level of fairness.

From a theoretical perspective, Sipe and Frick (2015) model shows that the issue of fairness and integrity fall under Pillar one, person of character. According to Sipe and Frick (2015) the ability of the principal as a person of character seems to be lacking.

Communication

Secondly, the teachers perspectives centered on communication. In this regard Ms. Elma of Alpha

Primary School had this to say:

Leadership does not want to listen to advice from others, I have been criticised and belittled in front of the learners and I feel strongly about this and I wish schools had unions...

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

Ms. Elma had more to add and she said:

*In one of the meetings we were discussing contracts and I indicated that the contract was not set up correctly. It was then that I was told that my contract was ending **in front of everyone and that my HOD did not approve of me...**I was personally told that because my probation is done and am not going to be employed there I am **not supposed to be part of the argument** of salary increase. I told him that I have a right to express my feelings*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

On the issue of the contract, Mr. Ndlovu had this to say:

We started getting contracts after new teachers were employed from other schools and the contract was sub- standard. It did not have any increment and such.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

The statement by Mr. Ndlovu corroborates with Ms. Elma and this confirms that indeed the issue of the contract occurred. It seems from the data gathered that there are issues around communication between this principal and his staff. The minutes of this very meeting were not produced for review by the researcher which then begs the question as to what was in those minutes that could warrant their disappearance. There seems to be some underlying structures at this school because Mr. Nkosi mentioned having humility to apologise if he had said something crude to the teachers earlier in this report. It seems that the principal doesn't like feedback which speaks to communication because the moment Ms. Elma brought the point that there was something wrong with the contract, she was reminded that she did not pass probation. Ms. Elma said:

Access to some vital information is denied especially by the clerks when we want to check documents that can give an indication of the background of a learner.

(Ms. Elma, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

Similarly, Mr. Ndlovu added an interesting point. He said:

Personally I try to be as open as I can with the parents but I also try to keep my position where I am secret ... parents ask about school fees and where the money goes and normally these questions come out when the kids get chased away from school for maybe being behind in payments and they look and see that the resources are not there. I am secret so that I don't become a victim of things that may cause a lot of unhappiness.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

Collaboration

The voices of the teachers at Alpha primary seem to suggest that there are issues around consultation and the flow of information. The fact that Mr. Ndlovu wants to be invisible so he can protect himself seems to show that they are scared of the principal on some matters pertaining to money. Van Dierendonck (2011) posits that a proper flow of information leads to team work.

Both teachers at Alpha School on the issue of team work shared the following views.

Ms. Elma only, said:

*We need to work together as a team we must work as one and understand each other and **not criticise** each other in front of learners.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

It seems there are power relations in the school where the principal because of his position thinks that he can criticise that teacher in front of the learners. In agreement to team work, Mr. Ndlovu said:

Servant leadership involves togetherness. We hold prayer sessions in the morning before school begins just to touch base and comfort those with problems at home. The

principal doesn't need to be there sometimes it's just us teachers.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher. Alpha Primary School)

There seems to be some element of community building and the fact that the principal allows this to happen in his school means that he seems to support it. Now this begs the question as to whether this principal allows these meetings because he will be enforcing his religion on all as Mr. Ndlovu had earlier in the research mentioned that the principal imposes his religion on others, since this principal is a pastor of a certain church.

Further Mr. Ndlovu added the issue of diversity. He said:

People come from different cultures hence language and background need to be considered so that they don't get isolated so everyone is included ...I mean a deep understanding.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

For triangulation, the minutes of the 20th of March 2018 corroborate the data from the interviews because the principal recommended that people need not pray in tongues. The findings from the questionnaire data refuted the interview data because the majority of the participants gave a positive answers to the question:

Does the principal demonstrate commitment to the growth of people and the building of community?

Scholars such as Insley et al (2016) posit that schools are organisations where human affairs and feelings are intense. In this case looking at Ms Elma's responses, which seem to be all negative suggests that she has bad feelings for this school. May be this was due to the fact that her probation was over. Donia, *et al.*, (2016)) contend that servant leaders thrive on the opportunity to share ideas because the process of sharing creates accountability for the results that are generated from their actions. Openly communicating with others allows for the creation of trust, Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that teams enjoy good exchanges when there is effective communication.

From a theoretical perspective. Sipe and Frick (2015) model of the seven pillars, the majority

findings from the Alpha school teachers seem to suggest that their principal Mr. Nkosi is lacking in servant leadership behaviour. Considering the pillar one, of the person of character, the findings suggest that this principal, is not a person of character because he is not humble and he embarrassed and belittles his teachers. Secondly, the second pillar of putting people first, the principal is lacking in this regard as well because he did not demonstrate humility when he told Ms Elma that she was not entitled to an opinion about the contract and salary issues. Furthermore, he went on to announce that one of the teachers had an increment thus making others jealous. The principals' behaviour as a compassionate collaborator is questionable because of his unfairness in granting an increase to one teacher, Mr Ndlovu, yet all the teachers had asked for an increase. The principal's action is tantamount to sowing the seeds of jealousy and that does not foster team work. Pillar seven speaks to leading with moral authority, the fact that Mr Ndlovu wanted to keep his position secret when it came to accountability of money to parents' leaves a lot to be desired. This action shows that there is no culture of accountability.

In summarising this segment, the findings that emerged show the teachers views or perspectives on the implementation of servant leadership by the principals. Fairness and procedural justice; communication and collaboration, came up as the behaviours the teachers would like to see demonstrated by their principal at Alpha Primary School.

4.2.2.2.1 Views from teachers at Beta Primary School

According to the teachers at Beta Primary School, expectations of their principals, in terms of the implementation of servant leadership dimensions, are widely focused on **communication** ; **Collaboration** which involves developing relationships and **conflict resolution**.

In this regard, Maria the teacher at Beta Primary School had this to say:

*I feel communication is not enough on the whole and is a problem, a lot of time, people don't know what is going on then there is confusion and people are upset and there has been **no feedback** on issues and that's stressful.*

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Furthermore, Maria added that:

***Communication** is really extremely important coz that's where you find the issues and*

lack of communication brings about problems, anxiety. Friction maybe... I have seen colleagues of mine get offended because they were not told to do to do something at an event so they felt left out and the principal said the intention was not leave anyone out but that the communication didn't go through.

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Similarly, Mr. Fats shared the same view and he said:

*There is **poor communication** in this school .People are not treated the same and there is a **small number of people that seem close to the leadership and they know everything.***

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Maria shared her concerns around this issue when she added:

*I don't know if there is like **honesty**, not sure if there is a level of **transparency with everyone**. Like they don't want to offend people. **Leaders seems afraid to offend people but will sugar coat issues.***

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Emotionally, Mr. Fats brought the issue of conflict resolution, which he considered non-existent and suggested that gossip was rife on the staff causing a lot of divisions. This speaks to trust and Mr. Fats asserted that:

My worry is if I can't trust leadership with confidential stuff. I remember requesting to go attend to a personal issue and to my surprise a cleaner asked me about my issue which I had only shared with a particular leader.

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

The overall concern from the teachers at Beta is the leadership style and Maria asserted that:

In the leadership team there are some who are too controlling

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

A sentiment shared by Mr. Fats when he said:

I think there is a problem when it comes to leadership because there are some on the leadership team who are dictators and they seem to have a bad influence on the top leader. Principal makes decisions without consulting... I don't feel that I belong here!!

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

A sentiment shared by Maria who said:

Decision making on sensitive issues seems to be a problem can this be a problem of not being used to making such decisions.

