



**TEACHERS' CONSTRUCTIONS OF SCHOOL-BASED CARE AND SUPPORT FOR
LEARNERS IN A PLACE OF SAFETY**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Nompumelelo Virgina Nene, declare that this dissertation is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree purposes at any other University. All the sources used have been referenced and acknowledged accordingly.

Student's signature

Date

Supervisor's signature

Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my late mother ‘Zisolile Saraphina Nene, for her unconditional love and support. She was my pillar and my source of inspiration.

To my beloved father ‘Mbambeni Tobias Nene’, who has been a good support structure to me, he has always been backing me up with his endless support throughout my study.

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ABSTRACT

Care and support of learners, particularly, orphaned and other vulnerable children, is a major call for schools and this is evident in the education policies and conceptual frameworks nationally and internationally. This study explores the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for vulnerable learners in a Place of Safety. The objectives of this study were: to explore the teachers' constructions of school-based care for learners in a place of safety and the school-based strategies to improve care and support for learners in the place of safety. A qualitative research design and interpretive approach were adopted to conduct this study. The study also employed the strength-based approach to achieve the objectives of the study. The purposive and convenient sampling were also chosen in order to get rich and accurate data from the participants. The study used two data generative qualitative methods namely: collage and focus group interview to generate data for this study. The findings that emerged from the study showed that teachers in the Place of Safety were aware that they were dealing with vulnerable learners and the degree of the vulnerability among learners. The data identified that teachers acted as advocate to the learners; engaged the OVC learners in collaborative learning; providing spiritual support to the OVC learners and helping the OVC learners to build their self-esteem. The findings further revealed that the teachers were aware of the improved supporting strategies that include providing most nutritious food to the learners with nutritional; applying multi-cultural approach to teaching; developing the learners on entrepreneurship skill and as well as providing recreational resources. Though inclusive education reforms have been initiated, there is even a greater need for the Department of Education to provide on-going and in-service training for teachers in relation to providing care and support for learners in a Place of Safety.

KEY WORDS: Care and support for learners, the school as a place of safety, schools as centre of care and support, teacher's role, orphan and vulnerable children, school-based support

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDs	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Document
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
OVL	Orphaned and Vulnerable Learners
SBST	School Based Support Team
TLSM	Teaching and Learning Support Material
UNAIDS	United Nation Program of HIV and AIDS
UNCRC	United Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisations
UNICEF	United Nations Children Funds
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
MEIT	Media in Education Trust

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Educators and policy-makers often argue that education begins at home. Unfortunately, not all children come from stable homes and have the opportunity to stay in close-knit families. A study conducted on vulnerable children indicated that each year, more than 500,000 of children were placed in foster care whether in an emergency shelter, a home with or without relatives, residential or a group home (United States Department of Health and Human Services, hereafter USHHS, 2010). Every child has the right to good education. Therefore, schools are expected be a safe place and a space where these vulnerable learners can be able to receive care and support.

In South Africa, the South African Teachers Educational Council (hereafter, SACE, 2007) also emphasised that the role of the teacher is to acknowledge the uniqueness of learners together with their specific needs by guiding and encouraging them in order to realise their potential. The Norms and Standards for Educators also identified that “community, citizenship and pastoral care is one of the seven roles required of teachers” (Department of Education, 2000, p. 14). The pastoral role holds implications for teachers’ care and support practices in schools for learners, which include counselling learners with social problems (Department of Education, 2000). The South African Education White Paper 6 also urges that socio-economic deprivation and psychosocial disturbances effects on learners must be addressed by schools thereby creating site-based support teams in schools (Department of Education, 2001).

Therefore, the care and support of learners, particularly the orphaned and other vulnerable children, is a major call for schools (Khanare, 2009). In view of this, this study aimed to understand what teachers consider school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety and the strategies that can be used to improved school-care and the support for the learners in a place of safety. An exploration on constructions of teachers concerning care and support would give insights as to what teachers consider appropriate care and support for learners in a place of

safety and what strategies are needed to improve care and support for these learners, so that they also can become responsible citizens (DoE, 2011).

1. 2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The teachers' views and voices in the construction of school based care and support for orphaned and vulnerable learners is important for this study. Recent studies on orphaned and vulnerable learners (hereafter OVL) have identified a high rate of learners made orphaned and vulnerable due to some social issues like HIV and AIDS, poverty, violence, drugs, abuse etc. These learners are either from dysfunctional families, abandoned, in child headed homes and vulnerable. The OVL also ends up heading some of their homes; others stay with their relatives, while some of them ends up not getting enough care and support from the people within their surroundings. Looking at the school, different resources (for example, human, physical, material) are developed and made available in supporting these vulnerable learners. The human resources are identified as the teachers, principal and school managers who are trained and have the appropriate skills to cater for this kind of learners. Ebersohn and Eloff (2002) and Wood and Goba (2011) assert that teachers are trained to address problems by using the existing strengths and assets in the schools.

Therefore, teachers are required to provide care and support for these orphaned and vulnerable learners in order to make them feel loved and cared for. Schools are also recognised to be a place of safety for these orphaned and vulnerable learners (DoE, 2011). However, the knowledge and experiences of teachers, in particular, teachers in 'safety schools' are still unknown because the teachers' voices have remained silent and unheard, pertaining to their understanding and construction of care and support in a South African school. Therefore, this study seeks to understand and explore the teachers' construction of school-based care and support, with specific reference to the learners in a place of safety.

The study by Govender (2004); Asikhia and Mohangi (2015) argued that there is a decline in the quality of teaching, particularly for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in Sub Saharan schools which was caused by teachers' lack of knowledge in the care and support for vulnerable

learners. However, the decline of the quality of teaching may also add to the existing socio-economic problems experienced in most disadvantaged communities like violence, HIV and AIDS, poverty, crime etc. by the OVC learners. Kamper (2008) states that competent and well-motivated teachers, including the provision of effective care and support of learners experiencing different vulnerabilities, could improve this poor-quality teaching. It is important to gain an understanding of what the teachers at the place of safety schools have to say on their constructions of care and support for orphaned and vulnerable learners and the strategies used in supporting these vulnerable learners in a place of safety. This is because when teachers are competent in their roles and fully motivated by the school they are able to strengthen, care and support the orphan and vulnerable learners. The teachers are also required to work together with other stakeholders in their schools to care and support the vulnerable learners in order to have a comprehensive, holistic and coordinated approach in education (Anderson, 2004; Clarke, 2008; UNESCO, 2008). To achieve this, the teachers' voices on their constructions of care and support of orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety were explored and it is at the centre of this study.

1. 3 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale for this study emanates from three perspectives. Firstly, from my personal and professional view point, as a Life Orientation (Hereafter, LO) teacher for 8 years, I have been providing care and support to learners in my school with the aid of using effective classroom management. I noticed that the placed for vulnerable and orphaned learners and families ravaged by poverty and HIV/AIDS are schools. Secondly, I have observed that most of the learners spend their time in school and they undergo or have undergone several traumatic experiences like rape, child abuse, HIV and AIDS, poverty, hunger, to mention a few. This indicates that schools should be places that could help to care and support learners, provided that proper strategies are developed, implemented and the government and other relevant stakeholders within and outside the school support the teachers. In addition, I am concerned about the challenges faced by the learners in my school, where I am sometimes required to play different roles in order to accommodate their needs. Therefore, these issues prompted me to undertake the study, which aims to establish the teachers' construction of school based care and

support of Orphaned and Vulnerable Learners (OVL) in a place of safety. The knowledge would help to contribute to the body of literature on care and support, especially for orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety.