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

For triangulation, the Beta Primary school minutes of the 17th of January, 2019 stated that the teachers were reminded to sign the confidentiality form and they were reminded that whatever is discussed in the staff room needs to stay there as there had been incidents of gossip and rumor mongering. The minutes of the 6th of June, 2019 stated that the principal wanted to resign because of pressure from home and school. The minutes of the 8th of November, 2019 corroborates this. It was written that the principal was upset because someone on the staff had leaked confidential information to the former principal. Teachers were urged to stop gossiping and be open. In the minutes of the 24th of January, 2019, it was written that the deputy principal and not the principal, will be dealing with any conflict issues until further notice. This came up after complaints were laid against one person in the principal's inner circle and it seems the principal swept the issue under the carpet that way to protect the friend.

The documents review of the school policy on the Principals Duties section 3.5 which speaks to the duty of the principal as manager of the school as an organisation stipulates that:

It is the duty of the principal to implement transparent decision making structures and solve problems in a creative manner.

This seems not to be happening at Beta Primary school as seen from the information above. This was corroborated by the questionnaire data. Question 2 and 10 begged the answer as to whether the principal consults in decision making; question 1 begged the answer to the question whether the principal acts with fairness when dealing with school matters. The majority of the participant's views were that the principal was not sufficient in that area of decision making, conflict resolution

and communication.

From a Literature perspective, scholars like Donia, *et al.*, (2016) posit that it is important to include followers in the decision-making process. Not including followers in the **decision-making process** results in the followers' loss of confidence in leadership, and ultimately their loss of faith in the organization's ability to withstand the storm created by the economy. The overall impact results in the **followers' desire to leave the organisation** due to the feeling of instability and insecurity (Kumar, 2018).

The practice of servant leadership profoundly affects the nature of an organization. Research showed that something as simple as **openly communicating** with others **allows for the creation of trust, the exchange of improvement in the decision-making** process. Greenleaf (1970) posit that followers need to be part of the decision making process as it impacts on them. Similarly Sipe and Frick (2015) acknowledges that decision making need to be flexible and must be matched with the situation

From a theoretical perspective Sipe and Frick (2015)'s model communication speaks to pillar three, that of the skilled communicator and decision making falls under pillar one that of a person of character and conflict resolution falls under pillar four, that of the compassionate collaborator.

In summary of this segment, from data generated at Beta primary school, a notion of dictatorship was raised by the majority which means that decisions are made without consultation, this speaks to communication.

4.2.2.2.3 Views from the teachers of Lucy Primary School

The key finding from Lucy primary show that there seems to be misappropriation of funds. Mr. Nqobile said;

Money for civvies days are not accounted for and almost every second Friday there is civvies.

(Mr. Nqobile, teacher, Lucy Primary School)

Similarly, on the financial issue Ms. Zukie said:

*There is mismanagement of funds. Even if there is a finance committee, there is **no***

*financial statement or just a list of how the money have been used. No feedback for the budget. The lifestyle he leads is not in line with his salary. I think there is something wrong. **No transparency with the money** raised and parents often ask what the money is for and there is often no accountability and these parents don't want to take part or keep contributing to the school without being updated on the other money.*

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

The issue of decision making seems to be a thorn in the flesh according to the majority of the teachers at Lucy Primary school and this seems to affect the implementation of servant leadership. Ms. Zukie further said:

The principal comes to the people that he will work with the conclusion. You need to come with the idea then discuss it then then hear what input they have regarding because having a goal without advising the subordinates also causes a lot of conflict. They are more managerial. It's like they want to carry out a target and forget about people in the process.

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

The teachers at Lucy primary school really had bad feelings towards their principal and they aired their views by saying:

*There is **no transparency** because the principal said that a parent complained about this and that but they don't disclose the parent or call a meeting to address the issues. When you demand to see the parent they go what what...What hee hee what what! **Hiding things, all lies.** The issue is **one sided** it is always the educator this and the educator that. And they don't even try to smell their on armpits they might be worse! They make you **feel unwanted**. The principal's behaviours doesn't go hand in hand with what they preach. It's like he has his own bible ...*

(Mr. Nqobile, teacher, Lucy Primary School)

Finally, Ms. Zukie in agreement said:

There is no Servant leadership in the school that I am at coz you find the principal wants to take ownership of everything at the same time it is not wise like I said before

*that one cannot know everything. Communication with the teachers is a **problem** because teachers are told different things. This **depends on the relationship they have with the principal** this has led to challenges with some parents when it comes to fundraising.*

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

The teachers' views at Lucy School have a resemblance to the views of the other two schools in terms of the principal coming to the meeting with conclusions. Kumar (2018) posit that servant leaders thrive on the opportunity to share ideas because the process of sharing creates accountability for the results that are generated from their actions. It also seems that the principal, Mr. Nzuma has different relationships with his teachers and Savage-Austin and Honeycutt (2011) are of the view that leaders who work within silos become so focused on accomplishing the goals of friends that they lose sight of the greater good.

According to Sipe and Frick (2015)'s model of the seven pillars of servant leadership, the principal of Lucy Primary School seems not to lead with moral authority because he does not create a culture of accountability in his abuse of school finances and not providing any financial statements to the stake holders.

In summarising this segment, the findings that emerge are that, the teachers perceive the principal as lacking in communication, mismanages the school funds and has no servant leadership qualities.

4.2.3 Necessity of servant leadership

4.2.3.1 Principals' views on necessity of servant leadership

The findings from the three principals on the necessity of servant leadership principles suggest that servant leadership is deemed important. The principals said servant leadership principle are necessary for self-actualisation, positive work climate and team relationships.

On **self- actualisation**, Mr. Nkosi, Principal of Alpha Primary school said:

*Servant leadership if correctly applied can **encourage** those who are being led to realise they have the **potential to rise and also lead!***

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

In a similar vein, Mrs. Green, Principal of Beta Primary school asserted that:

*Increases the motivation to do work knowing that they have support in their efforts this leads to **personal growth** which makes them able to face challenges.*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Mr. Nzuma of Lucy primary school added that:

*Servant leadership makes people feel the need to **volunteer** on their own. They will get the **confidence** they need to try and do things on their own.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

With regards to servant leadership being able to foster a positive work climate, Mr. Nkosi said:

*Yes the environment becomes relaxed and everyone is free where there is freedom then happiness follows resulting in a **positive work climate**.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

Similarly, Mr. Nzuma, Principal of Lucy Primary School shared the same sentiments when he said:

*If servant leadership holds all the pieces of an organisation this creates a driven **positive atmosphere** conducive for learning and teaching.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

All the principals agreed on servant leadership as necessary for team building and team effectiveness. Mrs. Green asserted that:

Teams become effective when everyone works together with the teachers coming to meet the parents and the kids ...

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Furthermore, Mr. Nkosi brought the notion of procedural justice when he said:

*Servant leadership makes all people realise that human beings are basically **equal**.
And fairness will prevail.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

In concluding the principals' perspectives on the importance of servant leadership, Mr. Nkosi asserted that:

...it's not just important; servant leadership is just an integral part of any administration, especially in a democratic country like this where you talk about democracy. That's what it is all about. Everything is about the people, so you are not leading the people as a president but the people are leading you through the constitution that is based on the will of the people.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

4.2.3.2 Teachers' views on necessity of servant leadership

The findings from all six teachers from the three schools suggest that they are in agreement with their principals on the necessity of servant leadership. The teachers added the notion of conflict resolution and organisational citizen behaviour which the principals did not mention.

Ms. Elma, teacher from Alpha primary School said that:

***Conflict resolution** is enhanced because if there is a dispute with a colleague. It makes it easier for **communication** because the bad vibes in an environment are unhealthy.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

Similarly, Ms. Maria from Beta primary school added that:

Communication is extremely important coz that's where you find out the issues and miscommunication can lead to problems, anxiety and friction.

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

In a similar vein, Ms. Zukie from Lucy school said:

*Communication may also help with digging out underground issues and this may **avoid conflicts**.*

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

Mr. Fats from Beta primary school brought in the notion of ‘*paying it forward*’. Mr. Fats reckons that servant leadership once it is enacted, then it will have a ripple effect to everybody. He said:

*The necessity of S.L in an organisation doesn't only impact of the people in that place only, the people come from communities hence it will affect **civil society** positively. Some say **it's paying it forward**, A little kindness goes a long way and has a **ripple effect**.*

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

The findings that the teachers put communication and conflict resolution as the glue that holds the school and the principals did not even mention that. This seems to signal that there could be problems in the schools with regards to conflict resolution and communication.

Overall, all the participants, Principals and teachers alike agree on the necessity of servant leadership principles in life. The findings from the documents review of the weekly staff meetings of the week 08/05/19 at Beta Primary School show that there is a reflection done at the start of the meetings and this aims to build teams in prayer. The last item on Beta Primary school minutes had the section for arising issues and everyone can give their contribution if they want. The challenge that came up is that not all people's contributions were recorded. This then begs the question as to why this was so? The minutes of 08/05/19 did not have the contribution of teacher X who had complained about gossip and how it could destroy lives. Could it be that some people are considered useless? Why then allow people to air their views if the minutes will be cherry picked.

Alpha Primary school minutes of the 30th of January, 2018 and the 21st of May, 2019 there was food brought by teachers and they were celebrating the teachers' birthdays. All this speaks to working together and a positive climate that could be created by servant leadership practises. The minutes of Lucy primary school as earlier mentioned were not available to the researcher. Interview data from Lucy primary School doesn't indicate any getting together instead there are cliques as Ms Zukie stated that the principal had different relationships with the staff. This implied that not everyone got to be invited for lunch except for the chosen few.

Minutes from alpha primary school did not show any of the teacher's voices or contributions. This may suggest that they were either scared to say something or they all didn't have anything to

contribute. These findings strengthen the findings from the interviews on the necessity of the implementation of the servant leadership principles.

The questionnaire data findings from both schools corroborate with the findings from the interviews judging from the majority of responses from section C where the teachers suggested that principals can demonstrate servant leadership practices by involving teachers in decision making, teamwork and communication

Literature supports the necessity of servant leadership principle in life. Greenleaf (1977) on team building is of the view that none of us is perfect by ourselves. We need each other. But for the deep understanding, Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that principals don't understand their people, as people are all different with different strengths. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that in conflict resolution the principal as a systems thinker should know all the underlying structures from all parties involved in the conflict before getting to an outcome. This speaks to a deep understanding of people and issues.

Van Dierendonck (2017) is of the view that a high-quality dyadic relationship, trust, and fairness are expected to be the most important mediating processes to encourage self-actualisation, positive job attitudes, performance, and a stronger organizational focus on sustainability. Northhouse (2016) posit the potential outcomes of servant leadership in three parts which are, first, the individual level which speaks to self- actualisation. Secondly, at the organisational level, where school achieve goals. Finally, Northhouse (2016) says servant leadership has a societal impact on the community at large and this is seen in the likes of Nelson Mandela.

This literature strengthens the findings that speak to the necessity of implementing servant leadership principles mentioned by all the participants.

Further, servant leadership yields more positive organisational out comes such as building a trusting culture, organizational citizen behaviour, team effectiveness and satisfaction (Parris & Welty-Peachey, 2013). Furthermore, literature has revealed that organizations led by a servant leaders are positively associated with procedural justice (Chan, 2017) and this fosters trust in the servant leader and the organisation (Von Fischer and De Jong, 2017). Subsequently, this trust created by a servant leader facilitates an open climate, builds a helping culture, and is associated with organisational citizenship behaviours (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Hu & Liden, 2011).

Despite the fact that there are a lot of positives in the implementation of servant leadership that the participants have mentioned, however, things are often easier said than done as there are a lot of generative mechanisms, complexity and inner states to consider that may affect the process.

From a theoretical perspective, Sipe and Frick (2015)'s model. Pillar six speaks to the servant leader as a systems thinker. Sipe & Frick (2015) are of the view that a systems thinker acts and thinks strategically and considers every angle in decision making. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that the pillar one of ethical conduct and pillar two that of people first are incorporated in systems thinking. It will be hard to be effective without the other pillars at play. Barbuto and Hayden (2011) posit that the Leader- Member- Exchange theory (LXM) speaks to the kind of relationship that the principal has with the teachers which in turn helps with decision making.

In concluding this theme on the necessity of servant leadership, the principals and their teachers acknowledge that servant leadership may affect individual performance, organisational performance and impacts the society positively.

4.2.4 Promotion of servant leadership

Findings from the principals and teachers suggest that they supported the promotion of servant by the following means: Culture change in the form of Training and Facilitation; policy as in pressure and support from the higher body of education; modelling best practice as in communication and conflict resolution. Ms. Zukie, teacher from Lucy Primary School said:

Servant leadership can be promoted through the change of perspective or culture change. Old people who are used to doing things in a certain way are not open to new ideas so servant leadership has to be practiced in a way that will win the hard core minds!

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

Ms. Zukie further went on to place the principals at the helm of this culture change when she said:

Principals as the driving force behind need to be trained more.

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

In a similar vein, the principal of Lucy Primary School, Mr. Nzuma also touched on the principals

and teachers' need to understand servant leadership more as there are other leadership types that people have been exposed to in the past. Mr. Nzuma said:

*First and foremost one cannot promote something they don't understand. Most of the adults already have their **ways of thinking engraved** in them so that needs to change if anything is to be achieved. Personalities may also be a problem. Some people are difficult naturally. I suggest that the principals need to know more by either **short courses, training workshops**.*

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

An interesting revelation was brought by the principal of Alpha Primary School Mr. Nkosi who said:

*Servant leadership needs to **be promoted early in life not at the level of principal**. Training should start early well before principal ship because it's the teachers who later become principals, or even the notion could be introduced at high school.*

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

Most of the participants spoke of training and facilitation and Mr. Fats, teacher at Beta Primary School said:

There needs to be proper structure with accountability so that everyone does what they try to learn. Everyone needs training even those who think they know.

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Mrs. Green principal of Beta primary School suggested that:

***Understanding** peoples **personality** matters. It becomes easier to catch a fly with honey than vinegar... this can also help in lifelong learning and people will need to go for refresher courses in servant leadership*

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Mr. Ndlovu, teacher from Alpha Primary School, brought in the notion of the leadership style that the principal aligns to when he said:

It will be easier to promote servant leadership if schools have principals who are also for servant leadership...

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

This puts the principals on the spot and this can be seen in their actions if they are for servant leadership. This brings us to the notion of demonstration of good behaviour as promoting servant leadership. Communication and conflict resolution came up from the majority of the participants. Ms. Zukie suggested that:

Suggestion boxes where people can share ideas which may help because other people do not want to speak out in public but prefer listen. Some may be having a challenge of English so if they write down even in their mother tongue someone can then translate for them without putting too much pressure and it will be anonymous coz they don't write their names.

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

Communication raised its titular head again when the participants said that for any training to occur, information needs to be communicated to the people well in good time as it is the golden thread that holds organisations and people together. For conflict resolution to be done effectively, communication is at the root of things.