From my personal point of view, the teachers' constructions and understanding of care and support in South African schools are under-researched (Wood & Goba, 2011; Klimas, Lally, Murphy, Crowley, Anderson, Meagher & Cullen, 2014). This is even so about care and support in a place of safety. In this view, there is a need for more extensive research about the teachers' constructions and understanding of care and support for orphan and vulnerable learners in a place of safety.

1. 4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Given the preceding background information and rationale, the objectives of this study are:

- To explore the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety.
- To explore the school-based strategies to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety.

1. 5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to answer the following key questions:

- What are the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety?
- What are the school-based strategies that could be employed to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety?

1. 6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The information gained from this study would not only add to the current literature on teachers' care and support for learners, but would also add another dimension of understanding the method

of generating data, which is gleaned through a participatory visual methodology known as the collage method. Having teachers through their own words share their stories, experiences and strategies on how they provide care and support to learners, this will give them a chance to listen to each other and to work together as a team. Furthermore, the findings would also assist the school and the teachers to improve their existing strategies for care and support for learners.

1. 7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.7. 1 Care and support for learners

Caring and support are generally seen as an integral part of teaching. Several authors' defined care as the teachers' behaviours derived from the need to maintain the quality of interpersonal relationships quality teachers and learners (Clarke, 2008; Wood, 2009). Forrester (2005) argues that caring is an emotional aspect of teachers' work; it cannot be measured. It is fundamental to teaching and it involves a deep concern for their learners' social well-being. Therefore, caring is a positive interpersonal relationship in which teachers create a conducive classroom setting and where learners feel that they are accepted and respected (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Voss and Kunter (2013) assert that the teachers' care is a kind of social support for student.

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2011), care is the provision of what is necessary for health, while support means giving assistance or some encouragement. Ebersohn (2008) defines care and support as steps taken to promote and maintain a person's wellbeing through medical, psychological, spiritual and other means. In the context of this study, learners in a place of safety need care and support. They need nurturing, access to good accommodation, diet, clean water and medical treatment. These children also need love, moral support, acceptance and respect. The care that they get from their caregivers helps them develop their full potential. Care also enables learners to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging, which is essential for their development and learning of life skills, to participate in society and to have faith for the future (Subbarao, Mattimore & Plangemann, 2001; Nziyane & Alpaslan, 2014).

1.7. 2. The school as a place of safety

Some authors defined a safe school in their study “as the creation and development of a school environment in which students have a sense of belonging, as well as personal efficacy, used as an alternative to violence, a place to feel secure and in which early warning signs of violence are actively addressed” (Brady, Balmer & Phenix, 2007, p. 456). Russel, Horn, Koslow and Saewy’s (2010) study on the ‘Safe school policy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual (LGBTQ) Students’ in USA asserts that a safe school creates supportive educational environments and promotes individual students’ perceptions of safety and wellbeing. Goldstein, Russel and Daley (2007) stipulate that a safe school is a warm place where teachers can teach, without intimidation and fear, and a warmth and welcoming environment where teaching and learning can run smoothly. In essence, a safe school is a place that promotes tolerance and ensures that no students are harassed or discriminated against in the school, despite their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation (Goldstein et al., 2007). In the context of this study, a safe place was regarded as a place where orphaned and vulnerable learners are kept, trained, supported and cared for by the teachers.

1.7. 3 Schools as centres of care and support

Policies and literature have placed schools as place of care and support for orphan and vulnerable learners (Khanare, 2012). Caring schools has been developed along with children’s increasing vulnerability due to HIV and AIDS and other factors (UNESCO, 2008; UNICEF, 2010). Abebe & Skovdal (2010) and Khanare (2008) revealed that reflecting on the dominant understandings of educators’ perceptions about schools as centres of care and support, particularly in the context of HIV and AIDS shows that schools contribute to the care and support of OVL. Chauhan (2015) with Tucker, Trotman and Martyn (2015) suggest some approaches to protect and support the welfare and health of the vulnerable and orphaned learners.

In the study by Khanare (2012) and Hoadley (2007), they argued that the status of South African educational system in relation to care and support of orphaned and vulnerable children revealed

that some schools are not the ideal place to cater for these children due to limited and poor management of scarce resources. Therefore, while there is scarcity of resources in some schools in relation to addressing the needs of orphaned and vulnerable learners, the creation and development of the School Based Support Team (hereafter, SBST) for every school (Department of Education, 2002) plays a significant role in making sure that the basic needs of all children are met. The creation of SBST placed schools in charge of identifying and helping vulnerable learners in a way that they previously had not been asked to do (Department of Education, 2002). For learners from disadvantaged and unstable homes, the SBST helps them to feel safe, secured and be properly taken care of (Hoadley, 2015).

1.7. 4 Teacher's role

Department of Education (2001) assert that there are seven roles that are played by teachers which include being the learning mediator; leader; administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; community member; citizen and pastor; assessor and lastly, as a subject specialist. These seven roles ascribed to teachers imply that the duty of the teacher stretches beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Furthermore, a teacher is to be regarded as an epitome of curriculum implementation in the teaching world, thus fostering conducive learning environment in their respective classroom (Panday, 2007). Therefore, teachers are expected to display attitudes that would enhance the overall success of curriculum implementation (Department of Education, 2000).

The document that addresses the seven roles of educators in caring for vulnerable learners is the Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000). This document specifically places social care in the hands of the educators, a term that is used to loosely group teachers, principals and even department managers and officials (Department of Education, 2000). A policy “inflates the work of teachers beyond the capacity of all the exceptionally talented and obsessively committed” (Morrow 2007, p. 96). However, in the context of this study, the teachers' role would be explored by discussing the different strategies they employ in schools as a place of safety in caring and supporting the OVL.

1.7. 5 Orphan and Vulnerable Learners (OVL)

The concept ‘orphan’ is defined as a child aged zero to 17 years, who’s either one parent or both have died (World Bank, 2005). However, there some other children who are regarded to as social orphans even if one or none of their parents might still be alive but has been unable to perform their duties as parents because of illness or acute poverty. (World Bank, 2005). Orphanhood is regarded as a main challenge to the well-being of children and health of children in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2011). Orphanhood prevalence has increased dramatically over the past decade, with Zimbabwe having the highest number (UNAIDS, 2011). UNAIDS, UNICEF and USAID (2010) described an orphan as a child who have lost both parents and those who have one parent who is still alive. An orphan is described by UNICEF (2011) as a child whose both parents are dead. The concept ‘orphan’ is socially constructed and may have different meanings (UNAIDS 2004). In some cultures, an orphan refers to a child who have lost one parent, while in other cultures; it means a child who have lost both parents. In this study, orphaned learners refer to learners who have lost both parents and are cared-for by caregivers and teachers in a place of safety.