With regards to conflict resolution, Mr. Ndlovu, teacher at Alpha Primary School said:

Conflict resolution needs to be done effectively, this can then make people work together to promote the vision of the school which in this case, the servant leadership culture.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

The majority of the teachers reckon that policy may be used to promote servant leadership. Mr. Nqobile, teacher at Lucy Primary said:

Since the department is busy on policies then servant leadership policy can be promoted by policy too.

(Mr. Nqobile, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

For triangulation the documents review of the minutes at Beta primary School, a diversity workshop was held on the 2nd of April, 2019. A lot was touched on conflict and communication. It seems the modelling of best behaviour spoke to the principles of servant leadership. On the 9th of April, 2019, NAPTOSA, a teachers' union hosts workshops at Wits University, ranging from leadership to classroom management. The principal Mrs. Green urged people to attend. The minutes at Alpha Primary School that indicate some workshop are those of the 21st of September 2018 where there was a cluster meeting to discuss some subject policy and there was mention of the 'Ubuntu' principles which in this instance are aligned to the servant leadership principles. No minutes were provided to the researcher from Lucy school.

The perspectives from the teachers suggest that there is a problem in the way their principals dealt with conflict and this does affect the promotion of servant leadership. In the minutes of the 24th of January, 2019, it was written that the principal was not able to deal with conflicts because of personal issues at home and at school. This then suggests that, there seems to be a problem in this school of conflict which is just swept under the carpet. This information is corroborated in the interview data of Mr. Fats who said that conflict resolution does not exist in that school. The principal as the person at the helm should be able to balance things and all decisions made impact on the principal.

These findings from the teachers corroborated with the data from the questionnaires on Section C point 1 which speaks to how the principal should demonstrate servant leadership principles, the majority spoke most of improving communication. This means that people will be informed of workshops which may serve as an enabling factor to the implementation of servant leadership. The findings from the policy documents from the schools corroborates with the findings from the interviews. The policy on the Duties of the Principal, Section 3.4.2 stipulates that the Batho Pele policy must be abided by. The policy on the Duties of the Teacher section 2.2.1 stipulates the application of the principles of Ubuntu which is the Batho Pele principles / servant Leadership principles. From the incidences that the teachers mentioned in the interviews, it would seem that yes the policy may be there but it would seem that it's not being abided by. Similarly, Blanchard, *et al.*, (2010) on the issue of Servant leadership being enforced on the teachers in the form of policy is not what Servant leadership stands for because it is a matter of the heart and the change in

perspectives.

Literature supports the promotion of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2002) say that personality is important. Insley et al (2016) are of the view that modest, compatible individuals who try to solve problems of others are accepted by the staff. This also puts the focus on the principals' modelling of good behaviour. Cerit (2009) posits that the more a teacher perceives the behaviours of servant leadership being implementing in the school, the higher the level of individual teacher job satisfaction hence this can be an enabling factor in the implementation of servant leadership. Ms Zukie of Lucy Primary School said that servant leadership may be promoted through the change in perspective. In agreement Cohen and Sherman (2014) are of the view that for change to be seen, people need to change their perspectives.

Training and facilitation if done consistently may promote servant leadership, as the great minds of old, Aristotle cited in Crespo(2016) once said that we are what we repeatedly do. Similarly Sipe and Frick (2015) posit that character is a result of the right habits. The Batho Pele White paper (DPSA.1997) showed governments intention to adopt a citizen oriented approach to service delivery informed by the eight principles of transparency, consultation, persuasion, redress, access, courtesy, service standards and value for money. Manala (2010) reckons that the Ubuntu philosophy which is strongly aligned to the Batho Pele policy because of putting people first, can be used to promote servant leadership, (etu.org.za/toolbox-/docs/-govern/bathopele).

Leading change effectively and providing for training falls within the ambit of Sipe and Frick's (2015) sixth pillar of servant leadership which speaks to a leader as a systems thinker. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that leaders need to deeply understand their staff and be able to deal with complexity. The findings seem to suggest that the principals' systems thinking abilities are lacking as communication and conflict resolution were also lacking. Sipe and Frick posit that the pillars do not function in isolation of each other.

In conclusion of this theme of the promotion of servant leadership principles, all the participants seem to agree on changing the perspectives people by Training and Facilitation; policy as in pressure and support from the higher body of education; modelling best practice as in communication and conflict resolution.

4.2.5 Challenges faced in the implementation of servant leadership

The findings from all the participants on the challenges they experience in the implementation of the principles of servant leadership put **leadership** at the core of the challenges. Insley, *et al.*, (2016) posit that servant leadership philosophy addresses both the leaders and followers roles, this suggests that meeting the needs of the followers and taking feedback from the followers will allow leaders to overcome the challenges faced by the schools. The principals put the lack of knowledge in servant leadership, different personalities / relationships, culture and policy as the barriers to servant leadership. On the other hand, the teachers put lack of leadership skills, dictatorship, and lack of feedback and culture change as barriers.

The principal of Alpha Primary school Mr. Nkosi said:

Notion of servant leadership is complex because it involves culture change. And that is definitely hard for people who are trying to master it at a very high level.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha primary school)

Mr. Nkosi further added that the complexity of people poses as a challenge. He said:

Another challenge which occur is the individual differences that human beings have. Different values and commitment levels. Service delivery will also be affected by who they are.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha primary school)

The change of culture from one leadership style to servant leadership seems to be a thorn in the flesh for some principals and is demanding. Mrs. Green, the principal of Beta Primary School brought in the notion of personal feelings when she said:

Servant leadership is very draining, I feel unappreciated and sometimes people take you for granted because you can be seen as too soft so they would take advantage of certain situations.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha primary school)

Mr. Nkosi and Mrs. Green both made reference to personalities being a challenge to servant leadership because Mrs. Green things she has a soft personality and wants to be appreciated and

Mr. Nkosi mentioned the different work ethic that people bring to work. Similarly, still on the challenge of culture change Mr. Nzuma, principal of Lucy School said:

Fear of change can be a challenge, may be they are comfortable with the way things are done. If when a new thing is introduced they try to sabotage others and find stuff to bring down others. No matter how good it is there will always be those who have an ugly thing to say.

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

Mr. Nzuma further added that most principals do not know the principles that they operate under and this poses a big challenge in the implementation. In his case he was honest enough to say that servant leadership was too idealistic and that he did not believe that it will work in all contexts Mr. Nzuma asserted that:

Schools are different and have different cultures and contexts, hence the principals need to have the correct strategy for the change process which aligns with the context.

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

Authoritarian leadership was seen as a barrier to servant leadership only by Mrs. Green of Beta Primary School who said:

Wielding power and being above everybody else is a challenge to the implementation of servant leadership.

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Mr. Nkosi, Principal of Alpha Primary School brought in the notion of action being louder than words when he pointed the finger at the researcher and said:

You researchers do research and nothing is ever heard of these things. More action must follow the words. We are willing to learn and help you...

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

The majority of the teachers blamed the principals for the challenges faced in the implementation

of servant leadership. To begin with, Ms. Elma of Alpha Primary School said:

*The challenge to the implementation of servant leadership in this school is the principal **has no leadership qualities** ...People are scared to speak about concerns hence if there is going to be any positive outcome that needs to be addressed. Principals need to communicate nicely with teachers. Directors of the school need to work with the principal and the teachers ... even the principal did not want to take the letter requesting a raise for the teachers and staff.*

(Ms. Elma, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

The issue of **authoritarianism** was brought by Mr. Ndlovu, a teacher from the same school, Alpha primary who said:

Dictatorship is a challenge, as in imposing your church beliefs on people.

(Mr. Ndlovu, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

It seems principal Nkosi is a pastor of a certain church and he told the teachers that they must finish early on Friday so as to prepare for the Sabbath. People have a right to choose a religion of their choice. This seems to work against servant leadership as it is not supposed to be a force matter.

The teachers from Beta Primary School also shared the same view of dictatorship being a challenge when Ms. Maria said:

*That which goes against servant leadership is a leader who is **too controlling**. **Leader should not impose own views**. Leaders should really **listen and understand the person they are dealing with**.*

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

In a similar vein, Mr. Fats of Beta Primary School added that:

*Dictatorship is a challenge ...giving people ultimatums and pretending to listen then do the opposite, one feels betrayed. **Double standards** hey! I will tell you the incident off record... They make you feel the status gap.*

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

Similarly, the teachers from Lucy shared the same sentiments and Mr. Nqobile brought the issue of slavery when he said:

***Dictatorship** in my school hinders servant leadership because the relationship we have is that of master and a **slave**. Most of us teachers are slaves to those people. ...they know we are underpaid they know we are being used and learners undermine us because of that.*

(Mr. Nqobile, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

The teachers also lamented the use of the command and control style by the principals when they use policy. This is what Mr. Fats, teacher from Beta Primary School said:

*Principals have a tendency to **use policy** to force people to comply like a paper was sent around telling people that it was now a new policy for people not to send a lot of things to be photocopied as that disturbs the other duties in the office. Isn't it easier to call the teachers and address them one by one those who do that? Another policy rule that came up was that teachers are not to talk at line up. When requested to produce the policy, it's nowhere to be found.*

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

The majority of the teachers brought the issue of **culture as** a barrier to the implementation of servant leadership. Ms. Zukie of Lucy Primary School gave an interesting account of how the sudden culture change seemed to affect policy and relationships.

*Another challenge is that the principal was a **post –level 1 teacher who got a promotion** in the same school. So this principal has grown within with everyone so they know too much about the principal and don't know where to draw the line anymore. These teachers forget that they need to respect the position. And that the principal has to adopt policies and implement them to achieve goals. This principal was lazy before and they used not to do any work, and now that he is a principal he wants them to work, they don't understand that. They try to understand what has changed because they have been lazy all along... Why now that you principal?*

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

Furthermore, the majority of the teachers said the **lack of feedback and accountability**, lack of vision and the different ways in which principals treat people pose as a challenge to servant leadership. Ms. Zukie added that:

Rules apply to certain people but not to others for example friends can be sick and stay home and a sick note is not required but others he will come to your house to see if you really sick and demand a sick note. The fact that different people are told different things again brings issues of trustworthiness.

(Ms. Zukie, Teacher, Lucy Primary School)

The above statement by Ms. Zukie teacher at Lucy Primary School raises eyebrows, especially when Mrs. Green, Principal of Beta Primary School appears to corroborate the issues raised. Mrs. Green asserted that:

There are different working relationships within a group of people; some people you will work easily, with and others will be a bit more challenging

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

4.2.5.1 Principals views on solutions to the challenges on servant leadership

The findings from the principals suggest that they had suggestions how they can overcome the barriers they faced in the implementation of servant leadership. Some were congruent to the servant leadership philosophy but others were not. That which came out most is the issue of culture change which they all agreed was complex. Mr. Nkosi said:

*The solution could be introducing servant leadership at the level of teacher so when they get to be principals, they are better equipped. In doing so a proper **structure for implementation is needed.***

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

Similarly, the Principal of Lucy Primary School brought an important point of the different contexts and geography of the schools and he said:

*Different schools have different needs hence the **geography of the school** in terms of*

how to approach the culture change

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

This is where the profile of implementation fits in because servant will be approached from where the school is. This may be a solution to what Mrs. Green of Beta primary School said earlier that:

Servant leadership is very draining...

(Mrs. Green, Principal, Beta Primary School)

Things become draining if the willpower goes hence the principal of Alpha Primary School, Mr. Nkosi stressed the point that persistence will help with the culture change. Similarly, Mr. Nzuma principal of Lucy primary mentioned that people fear change but as they get more comfortable, it will happen.

Mr. Nzuma seems to have a solution for Mrs. Green when he said:

Principal need to know the style they choose and stick to it for some time that is adopting the right leadership style for the kind of school as I said different schools need to be profiled for servant leaders and this is not easy considering that leading people is not easy!

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

Mr. Nzuma further added that:

I guess persistence in living out servant leadership will make a change. Nothing is easy in life!

(Mr. Nzuma, Principal, Lucy Primary School)

On the issue of different personalities, Mr. Nkosi said:

The individual differences that human beings have. Different values and commitment levels affect servant leadership principles but changing this perspective by culture change process may help.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

Mrs. Green reckons that having the different working relationships with the people seems to be one way she overcomes the barrier of different personalities. This is not congruent to the servant leadership philosophy as it will be discussed later. Servant leadership focuses on building relationships between the leader and all followers.

The solution that Mr. Nkosi, Principal of Alpha School suggested may have a few challenges because other people from other religions may not be happy if it is imposed on them from a Christian point of view. Mr. Nkosi suggested that:

This needs to be taught from a Christian point of view because Jesus Christ was a servant.

(Mr. Nkosi, Principal, Alpha Primary School)

4.2.5.2 Teachers' views on solutions to the challenges

The majority of the teachers stated that their principals did not display any servant leadership behaviors. The perceived challenges were the command and control style of management by the principals, inconsistency in the modelling of servant leadership behaviours, the misuse of policy and creating their own policies to scare the teachers and lack of communication as in giving feedback and accountability.

Ms. Elma teacher from Alpha Primary school suggested that:

Principals may know servant leadership, but their actions are different. I think work shopping may help with awareness of servant leadership.

(Ms. Elma, Teacher, Alpha Primary School)

Similarly Mr. Fats, teacher from Beta Primary School said:

Consistency in the modelling of best behaviour hence everyone needs to be on board with enacting the servant leadership behaviours. The principals first because they are the drivers of the schools.

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

On the challenge of lack of communication the teachers suggested that:

*Leaders should really **listen and understand the** person they are dealing with and they should exercise patience and grit in culture change because it takes time and is demanding. Leaders should also stop gossiping about the teachers.*

(Ms. Maria, teacher, Beta Primary School)

Similarly Mr. Fats, teacher from Beta Primary school on the lack of **feedback and accountability** said:

I would like to see more openness with the fundraising money because we are not told the exact amount raised and what it was used for.

(Mr. Fats, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

The solution on the dictatorship or slavery as Mr. Nqobile put it, would be to seek outside support like meeting with the directors to alert them on servant leadership. The department of labour has a bench mark on the salaries that educators must get. The principal should be at the helm to show his support to the teachers.

Furthermore, Mr. Nzuma, Principal of Lucy primary had mentioned that most principals need to know the principles that they operate under. If they do not know they will be mixing different leadership styles like servant leadership then at another time they are controllers. Most of the teachers said that they feel the status gap between them and the principals. The solution to that could be that people need to change their perspectives and buy into servant leadership.

The challenge of the policy and the misuse of it by the principals can be overcome by the principals meeting with the teachers and showing them the actual policy documents because the teachers mentioned that the principals lie and claim that they are following policy yet it would be their controlling. This can only happen if there is communication and collaboration.

Mr. Ndlovu said:

Vision building and the inclusion of all parties can be positive for the organisation.