A child can be orphaned but not vulnerable, or be vulnerable and not necessary be an orphan. “Vulnerability or otherwise regarding orphans, vests mainly in the support system available” (Munyati, 2006, p.6). However, from the above definitions, this indicates that a vulnerable child is that child below the age of 18 years and currently at high risk of inadequate care and protection. All children are vulnerable by nature, as compared to adults’ but some are more vulnerable than others (Munyati, 2006). A vulnerable learner could be because of child abuse, poverty, drug abuse, homelessness or the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Vulnerable learners are defined as those who, as a result of the death or illness of an adult who contributed to their care/ or financial support, now find themselves in compromising situations (King & Nkosi, 2016).

1.7.6. School based support

The term school-based support is regarded as the different support administered by some group of people in the school to assist schools in addressing issues and barriers to learning. Rulwa-Mnatwana (2014) indicates that the school-based support is a team made up of the school management teams (SMT), senior teachers, local communities and NGOs who help teachers having trouble in their teachings of vulnerable learners. On the other hand, the South African Department of Education (DoE, 2014) indicates that there are several sources of school-based support such as physical, human and material support for example teachers, parents, social workers, principal, health department etc. These sources are responsible in identifying learners that are vulnerable and help in addressing barriers to learning (DoE, 2014). Lastly, Masango (2013) is of the view that school based support teams identify and evaluate different learning barriers and tries to address them too. In the context of the study, the school based support team comprises of physical, human and material support in schools that helps in the care and support of orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety.

1. 8 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed the interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), which is a qualitative approach to explore the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. According to Henning (2011), interpretive researcher's focus on the meaning as it aims at understanding people's experiences and circumstances. Moreover, in the interpretive paradigm, time and context depend on the interpretations of when they are made and the context in which they are made (Biggam, 2015).

The qualitative approach was used in this study because it allowed me to assemble a multi-faceted and holistic picture of teachers' constructions and understanding about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2005) in this case care and support of orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) define qualitative research as research that begins with the assumptions of a worldview, the likely use of theoretical lens and the study of research problems inquiring into meaning ascribe to a social or to human problem. Nieuwenhuis (2016)

indicates that qualitative research is a methodology concerned with the understanding of processes, the social and cultural contexts that shape numerous behavioural patterns. Nieuwenhuis (2016) further explained that it employs a wide range of data gathering techniques such as focus groups, interviewing, observation, to mention a few, and seeks insights through structured in-depth data analysis.

Creswell (2015) positions natural settings as one of the characteristics of qualitative research where by the behaviour is studied on the occurrence because of that there is no manipulation or control of behaviour (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010) . Detailed and exact analyses of a few cases can be produced and this is stated as another advantage of a qualitative research in which participants can be allowed to determine what is relevant for them and to present it in its contexts. However, a disadvantage of this is that these analyses maybe time consuming and the researcher can generalise the results to the broad masses in only a very limited way (Flick, 2015). In this study, the qualitative approach was used by the researcher to explore the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. This approach allowed the teachers to speak out on how they provide care and support to orphaned and vulnerable learners.

- **Sampling methods employed**

The participants were selected through purposeful sampling in which Creswell (2013) claims that researchers intentionally select the individuals and sites to study or understand the central phenomenon. Therefore, I chose this specific place of safety school because it was convenient for me since it is situated at Umlazi where I live. In addition, it is purposive because I deliberately chose the school because the school specifically catering for learners with multiple challenges.

- **Data generation methods**

In line with Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2014), the qualitative research allows the use of multiple methods that are also interactive in nature (Maree, 2016). Therefore, the two main interactive methods that were used as the main data generation methods in this qualitative research are the collage and focus group discussion, in order to explore and understand the

teachers' construction of care and support of learners in a place of safety – a residential area for orphaned and other vulnerable children in Umlazi.

- **Ethical Matters**

According to Reardon (2006), ethical standards must be installed into all researchers from the start of their careers. The University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood campus) granted ethical approval for the research and permission was obtained from the school at which the research was conducted. Prospective participants were issued a consent letter containing details of the study, with the option of participating or withdrawing at any stage of the research (Christiansen, Bertram & Land, 2010). Confidentiality of the data was assured. The participants were completely informed about the study and given an assurance of confidentiality of their names and would be protected during the interviews (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, 2009).

I ensured that the participants understood the information during all the stages of the research by allowing enough time for questions to be asked and answered. In this study, the objectives and focus of the study was clearly elucidated and clarified to the participants, as well as the significance of their participation. Campbell, Goodie and Foster (2004) indicate that the issue of freedom for participation must be discussed at the beginning of the interview and the participants' needs to feel free in giving their information, in order to alleviate the pressure that the participant undergoes. Furthermore, my contact details and those of my supervisor were made available in case of further clarification by the school Principal or the participants.

1. 9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This research is situated in Educational Psychology, which puts more emphasis on the development and learning of children. I explore teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners in a place of safety school. The study was delimited in one place of safety school. A place of safety school was chosen purposely because it was convenient for the researcher. Four participants were chosen for this study, because they were more experienced and they had served for a number of years teaching in this school. The

purpose was to explore teachers' strategies in teaching vulnerable and orphaned learners and how to improve on the existing strategies.

1. 10 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter One: Is the introduction and background of the study. It also provided the rationale, statement of problem of the study. It further gave a brief explanation of the research methodologies and the clarification of key concepts was provided.

Chapter Two: This comprises the review of relevant literatures for the study on care and support for OVL in a place of safety. It also discussed the teachers' roles as agents of change, their challenges and benefits of providing care and support to OVL. Lastly, the chapter explained the theoretical framework (Strength based theory) which was used as a lens to understand the teachers' constructions of care and support in a place of safety.

Chapter Three: It presents the research design and the methodology utilised in the study to generate data. It employed the interpretive paradigm using the qualitative approach and a single case study. This chapter also indicates the sampling procedures used in selecting participants' and the context, the data generation methods, data analysis and the procedure for ensuring trustworthiness.

Chapter Four: This chapter presents the results and discussion of findings. It contains the analysis and interpretation of the data that were captured so that answers could be found for the research question and sub-questions.

Chapter Five: This is the conclusion of the study. It offers a summary of the findings in understanding the teachers' constructions of school based care and support in a place of safety. In addition, it also addresses the limitations of the study, recommendations for further research to be undertaken and ends with a brief conclusion stemming from the research.

1. 11 CONCLUSION

This chapter began with the background to the study, followed by the rationale, problem statement, and significance of the study, objectives and key research questions guiding the study. It also provided the clarification of key concepts, overview of research methodology,

delimitation of the study and lastly, the structure of the study. The next chapter discusses the literature review and the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2. 1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explored the background of the study. Therefore, this chapter gives a detailed description of the review of literature that is significant for the study. The literature was reviewed internationally, continentally and contextually; firstly, by examining the policy guiding schools as a place of care and support and the rationale guiding this policy I also discussed the multidimensional nature of safety schools and examine schools as a place for care and support. In addition, literature on the conceptualisation of vulnerable and orphaned learners was explored, followed by the role of the teachers in care and support i.e. teachers as change agents; the challenges and benefits of teachers as agents of care and support and the various studies on teachers' care and support for learners. The chapter also explores the strength-based theory as the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Lastly, the chapter ends with a brief conclusion.

2. 2 UNDERSTANDING THE POLICY OF CARE AND SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

2.2. 1 What do we mean by Care and Support?