The teachers felt that the principal had different relationships with the staff resulting in favours being done and those chosen few knowing more about other people. The cliques that form only serve their own interests not everybody. The principal should not encourage the formation of

cliques and as already discussed, should instead bring people together for the common goal of servant leadership.

To a large extent the findings from the interviewed participants corroborated with the findings from the questionnaires and the perused documents that were analysed. The questionnaire data on Section C which wanted suggestions as to how the principal should demonstrate group togetherness. The majority of the teachers wrote that they would like the leaders to work with them and understand their pain and be informed of all that is happening instead of the grapevine. On human dignity, the teachers said that they would like the principals to respect them and not belittle them in front of people. They also would like the principal to not make them feel the status gap.

The review of the minutes from Beta Primary School show that on the 8th of November, 2018, the principal was upset because somebody had gossiped about her and that a teacher had leaked confidential information about the schools finances and she wanted to resign. This corroborated with the questionnaire data section A. which states that:

My principal doesn't instill trust, respect but brings insecurity in the whole school.

Such behaviour poses a challenge in the implementation of servant leadership as people will be on guard watching each other and the sense of unity is destroyed. The minutes from Alpha primary of the 19th of July, 2018 show that the meeting did not end well because the principal sent away a teacher for losing her temper on some issue. The questionnaire data from alpha school corroborated this corroborated this when the majority of the respondents on question seven of section A which states that:

I believe that my school principal manifests a professional code of conduct when leading and managing the school.

The teachers said that they did not believe that the principal acted in a professional way because of the way he treated some teachers.

Literature supports that there are challenges and it also offers possible solutions. Savage –Austin and Honeycutt (2011) posit that servant leadership would prosper in a culture that encourages trust and inclusivity and not in an authoritarian style of leadership. Von Fischer and De Jong (2017)

posit that leaders who have false pride are controllers and even when they don't know what they are doing they still have the high need of power. This corroborates with what Ms. Maria, teacher, Beta Primary said in the interview that:

Some people love to control and are dictators hence one never knows where they stand with leadership.

(Ms. Maria, Teacher, Beta Primary School)

On the issue of lack of feedback and accountability, Chinyerere (2018) is of the view that, it is most typical of dictators or controllers because they get violent when they are asked about the feedback they are supposed to give and don't want to listen to others.

When the principals work towards skilled communication with their staff, they develop a relationship and that's where the Leader Member Exchange theory (LMX) coined by Dansereau, Cashman and Graen (1973) fits in. Barbuto and Hayden (2011) define LMX as the special relationship that leaders develop with each follower and they further say that the stronger the bonds the more they are trusted and respected and this works perfectly for servant leadership. For this reason the principal need not cherry pick people that they have relations with only but are called to try and understand all, the easy and the challenging ones so as to avoid what Insley, *et al.*, (2016) calls 'cliques'.

Liden, Wayne and Henderson (2016) are of the view that the challenge for servant leadership would be when servant leadership was matched with followers who do not desire it, Liden et al (2011) further say that both the followers and the leaders need to be on the same page for servant leadership to bear positive fruits. This speaks to the different personalities that the principals spoke of as hindering servant hood. Greenleaf (1970) who said the true test of a servant leader is whether the followers become healthier, wiser and they too become servant leaders. This then takes us to the question: What may make the followers not want to be servant leaders?

Blanchard, *et al.*, (2010) posit that a barrier to servant leadership is a heart motivated by self-interest. They further say that servant leadership is a question of the heart and no matter how they pretend to change, it will always show. Taylor (2007) cited in Northouse (2016) posit that to be a model to others, one needs to understand themselves and their chosen leadership style and they

further suggest that this may mean challenging the culture of the organisation. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) further say that the lack of understanding of one self has catastrophic implications for the school. Savage –Austin and Honeycutt (2011) are of the view that the leaders need to attract employees so they can participate in servant leadership.

From the theoretical perspective of Sipe and Frick (2015) performance of the top officials should be congruent with the highest standards because ‘actions speak louder than words. The principal of Alpha, Mr. Nkosi also shared the same sentiments when he said to the researcher that, it must not end with research but action must be taken to foster servant leadership in organisations. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that the efforts to implement servant leadership in schools has been jeopardised by impatience, incongruence and the lack of knowledge of the change process. The principal of Beta Primary seems to fall in this group of those who are impatient and may be lack knowledge of the change process because she said servant leadership was too draining on her. Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest that in order to make life easier for the leaders, they should hire people who are for example honest and not train someone to be honest when they are already employed. The issue of the policies is a thorn in the flesh for most teachers and Sipe and Frick (2015) say that the balance of putting people first and the school performance can be messy. Sipe and Frick (2015) suggest that all personnel who have a negative impact on the school need to be cut loose and make way for those who will work with others.

Drawing on Sipe and Frick (2015)’s model of the pillars of servant leadership with regards to the theme of challenges and their solutions, speaks to pillar seven. Pillar seven, represents the leader who leads with Moral Authority. Sipe and Frick (2015) further say that moral authority is earned by the principals by following all the other six pillars. A person who leads with moral authority is highly ethical, inspires trust and creates a culture of accountability and responsibility. From the findings in this research, the teachers stated that their principals as servant leaders was not sufficient hence they did not think that they were leading with moral authority.

4.2.5.3 Chapter summary

The chapter comprised of the discussions of the findings and the analysed data generated through the semi -structured interviews, questionnaires, and documents review of the policies and staff minutes. The participants were the three principals and six teachers in the Johannesburg East

District. In this chapter, the findings for each of the interview questions was compared and contrasted with the data from the questionnaires and the documents review. The next chapter is the last chapter of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the study summary, the conclusions and the recommendations of the whole study. Drawing from the findings outlined in Chapter Four, conclusions and recommendations are arrived at, there after the implications of the study are made known to all stake holders. A chapter summary concludes the presentation.

5.2 The summary of the study

The focus of the study was to explore servant leadership at three schools in the Johannesburg East District with the special emphasis on the perspectives of teachers. Nine participants took part in the semi -structured interviews, comprising of three principals and six teachers. For triangulation, questionnaires and documents review of the staff minutes and policies were used.

Chapter one was an introduction to the study. It gave an overview of the following: the background to the study; purpose and rationale; the significance of the study; the aims and objectives; the delimitations and limitations of the study and the general organisation of the whole research study.

Chapter two provided an in-depth literature review and survey on Servant leadership as well as the underpinning theoretical frameworks that were able to enlighten on the matter under scrutiny.

Chapter three provided an explanation of the research design, methodology, and data generation methods, data analysis procedures issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues that were followed in carrying out the research.

Chapter four presented the thematic analysis and the interpretation of the data gathered.

Chapter five presents the main findings of the research. The conclusions, recommendations and implications are made known to stakeholders and may influence policy.

5.3 Conclusions

The researcher's aim when analysing and interpreting data is to make and draw conclusions (Maree, 2011). Maree (2011) further says that conclusions should be drawn from verified data in

relation to the already known knowledge to reveal the new knowledge. Maree (2011) further posit that the conclusions drawn from a bounded study like this one cannot be generalised to the bigger population but is confined to the participants in their specific area.

This study is underpinned by the following main question:

- ✚ What are the school principals and teachers' conceptualisations, practices and experiences of servant leadership in the researched schools?

Subsidiary questions:

- ✚ What are the views of school principals and teachers about the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership at the researched schools?
- ✚ Why is it necessary for school principals and teachers to implement the principles and values of servant leadership in their schools?
- ✚ How do school principals and teachers think the principles and values of servant leadership could be promoted to enhance school leadership and teaching in their schools?
- ✚ What are the challenges that participants have experienced in the implementation of the principles and values of servant leadership and how do they think these challenges could be minimised

A significant conclusion that was gleaned from the first theme of conceptualisations of servant leadership suggests that the majority of the participants, principals and the teachers alike had some understanding of servant leadership and is congruent to the servant leadership theory by Green leaf (1970). The understanding of servant leadership was deemed as service to those led and leading by example. Only one principal's understanding was not congruent with Servant leadership theory. This principal in the minority, seemed not to take servant leadership seriously in the manner he assumed that it was some fancy leadership style which will soon fade into nothingness. I conclude then that, the majority of the principals had knowledge of servant leadership prior this investigation. One principal is a pastor and heard about it from his Christian church and the other encountered the philosophy during a leadership course.

The findings on practices and experiences of servant leaderships revealed that all the participants perceived themselves as practising some sort of servant leadership. The key finding that emerged

from the teachers was that the teachers expected best practises from their principals. These practises include caring for their needs as teachers; fairness; not the command and control type of leadership and they called for a deeper understanding of each of them as individuals. When it comes to the principals, the major finding that emerged was that the principals conceptualised their roles to be very important in serving the needs of stakeholders. They said they served by modelling best practise as in sharing, motivating and respecting people under their care. It seems the principals knew what servant leadership is about but the question that comes up is. Did they really practise what they said? The perspectives of the teachers seem to indicate otherwise.

The major findings from the second theme that of the participants' views about the implementation of servant leadership was that the principals viewed firstly, communication as the golden thread that connected the school. Secondly, emotional and social support which comprises of relationship building. Thirdly, leading by example as in punctuality.

The major findings from the teachers which comprise the core of this study of 'Perspective of the teachers' on servant leadership in the researched schools are similar to Insley, *et al.*, (2016)'s finding that the teachers perceptions about their principals servant leader behaviours are good indicators about their principals level of accountability. The Alpha primary school teachers viewed communication and team work as implementing of the servant leadership values. The Beta Primary school teachers viewed the modelling of behaviours like integrity, proper decision making, sincerity and the wiping out of authoritarianism as implementing of the values of servant leadership. The teachers at Lucy Primary brought the issue of communication and transparency in the management of funds as implementing of servant leadership values and principles. In summary of the major findings, all the teachers view skilled communication, building relationships modelling of best behaviours by the principals coupled with transparency in the management of school funds.

The other major finding is that the principals' practices were all questionable when looking at all the negative perspectives from the teachers, like the mismanagement of school money and poor communication skills. The area of interest in servant leadership are the followers. The relationship between the leader and follower forms the focus of servant leadership. I conclude that, it is possible that the principals were covering up and they were indeed not demonstrating servant leadership behaviours.

The major finding that emerged from the theme of the necessity of servant leadership from the teachers and principals, alluded to the fact that servant leadership produced a positive work environment, self actualisation, an entrusting culture, organised citizens and healthy relationships. The teachers only added that servant leadership was necessary for conflict resolution and they seemed to feel strongly about it. I conclude that in as much as people are aware of the benefits of servant leadership, there seemed to be issues around conflict resolution. I conclude that in as much as people know the outcome of servant hood, it's not easy to put action to the words because there are a lot of generative mechanism and the issue of complexity which holds true the saying that "things are easier said than done". Teachers from Beta primary school lamented the issues that were swept under the carpet and Mr. Ndlovu was scared to ask about the fundraising money and wanted to keep his feelings secret so he does not lose his job. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2018) posit that when people are on the same page, without fights, it is possible to build healthy relationships. Generally, Servant leadership is necessary because it impacts on the individuals, organisations and civil society positively.

The major findings from the theme on the promotion of servant leadership centred on culture change. This culture change from other leadership styles to servant leadership the participants suggested training and facilitation. Training should make use of all the research done in order to gain new insights into servant leadership values. The teachers said that the principals needed more training as they were the drivers of the schools.

On the other hand the principals said every one needed training especially right from teacher training college. This comes in light of Principal Nkosi of Alpha primary School, who said that he knows that research just ended in the books. Sipe and Frick (2015) are of the view that the seven pillars of servant leadership provide the necessary steps for the application and operationalisation. Secondly, the servant leadership policy that is not only symbolic but should have people following up, more like service champions. Thirdly, leading by example, if people see the good behaviour in the servant leader, the tendency is to emulate. The emphasis was on skilled communication and conflict resolution as key to the promotion of servant leadership. I conclude that Policy will definitely make people comply even though this goes against Greenleaf (1970) original theory of gentle persuasion because policy is similar with forcing people to do something. On the other hand, because times are changing and schools are run as organisations that have other policies at work

then it makes sense to use the servant leadership policy.

The major findings on the challenges in the implementation of servant leadership by the principals, put lack of knowledge on the philosophy of servant leadership. They said this poses challenges as the principals did not know the principles under which they operated. Secondly, culture posed as a challenge because it is not easy to change culture. It takes patience, consistency and congruency to make head way in culture change. The principals blamed the other policies from the Department of Education that act as barriers to servant leadership. The findings from the teachers on the challenges in the implementation of servant leadership, put all blame on the principals' lack of leadership qualities.

The teachers sighted lack of knowledge of the servant leadership principles and values hence the principals' use of dictatorship. The principals were called to improve on skilled communication and accept feedback without turning the tables, they needed to work with all teachers and not encourage silos. The economic challenges facing the country make the principals corrupt hence the misappropriation of school funds and lack of accountability. I then conclude that there is need for good leadership skills from the principals and reciprocity from the teachers as in supporting the principals in their efforts in the implementation of servant leadership. The knowledge that as long there are people, challenges will always be there but servant leadership may benefit the people, schools and society at large.

The major findings on the possible solutions to the challenges were the call for the profile of implementation to be done on each school because the geography and contexts of schools differ. This will help in how best to introduce servant leadership because the one size fit all policies do not work for everyone. Profiling the schools also helps with the culture change process because other schools will need more training than others. This calls for a proper structure with steps for application and accountability purposes. The teachers only, suggested that the principal need to stop abusing the departmental policies and creating their own policies which don't exist as this cause fear and unnecessary instability.

In conclusion of this segment, the findings show that the teachers perceive the principals as lacking in moral authority. Moral authority as defined by Sipe and Frick (2015) encompasses being a person of character; putting people first; skilled communicator; compassionate collaborator having foresight and being a systems thinker. The findings also show that servant leadership may

enhance a positive working climate and helps with self actualisation thus fulfilling the purpose of this study which was to explore servant leadership from the perspectives of the six teachers and three principals in the researched schools in order to improve leadership and management.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

Recommendation one

Since all schools in a country fall under the Ministry of Education, the servant leadership policy will enable its implementation because all have to comply and it also helps with accountability. From the findings, participants feel that a lot of research is done but all remains in the books and no action is taken to work on the findings or recommendations regarding this issue.

The schools are encouraged to revisit their policies in schools and align those policies to be congruent with servant leadership. Servant leadership needs to begin at hiring stage. People need to be hired for integrity not trained for integrity.

Recommendation two

Training and certification of both principals and teachers at their different levels. Making use of retiree and unemployed people who wish to keep themselves busy. Refresher courses for the encouragement of lifelong learning in order for people to meet the ever changing world demands. In order to make sure that the process starts government may consider making use of volunteers like one of the principals in this research then cascade it to all. Incentives in the form of cash may also motivate for servant leadership.