The concepts of care and support are two distinct terms with diverse meanings. According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2011), care is the provision of what is necessary for health, while support means giving assistance or some encouragement. This in general term means the steps an individual take that is the steps taken to support and sustain a person's wellbeing through medical, psychological, spiritual and other means. In the context of this study, learners in a place of safety needs care and support. They need nurturing, access to good accommodation, diet, clean water and medical treatment. These children also need love, moral support, acceptance and respect. The care given to children by their caregivers helps them develop their full potential. Care also enables these learners to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging, which is essential for them to learn and advance life skills that, enables them to contribute to

society and to have faith for the future (Subbarao, Mattimore & Plangemann, 2001; Wood & Goba, 2011). In this regards, Forrester (2005) argues that caring is an emotional aspect of teachers' work; it cannot be measured. It is fundamental to teaching and it involves a deep concern for their learners' social well-being.

Therefore, the words care and support originally come from the need for relatedness, which improves or maintains the interpersonal quality relationship among teachers and learners (Kunter, & Baumert, 2006). Therefore, a positive interpersonal affiliation is likely to occur when teachers create a conducive classroom setting where teachers and learners respects one another (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Apart from this, teachers' care can be understood as a kind of social support for learners (Kunter& Baumert, 2006). Hence, care and support are generally seen as an integral part of teaching (Drudy, 2008).

2. 3 THE POLICY OF CARE AND SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Care and support have become an increasingly important concept in education in recent years (UNESCO, 2008). The importance of addressing care and support in schools is noted in a variety of influential and binding documents. From the global perspectives, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action in Special Needs Education which was adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education which indicates that “the fundamental principle of inclusive schools is that all children should learn together while their individual differences and learning needs are accommodated and appropriate support is provided” (UNESCO, 2008, pp. 11-12).

Schools have been placed as care and support centres by international policies and literature. The idea of caring schools developed along with children is increasing vulnerability due to HIV/AIDs and other factors (UNESCO, 2008; UNICEF, 2011). The United Nations General Assembly (2000) also presented eight goals that needs to be reached by 2015, in order to provide response to the world developmental challenge, its goal number two was to achieve universal primary education, with the target of ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling (UNESCO, 2008; UNICEF, 2011).

Contextually, more policy documents have been established in South Africa in addressing care and support in schools which include phrases such as ‘schools as inclusive centre’s (Department of Basic Education & Media in Education Trust (MEIT), 2010); ‘friendly schools, caring schools’ (UNESCO, 2008); and ‘schools as nodes of care and support’ (Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication, 2006). In addition, children’s right to holistic education were developed; and the means to achieve this right gradually was based on equal opportunity which was developed and implemented in South Africa by the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 2010). This emphasises that every individual including learners have the fundamental human rights to basic education. On the other hand, the South African Teachers Educational Council (hereafter, SACE, 2007) also emphasises that the role of teachers’ is to accept that learners are different including their individual needs by supporting them to reach their full potential. Norms and Standards for Educators also identified in their policy that “community, citizenship and pastoral care is one of the seven roles required of teachers” (Department of Education, 2000, p. 14).

The pastoral role holds implications for teachers’ care and support practices in schools for learners, which include counselling learners with social problems (Department of Education, 2000). The South African Education White Paper 6 also urges schools to address the effects of socio-economic deprivation and psychosocial disturbances on learners through the creation of site-based support teams in schools (Department of Education, 2001). Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla and Sylvester (2014) indicate that a learner who comes from a home where there are social problems needs more than teaching and learning.

Moreover, teachers are required to care for their learners and make the school an enabling environment for them too. Hence, the teachers’ either become or are seen as caregivers in schools. Kunter, Klusmann, Brunner, Krauss and Baumert (2008) also claims that teachers’ care is a form of social support for learners. However, different studies have shown that teachers experience great challenges while performing the task of care and support in their various schools. According to Ebersohn and Ellof (2006), the support for vulnerable learners in education is no doubt one of the greatest challenges faced in educational transformation. Ebersohn and Ellof (2006) further indicate that limited workshops have been done with the

teachers who work in the place of safety in order to be more equipped in teaching the vulnerable learners. Another challenge faced by teachers was the issue of coordination of care and support by the school departments. This is in line with the study by Chitiyo, Changara, and Chitiyo, (2010) argue that care and support for vulnerable learners should be well coordinated in schools. Muller (2011) also highlighted that teachers' attitudes and actions are the key in students' academic progress. It also cannot be ignored that vulnerable children and AIDS orphans are still neglected by teachers in the classroom (Kendall & O'Gara, 2007), which hinders their success.

2. 4 THE RATIONALE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Recent studies have shown that apart from the family, school is seen as an essential comforting community in learners' lives especially vulnerable learners. For orphans and vulnerable children, the school environment may help them to feel more secure and encourage them to be eager to learn (Department of Education, 2002). Such an environment is important to the child's development as they get company of other learners during lunch time or because they may have someone to sit with them during their lunch.

When learners feel they are taken care of and included by the teachers, they have less chances of engaging in negative social issues such as substance abuse, violence or initiate sexual activity at an early age (Geese, Gow & Desmond, 2002; Dhlamini, 2011). The fact that they feel connected will automatically cause them to have higher levels of emotional well-being (Blum, 2005; Parag, 2009). Studies have shown that some vulnerable learners view the school as a safe place to be (Blum, 2005). Fazel (2015) asserts that to support vulnerable learners is to offer them psychosocial support in which the schools are well placed for this. Tucker et al. (2015) argue that schools and teachers should perform the roles of pastoral care, which is practiced in developed and economically stable countries like United Kingdom, where school-based services are made available to learners and young people with psychosocial difficulties (Skovdal & Campbell, 2015).

2. 5 THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL NATURE OF SAFETY SCHOOLS

Literature has shown the diverse nature of safety schools. This implies that scholars' understanding of the nature of safety schools are multidimensional. In this aspect, the study by Astor, Benbenishty and Estarda (2009) on school violence and a typical school and the role of principal centrality in coordinating safe schools claimed that a safe school is a space that elevates students in order for them to improve their world and be a contributing member of a democratic community. In addition, Astor et al. (2009) further contend that in this safe school, an alternative reality of inclusion is created, a place of peace, where learners are cared for, honoured and are socially supported. Gregory, Cornell, Fan, Sheras, Shish and Huang (2010) also position that a safe school is a place where learners see their teachers as caring and supportive and are likely to seek help. Kilian, Fish and Maniango (2007) argued from a psychological point of view, indicating a safe school as a school where the appropriate social behaviours are built and maintained in order to become an effective learning environment.

Nevertheless, other authors defined a safe school “as the creation and development of a school environment in which students have a sense of belonging, as well as personal efficacy, use alternatives to violence and feel secure, and in which early warning signs of violence are actively addressed” (Brady, Balmer and Phenix, 2007, p. 456). Russel, Horn, Koslow and Saewy (2010) assert that a safe school creates supportive educational environments and promotes individual students' perceptions of safety and wellbeing. Whilst Goldstein, Russel and Daley (2007) stipulate that a safe school is a systematic process that generates and sustains a place where teaching and learning can run smoothly. In essence, a safe school is a place that promotes tolerance and ensures that no students are harassed or discriminated against in the school, whatever the race, religion, gender or sexual orientation might be (Goldstein et al., 2007). Meintjes (2014) is also of the view that a school is safe when learners are being exposed to protective resources, where community involvement and entrepreneurial activities, in order to improve resilience among learners. Kenny (2014) is also of the opinion that a safe and enabling school should be one that has cultural inclusion programs, integration of cultural minorities and a school that moves from an education system where teachers and staff are keepers of knowledge, to a more liberal paradigm of the teacher facilitating the democratisation of knowledge.