Recommendation three

In leading by example: the performance of the top officials should be congruent with the highest standards because actions speak louder than words. Leading by example is in meeting the needs of the followers (Greenleaf, 1970). The ministry of education may help in monitoring and support servant leadership. This calls for the ministry officials to be servant leaders as well if they are going to get buy in from everybody. Leading by example is paying the kindness forward, meaning that you do well now, that makes somebody else emulate, hence the term paying it forward. This has a ripple effect from small organisations like schools to the world.

Recommendation four

Since South Africa is a heterogeneous nation comprising of many cultures and races (Mahembe & Engelbrecht, 2018) servant leadership should still be researched more widely in line with the different cultures for example the philosophy of Ubuntu which puts respect for the other (Ncube, cited in Manala, 2010)

Recommendation five

Effective Board of governors to be put up at all schools which involves parents, teachers and principal and director so that there is sharing of power which is what Servant leadership stands for and that can also minimise misappropriation of funds and nepotism and possibly improve on the flow of information. The ministry of education should do an audit of all schools regardless of whether they are public or privately owned.

Recommendation six

People are familiar with servant leadership all along but they are not familiar with the language. Training may help. Furthermore, the servant leadership policy is overshadowed by the old Bathopele Policy of (1997).

5.5 Chapter summary

In conclusion, servant leadership is a matter of the heart, people need to genuinely want to change for servant leadership to have a lasting effect and as the saying goes that goodness has a ripple effect and it must all start with us, if we are going to meet the challenges and prepare the leaders today and for the future. This study falls within the various investigations of servant leadership across a variety of contexts and cultures. Sipe and Frick (2015)'s model of the seven pillars of servant leadership provide the steps for the operationalisation of Greenleaf (1970) theory. Suggestions for future study is that there is need to explore servant leadership further across different religions and cultures especially in South Africa using Sipe and Frick (2015) theoretical frame work. This research also made use of other behavioural theories like the Leader Member exchange theory (LMX) which have links with servant leadership theory in terms of the relationship between the leader and follower and it can also affect future research.

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09 July 2019

Attention: Trace Tshuma
[REDACTED] Primary School

Dear Trace,

Re: Request to carry out research with the teachers and principal

This is to inform you that it will be in order for you to interview the Holiday School teaching staff based at [REDACTED] Primary School for the purpose of your academic research.

You will however need to get their consent in order for you to do the research.

Should you require any further assistance, please let me know.

Hoping all will be in order.

Kind Regards
Thandi Sokujika
School Programme Manager



10 March, 2019

Dear Mrs Trace Tshuma

You have permission to do research for your Masters in Education Degree at [REDACTED] Primary school.

Regards

Mrs K. Smith (Principal)

[REDACTED]

Loiuse Botha Ave

Orange Grove

JHb

2192

The ELPS Department of WSoE

27 St Andrews Road

Parktown

2193

JHB

Re: Approval Letter for Trace Tshuma (1571739)

This serves to confirm that the above mentioned has been granted permission to conduct research at this school

We pledge to give her all the support she needs to complete her research.

Yours in Education,

M. Nkawu

(Principal)

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ORANGE GROVE, JOHANNESBURG

TEL: 011 021 3502

EMAIL: info@ghouseschool.co.za

PRINCIPAL 

Servant Leadership Questionnaire (2019)
Section A: Biographical Information

Place a CROSS (X) in the appropriate box

Gender: Male _____ Female _____

Position

L1 Teacher		Head of Department		Deputy Principal	
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Race

African		Coloured		Indian		White	
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Age:

Below 20		21-30		31-40		41-50		51 +	
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School type:

Primary		Secondary		Combined	
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Section B

Instructions: Place a cross (X) in the column that most closely describes your opinion in respect of your school principal's implementation of the Servant Leadership principles and values described below in terms of his/her leadership practice.

Scale: 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

I believe that my school principal		1	2	3	4	5
1	Acts with humility, fairness and honesty when handling school matters.					
2	Demonstrates vision, honesty, integrity, trust, commitment to service, competence, stewardship, influence and listens.					
3	Encourages staff and learners to do better, delegates and ensures empowerment of all stakeholders.					
4	Makes decisions based on legal implications (frameworks) of policy options.					
5	Acts with impartiality, transparency (especially in managing school finances and other resources), foresight and without bias.					
6	Is accessible, courteous and provides teachers, learners and parents with accurate information.					
7	Manifests a professional code of conduct when leading and managing the school.					

8	Creates, models and implements good human resource management in his/her school.					
9	Understands the Batho Pele Principles and implements them when handling school matters.					
10	He/she consults before taking important decisions at the school.					
11	He/she ensures that the school maintains high service standards in line with the Service Charter that was collectively crafted with all stakeholders.					
12	Demonstrates commitment to the growth of people and the building of the community.					
13	In his/her dealings with teachers and learners, he/she manifests a personal code of servanthood embracing diversity, integrity, respect, dignity of all people and adherence to democratic principles.					
14	Is highly respected by the school community because he/she is fair when making decisions.					
15	Seeks to instil trust, respect and a sense of service rather than insecurity in the entire school.					

Section C

How do you think school principals can/should demonstrate the following in their daily leadership practice?

1. Servant leadership principles

2. Trust and respect:

3. Group togetherness:

4. Compassion:

5. Human Dignity:

Section D

In your opinion, what are some of the obstacles school principals face in putting into practice the following:

1. Developing relationships based on trust and respect

2. Promoting collaboration/teamwork among staff

3. Encouraging staff and parents to be loyal to the school

4. Being compassionate to staff and learners

Interview Schedule for School Principals
Section A: Biographical Information

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

2. Experience (in years):

 As a Post Level 1 teacher: _____

 As an HoD (if applicable): _____

 As a Dep. Principal (if applicable): _____

 As a School Principal: _____

3. Teaching qualifications:

Section B: Interview questions

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

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

Interview questions for other participants such as Level 1 Teachers & HOD's

Section A: Biographical Information

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

2. Experience (in years):

As a Post Level 1 teacher: _____

As an HOD (if applicable): _____

3. Teaching qualifications: _____

Section B: Interview

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

2. As a teacher and an educational leader, what **servant leadership practices** (if any) do you try to promote as you do your work? Please elaborate.
3. Why do you think those servant leadership practices (you mentioned in 2 above) are important? Please elaborate.
4. Without giving names (of people), would you please share with me the **experiences** that you have regarding the application of servant leadership in the school where you are stationed? Please elaborate.
5. As a teacher serving a particular community (explain the community of my study in terms of location (rural, urban, township, etc.) (Wealth, i.e. rich, poor, middle class, etc.), what do you do to promote a servant leadership culture within the school, yourself and among teachers, learners and parents that you work with? Please elaborate on your views.
6. In the SA context, the notion of servant leadership has been promoted through the Batho Pele Principles (consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money). How do you promote these values in your teaching and classroom management (if you do)?
7. In your view, what are the challenges regarding the implementation of servant leadership principles in your school? Please elaborate.
8. As a teacher, how regularly have you been invited to workshops where, as part of in-service training and development, you were appraised by the Department of Education (as your employer) on the Batho Pele principles? Please elaborate your answer.
9. How would you rate the quality of training (if any), that you receive from the Department of Education or its service providers to promote servant leadership/Batho Pele principles among teachers? Please elaborate.
10. Do you think it is necessary (or important) for school teachers, as part of their continuous leadership development, to be exposed to servant leadership/Batho Pele principles? Please elaborate.

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

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

Thank you very much for taking part in this Interview.