2. 6.SCHOOLS AS SITES OF CARE AND SUPPORT

According to Campbell, Andersen, Mutsikiwa, Pufall, Skovdal, Madanhire and Gregson (2015) in Sub-Saharan Africa it has been found that if orphaned and vulnerable learners attend school regularly that will automatically impact positively on their well-being. Although, the findings revealed that most teachers from Zimbabwe are finding it difficult to support vulnerable learners as they are unable to deal with their own personal problems which are caused by many factors like poverty and HIV & AIDS (Campbell et al., 2015). Khanare, (2012) highlighted that in schools, the teachers who are supposed to care for these learners, are struggling to provide the care and support for these learners because of inadequate resources and also because of victimising representations of the needy children. Hence, Akesson's (2015) study found schools to be places that exposed learners to violence, certainties of war and occupation, and not safe for learning.

In KwaZulu-Natal (hereafter, KZN) province of South Africa, it's a different case as teachers from primary schools voiced that schools must provide training for them so that they can be more equipped in providing care and support for OVC (King, & Nkosi, (2016). Meaning they are willing but only if the school can play it role but the fact remains that teachers must be able to take initiatives in supporting vulnerable learners than waiting for the authorities to act first. The more schools provide training, the more teachers will realise the importance of caring for the OVC (King, & Nkosi, (2016). This led to the creation and the development of the School Based Support Teams (hereafter, SBST) for every school (Department of Education, 2002). The formation of SBST positioned schools in charge of identifying and assisting learners who are vulnerable in a way that they previously had not been asked to do. On behalf of learners from disadvantaged and unstable homes, the SBST helps them to feel safe, secured and be properly taken care of (Hoadley, 2015).

Care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners offered by teachers can go beyond formal education (Ainscow, 2013). A much formal support for vulnerable and orphaned learners, such as inclusive education practices, needs schools and teachers to advance new ways of working (Skovdal, 2015). Skovdal (2015) further argues the ways of offering care and support to learners

can also be informal. The analyses of teachers' identity discourses suggest that ethnic of care is a useful framework in understanding teachers' views on the nature of their work (Drudy, 2008). Also, Chauhan (2015) and Tucker et al. (2015) suggest some approaches to protect and support the welfare and health of vulnerable and orphaned learners, as well as young people in schools. In advocating against hunger and malnutrition, (Skovdal, 2015) in India used a school feeding programme for appraisal of the state use of schools as sites for discharging social policies looking to improve the nutrition of learners. UNICEF (2009); Tang, Nutbeam, Aldinger, St Leger, Bundy, Hoffmann; et al. (2009) and Pufall, Gregson, Eaton, Masoka, Mpandaguta, Andersen, et al. (2014) agreed that schools do have a role to play in supporting and caring for learners facing hardships.

In the United States of America, schools recognise the significance of children's rights to education to a certain extent (Rights of the Child, 2013). Schools in developing countries play a major role in fulfilling the millennium development goal, which encourages global access to primary education for all children (Catholic Relief Services (CRC), 2013). For example, in Kenya, school fees in primary education, for orphaned and vulnerable learners, were abolished as a way of caring and supporting the OVL (Rapid Assessment Analysis and Action Planning Process, 2004).

Therefore, various studies indicate that the second place, apart from the family where a learner can feel relaxed and comfortable, is the school (Hoadley, 2008). In addition, For the OVL, a school environment may contribute to their feeling more secure and enrich their readiness to learn. Schools are critical environment for learners' development because that is where they can have someone to sit and talk with during their break times. They may have an educator who can provide assistance with their schoolwork as well as the coach who finds ways to incorporate them into a team. So the majority of vulnerable and orphaned learners continue to live (spend more of their time) in the care and support of the schools as they find it more conducive and helpful to their needs.

2. 7 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF VULNERABLE AND ORPHANED LEARNER

2.7. 1 Who is a Vulnerable Learner?

Report by the United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2004) mentioned that learners could be defined as vulnerable due to the effects of certain disease, illness, accidents and poverty. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is seen as the most significant cause of this. Orphaned learners are defined as children under 18 years of age who have either both or one parent (USAID & Catholic Relief Services, hereafter, CRS, 2008). Vulnerable learners are demarcated as those learners whose safety development is substantial (USAID & CRS, 2008).

According to Subbarao, Mttaimore and Plangemann (2001), Wood and Goba (2011), Hepburn (2001) and Ntaote (2011), vulnerable children are those children who belong to high-risk groups and who lacks access to basic social facilities. These children's survival, well-being and development are threatened. Subbarao et al. (2001) further state that the vulnerability may be caused by specific sets of factors or circumstances in different countries.

Most children who are considered vulnerable live below the level of poverty. Poverty has been documented repeatedly as a risk factor; the developmental and achievement deficits in children from low socio-economic backgrounds are significant by kindergarten entry and increases each year in school (West, Denton, & Germino-Hausken, 2000; Fox & Hemmeter, 2009). The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child defines the child as any human being who is below the age of eighteen years, unless under the law to the child, the majority is attained earlier (UNCRC, 2010). The official definition of an orphan is a child aged zero to 17 years whose mother, father, or both have died (World Bank, 2005).

Munyati (2006) discussed that a vulnerable learner is conceptualised as one who is living under difficult circumstances which include poor household, with sick parents, learners in child-headed families, learners' who head households, learners' dependent on old, frail or disabled caregivers and learners in households which assume additional dependency by taking in orphaned learners.

It should be noted that there is no direct relationship between orphanhood and vulnerability. A child can be an orphaned but not vulnerable, or be vulnerable and not necessary be an orphan. “Vulnerability or otherwise regarding orphans, vests mainly in the support system available” (Munyati, 2006, p.6).

However, from the above definitions, this indicates that a vulnerable child is a child under the age of 18 years and currently at high risk of lacking adequate care and protection. All children are vulnerable by nature, as compared to adults, but some are more vulnerable than others; child vulnerability is downward spiral, where each shock leads to a new level of vulnerability, and each new level opens a host of new risks (Munyati, 2006). In other words, the probability of a child experiencing a negative outcome rises with each shock (World Bank, 2005). A vulnerable learner could be because of child abuse, poverty, drug abuse, homelessness or by pandemic HIV/AIDS. Vulnerable learners are defined as those who, as a results of the death or illness of an adult who contributed to their care/ or financial support, now find themselves in compromising situation (King & Nkosi, 2016).

2.7. 2 Orphaned Learner

Who is an orphan?

UNAIDS (2011) that being an orphan is a major challenge to the well-being and health of children in Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, the concept ‘orphan’ is socially constructed and has different meanings (UNAIDS, 2004). A study has shown that orphanhood prevalence has risen dramatically over the past decades, with Zimbabwe particularly on a high rate (UNAIDS, 2011). Orphaned learners are regarded as those learners who lost both parents and those with one surviving (UNAIDS, UNICEF, & USAID, 2010). In other words, an orphan is described as a child whose parents are dead. In the African context, orphans are regarded as the children who lost one parent or both parents (South African Schools Act, 1996). This implies that orphaned learners are those learners who have lost either parents or one both and they are cared-for by caregivers and teachers in a place of safety.

However, Smart (2003) and Mshengu (2014) asserts that OVC refers to any child whose level of vulnerability has increased because of HIV and AIDS. This includes any child under the age of 18, who falls into one or more of the following categories: has lost one or both parents; being neglected, abused, abandoned or experienced the death of a family member; is neglected, destitute, has a parent or guardian who is ill; has suffered increased poverty levels; has been the victim of human rights abuse and are HIV positive themselves (Smart, 2003; Mshengu 2014).

2. 8 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE CARE AND SUPPORT OF ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN (OVC): TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Teachers are regarded as mentors, role models and agents of change. Ebersohn and Ferreira, (2011) assert that teachers are people who are qualified to teach in schools and are seen as role models and motivators by their students. Therefore, schools are made up of diverse learners from different families, ethnicity, race, gender, sex, age, values and ideas.

A report by UNAIDS (2010B) reveals that in most countries in Sab-Saharan Africa, there is a considerable increase in school attendance by vulnerable and orphaned learners. This is because of the orphaned and vulnerable learners seeing these schools as an enabling environment, which enhances their holistic development. More so, when learners are cared for by teachers in their school it is possible for those learners to feel as part of the school community, feel cared for by educators at their school and they are at a low risk to engaged themselves with harmful effects and to be absent from school (Giese, Gow & Desmond, 2002; Tamasane, 2011). When learners feel connected with their school, there is a possibility to have higher levels of emotional well-being (Blum, 2005; Bialobrzaska, Randell, Hellman & Winkler, 2012). Research has proven that those learners who are vulnerable and who perceive their educators and school administrators as creating a caring environment had realistic expectations and were clear and fair to be connected to their school (Blum, 2005).

Ebersohn and Ferreira (2011) pose that the question whether or not teachers should provide psychosocial support in school remains contested. Jabbarifar (2011) contends that teachers play a significant role in detecting the learners' beliefs about their abilities and helping them to improve

it. However, teachers do play a significant role in promoting resilience in the lives of the vulnerable and orphaned learners. Therefore, teachers can promote resilience in the lives of their learners by making the most of social capital in identifying and harnessing community resources, thereby enhancing vulnerable children (Blum, 2005). Blum (2005) further argues that the relationships between the teachers and their OVL shows the support networks that mitigate the effects of cumulative risk.

However, the school communities as co-parents view teachers, since they play a role of being learners' parents during the day. Therefore, teaching, like any other job, has a description that allows them to collaborate in taking care of children while they are in the school environment (Ebersohn & Ferreira, 2011). The South African Department of Education Norms and Standards (DoE, 2000) classified the seven roles which teachers are mandated to play in the school environment under the categories of citizenship, community, and pastoral role. In the context of community and citizenship, teachers are expected to demonstrate that they are able to develop an environment that is supportive and empowering to the learners. In addition, they are expected to respond to educational needs of teachers and learners, whilst the pastoral role includes practical competencies such as demonstrating care, protection and the holistic development of the learners (DoE, 2000).

A study by Wood and Goba (2009) identified the importance of all teachers to work together that to address the issue of care and support of OVL. Wood and Goba (2009) encouraged the need for school leadership to take the initiative to strategically plan on how to approach the problems of care and support for OVL. Anderson (2004), Clarke (2008) and UNESCO (2008) support this claim when they called for a comprehensive, holistic and coordinated approach to HIV and AIDS in education. Bojuwoye et al. (2014) mentioned that there is a need for the holistic approach because learners might come from backgrounds where there are social problems, so the learners need more than just teaching and learning.

In essence, vulnerable and orphaned learners need to be recognised all the times. They need to be motivated and encouraged in order for them to have a positive self-esteem. The study by Loots (2011), concurs with this view and asserts that when learners are made to feel as part of the school, by the teachers caring for them, they are less expected to be absent from school and this

improves their self-esteem. Marongwe, Sonn and Mashologu (2016) also identified that learners come to school carrying heavy responsibilities, lacking love, warmth and means and they expect teachers to fill the gap. Mayimele (2009) states that teachers also offer spiritual support to OVC. This implies that the availability of religious teachers in schools also contribute to a spiritual foundation for learners by helping the learners to grow in faith and in hope.

2. 9 THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF CARE AND SUPPORT

2.9. 1 The Benefits of Teachers as Agents of Care and Support in Schools

There are numerous benefits for teachers in providing care and support to learners in schools (Ogulmus Piskin & Kumandas, 2011). According to Ogulmus et al. (2011) the most important single driving factor for mainstreaming Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (hereafter, CSTL) within education is the direct impact of CSTL on core education outcomes- namely improved access, retention and achievement outcomes. In other words, school-based support allows teachers to identify learners who are at risks early and allows service providers to identify the needs that might otherwise not be addressed (DBE, 2009).

However, providing care and support to learners through schools assist in keeping learners in school, which in turn helps to lessen their risks across a variety of dimensions. School-based services improve teachers' skills as well as their well-being. (DoE, 2009). Pantic and Florian (2015) also identified that teachers developed relational agency for transforming the conditions in schools and have a capacity to reflect on their own practices and environment, when seeking to support and care for the learners. Lane, Lacefield-Parachini and Isken (2003) with Wood, DeLange and Mkumbo (2013) also indicated that teachers become empowered to transform the lives of the learners and work collaboratively with the school stakeholders and the community (Wood & Goba, 2011; Sarma & Oliveras, 2013). They also develop good interpersonal relationships skills with their learners (Matters, 2006; Wood & Goba, 2011), engage in professional development, that is, they develop skills in training workshops on care and support (Wood & Goba, 2011; Sarma & Oliveras, 2013).

In addition, teachers also receive support from the communities, school board, parents and fellow teachers (Sarma & Oliveras, 2013), have increased self-esteem and self-confidence in dealing with OVC learners' issues and are able to use interactive teaching methods in their classes to engage their learners (Sarma & Olivera, 2013). Mulford's (2003) and Motsa and Morojele (2016) study found that teachers contributed to the success and the holistic development of their learners. Matters (2006) and Huber (2011) revealed in their studies, that teachers become resilient. Matters's (2006) study also revealed that teachers are seen as mentors, role models and friends, whom the OVL look up to as assets to the school. Matters (2006) also revealed that teachers use diverse social and strategic networks, while collaborating with other agencies in the society in order to meet various needs of these learners. This is concurred by Knoell (2012) in his study that teachers become active listeners and fun as they actively engage in co-curricular activities with their learners.

Succinctly, McCombs (2015) found that teachers acting as agents of care and support will help to develop autonomous and responsible learners by creating positive learners' relationships and listening to each learner's voice in creating a dynamic learning climate. This indicates that teachers will help the OVC learners to construct and to take responsibility of their learning and life.

2.9. 2 The challenges of teachers as agents of care and support

Notwithstanding the many advantages of teachers as agents of care and support to OVL, teachers still face several challenges as agents of care and support within schools. For example, the UNESCO (2008) study identified that many educators lack the skills and motivation to provide care and support to children. A related challenge is the fact that assessments of school performance based almost entirely on academic outcomes (UNESCO, 2008). Hence, the criteria in which schools and school staff are evaluated should rather include consideration of the extent to which they fulfill their care and support mandate (DoE, 2009). Human resources constraints and related challenges within other departments can hamper the ability of schools to respond to the needs of vulnerable learners (UNESCO, 2008). In addition, Keshavarz, Nutbeam, Rowling

and Khavapour (2010) highlight the real and unresolved challenge in the expanding role of schools and teachers in taking broader responsibilities for children's health and social services. In addition, Porter (2015) found that some schools in Uganda are unable to protect girls from sexual violence due to the condition of extreme social breakdown, despite the teachers' concerted efforts.

Teachers have lost interest in supporting the OVL because of low salaries and education professional status being undermined by most people (Campbell, Andersen, Mutsikiwa, Madanhire, Nyamukapa, & Gregson, 2016). In addition, teachers feel that they do not have the necessary skills to support the orphaned and vulnerable learners due to the fact that learners are afraid of being stigmatized when they disclose their problems to them and the community does not trust teachers too (Campbell, et al., 2016). Wood and Goba (2011), revealed that even though the South African Department of Education designed workshops that would equip teachers on the strategies that they can use to provide care and support to vulnerable and orphaned learners in schools, some of the teachers reported to experience challenges in supporting orphaned learners. The study further indicates that teachers are struggling to translate knowledge into action (Goba & Wood, 2011). In addition, teachers' situation plays a major role in supporting vulnerable and orphaned learners in school, for example, if a teacher is affected by the death of his or her loved one, this might also affect them financially and emotionally (Theron, 2007). Therefore, the teacher's unpleasant situation has a negative impact on the response to vulnerable and orphaned learners' needs in the school environment (Theron, 2007).

2. 10 VARIOUS STUDIES ON TEACHERS' CARE AND SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

Wood, Ntaote and Theron (2011) argue that teachers should also be supported on the initiation to support learners in schools. Wood and Webb (2008) also reported that in order to make care and support for learners effective, school leadership should also play a role in strategising methods to enhance orphaned and vulnerable learners and integrate other departments like social welfare. The study by Wood and Goba (2011) which explored teachers' perceptions of the training programs offered in a specific school district in South Africa and in particular, how the teachers perceived themselves in terms of being prepared to address the OVL's identified that there is a

prerequisite for all teachers in the school to collaborate in addressing care and support of OVC. On the other hand, Backes and Mittag (2011) found a positive relation between teachers' care, which is initiated through teachers' sensitivity to learners' needs and learner engagement. This shows the important role of teachers in supporting learners. The teachers' care is emphasised as an important aspect for students' motivation. Teachers' care can be defined in various ways as teacher behaviours derived from the need for relatedness, which develop or maintain the quality of interpersonal relationships among teachers and learners (Wood & Goba, 2011).

Marongwe et al. (2016) findings also indicated that teachers were not empowered to deal with vulnerable and orphaned learners. Ogina (2016) study on the caring and supporting of vulnerable and orphaned learners highlighted the need to equip teachers with skills and knowledge in this regard and suggested that government policies and structural changes are crucial for supporting the schools of orphaned learners. A study conducted by Bhana (2015), about the limits of teachers' support for South African primary school-girls in the context of sexual violence revealed that teachers' care work in the context of sexual violence does require far more recognition in the social protection of girls and in addressing the scourge of violence. Noddings (2012) refers to caring as a relation and describes teachers as people who listen, act, and reflect and who are personally involved and respond to the learners' suffering with concern and compassion. This highlights the ethic of care and support, which entails teachers' capacity to ensure that learners are supported, cared for and protected, especially in vulnerable contexts.

Skovdal and Campbell (2015) also investigated the role of schools in the support and protection of children in the extreme settings. The role of schools was regarded as supporting young people exposed to challenging environment and situations (Tucker et al., 2015). Bhana, (2012) study on identified how groups of teachers in a township primary school in South Africa were "foots soldiers of care", as they provided vulnerable children with food and clothes at their own cost, offering encouragement and psychosocial support. Akesson (2015) found schools to be a place of violence, exposing children to the realities of war and occupation.

A study in Namibia identified the potential for schools to support adolescent learners living with HIV and on antiretroviral treatment (Baxen & Haipinge, 2015). Ogina (2010) study on teachers'

pastoral role in response to the needs of orphaned learners, found that there is a need for teacher development in terms of preparing them to provide pastoral care for orphaned learners. Mshengu (2014) study identified how orphaned learners experience psychosocial support in two high schools by revealing that learners do receive support from their teachers, as well as from their peers.

This section revealed the role of teachers in supporting vulnerable and orphaned learners through attending trainings and workshops. Literatures reviewed above showed that teachers play a key role in supporting OVL. While other studies showed that teacher's still needed more training and workshops that will equip them with the skills of supporting and dealing with vulnerable and orphaned learners in schools. Therefore, the next section discusses the theoretical framework selected for this study.

2. 11 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE STRENGTH BASED THEORY

2.11. 1 Introduction

This section explores the theoretical framework guiding this study. The study employed the strength-based theory by Bertha Reynolds who was a proto-theorist for this practice (Healy, 2005). This theory was used to explore teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety.

2.11. 2 The Origin of the Strength -Based Theory

This study is located within the area of educational psychology and therefore employs the strength-based theory as its theoretical framework. A social worker, Bertha Reynolds, who was a proto-theorist for this practice (Healy, 2005), developed this theory. Bertha worked as an American social worker and became influential in the creation of Strength Based Practice as a radical social worker among others (Kaplan, 2002). Bertha Reynolds criticised the American social work tendency and developed her own theory by adopting the psychoanalytic approach. Charles Rapp, who wrote that the strength based model focuses on amplifying the well part of the patient (Rapp, 1997), redeveloped this theory in 1997.

The strengths based perspective demands a diverse way of looking at individuals, families and communities in seeking to develop in clients, their natural abilities and capabilities (Saleebey, 1996). Saleebey (1996) defines the strengths based theory through three interlinked aspects, called "CPR": C represents competence, capacities and courage; P stands for promise, possibility and positive expectation and R means resilience, reserves and resources. This framework emphasises the discovering, affirming and enhancing the capabilities, interest, knowledge, resources, goals and objectives of the individual (Cederbaun & Klusaritz, 2009). The strength-based approach values the capacity, skills, connections and potential in individuals and communities, although focusing on strength does not mean ignoring the challenges or spinning struggles into strengths (Cederbaun & Klusaritz, 2009). One important element of the strength-based approach is accepting elucidations for every person, strengths of individuals and

their circumstances are different (Barwick, 2004). Barwick (2004) went on to say that, people must be fully involved in identifying their goals and building on their strengths and resources.

With the appearance of the asset-based approach that was developed from the strength base approach, the new decade also saw an increased worldwide move towards positive psychology. Both positive psychology and the asset-based approach manifest a shift in theoretical development, as well as practice (Ebersohn & Eloff, 2006). Ebersohn and Eloff (2006) further added that the positive psychology movement informed and enhanced the development of the asset-based approach that resulted in a search for assets on the inside, as well as the outside of man (Ebersohn & Eloff, 2006). In the same vein, MacFarlane (2006) describe the asset-based approach as an approach that uses assets as a way of addressing problems in different contexts such as “seeing the glass as half full”. So taking from the belief that every individual consist of capabilities, skills, assets and resources that can contribute to positive change (Ebersohn, 2006, p. 462).

This approach is also based on the belief that people who receive supportive relationships will develop and become assets to the community. Meaning those people can be able to solve problems in partnership with professionalism (Ebersohn & Eloff, 2003; Ebersohn & Mbetse, 2003). Cadell Fletcher, Makkappallil-Knowles, Caldwell, Wong, Bodurtha, et al. (2005) went on to say that the strength based approach entails a central view of human beings as being capable to change. In addition to this, the strength-based approach emphasises the positive aspect of a person’s effort and achievement, as well as ‘human strength’ (Finnmoore & Toope, 2001). This approach is a perspective that works to address people’s problems by focusing on their skills, support system and interest (Nissen, Mackin, Weller & Tarte, 2005).

2.11. 3 People as an Asset in the Strength Based Theory

The asset-based approach falls under the umbrella term of positive psychology. Therefore, both the asset-based approach and positive psychology form part of the strength-based approach, focusing on the presence of the positive such as talents, assets, creativity and resources (Bower, 2005; Ebersohn & Eloff, 2003, 2006; Eloff, 2006; Snyder & Lopez, 2002). The asset based

theory entails an essential view of human beings as being capable of change, stressing the positive aspects of client's effort and achievement, as well as human strengths (Caddell, 2005). In short, "the asset-based approach shifts the emphasis of the intervention from what went wrong to what can be done to enhance functionality and builds on family members" (Sousa, Ribeiro & Rodrigues, 2006, pp.190-191; 2007). Strength perspective in practice has been promoted as consistent with social work values (Bogo, 2006), as the idea of building on people's strengths has been accepted in professional social work (Saleebey, 2008). The strengths model embodies a holistic respect for the dignity and uniqueness of individuals (Noble, Perkins & Fatout (2000, 2015; Platt, 2006; Saleebey, 2006c) and recognising their way to experience and construct their social realities (Saleebey, 2006b).

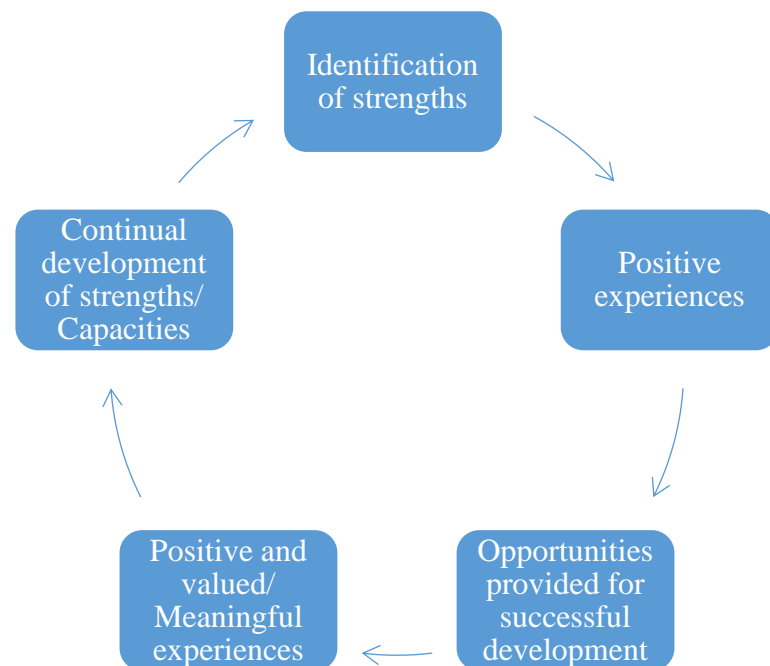


Figure 1: The strength base approach model (adapted from McCaskey, 2008, p.3)

2.11. 4 Different studies in which the strength-based approach has been applied

Christie (2011) states that there is increasing interest in identifying and building on the strength and capacities of those people supported by services, as a means to help them resolve problems and deliver their own solutions. The asset -based approach concentrates on inherent strengths of

individuals, families, groups and organisations, deploying personal strengths to aid recovery and improvement.

Studies of other service recipients (e.g. early intervention, mental health, elderly services) found that a family-centered, strengths-based approach is associated with increased service engagement (Green, Draper & Dowler, 2003; Shireman, 1998) and increased parenting competency (Green et al., 2003; Huebner, Jones, Miller, Custer & Critchfield, 2006). Heather (2008) used the strength-based approach on life skills facilitation in order to identify and mobilise individuals and community assets with learners affected by disability and HIV and AIDs.

Another study that was conducted by Cosden, Koegel, Greenwell and Klein (2006) indicates a movement for service providers to use the strength-based approach in the assessment of individuals with autism. A study in USA by Peterson, Stephens, Park, Lee and Seligman (2009) used the strength-based approach to show the initial evidence that strengths are associated with work satisfaction. On a similar vein, Harter, Schmidt & Hayes (2002) found that people who regularly use their strengths are more engaged at work. Myende (2012) also used the theory to improve academic performance in rural schools. Studies also highlighted that when families, schools and communities work together in positive and collaborative ways, the children's capacity to achieve learning potential significantly enhance their general health, wellbeing, positive outlook and sense of purpose in life (Green et al., 2003; Huebner, Jones, Miller, Custer & Critchfield, 2006).

2.11. 5 Application of the strength-based approach in this study

The significant issue here is that the strength based approach enables people to develop holistically as they begin to show their unique strengths, develop intrapersonal power to help themselves, build self confidence and self-esteem, while being able to identify new opportunities and transform to a better person (Hammond, 2010). This theory shows that the OVL are people with potentials, power and inbuilt strengths and as they experience support and care, they are able to transform and overcome their problems, challenges and difficulties. This theory also enables teachers to see learners as people who often lack confidence and therefore need the teachers' care and support always.

However, the strength and potential of the OVL can only be developed according to this theory if the schools and teachers act as agencies that would help in the transformation of these learners, through enabling an effective engagement, collaboration among the learners and other stakeholders (Hammond & Zimmerman, 2012). Therefore, teachers are required to approach the OVL with good attitudes and also to talk to them in a positive way when discussing their struggles and problems with them, which in turn enhances the learners' motivation and gives them hope. The theory also opens doors for the development of the learners as they see the school as a place of safety. In addition, the communities are also seen as agencies, as they work together and partner with the schools' authorities and teachers to nurture resilience in the particular learners. It is significant to comprehend that the strengths-based approach is not about denying that people do experience problems and challenges, but these issues need to be taken into considerations with a more holistic approach (McCaskey, 2008).

Furthermore, the strength-base theory makes it easier for social workers to uphold the individualisation value, even when these learners are in the same situation or facing similar problems (Gray & Kabadaki, 2005). However, it is imperative to understand that the strength-based approach is not rejecting the fact that people do experience problems and challenges but that these issues do need to be taken into consideration with more holistic approach (Hammond, 2010). Hence, when the problem becomes the starting point with an emphasis on what the learners are lacking, a dependency is created on the helping profession, with lowered positive expectations and blocked opportunities for change (McCaskey, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative for teachers to understand their strengths, as it gives them the potential to reach higher levels of performance in their roles as agents of care and support.

2.11. 6 Limitations of the strength-based approach

There are numerous criticisms associated with the strength-based approach. MacFarlane (2006) indicates that some of her colleagues argue that the strengths perspective sets people up for disappointment. This is indicated by allowing clients to believe that they can do anything, any minor failure can cause a tremendous setback (MacFarlane, 2006). Those rebels often argue that

the strengths-oriented professionals need to be realistic with their people and help them to set reachable goals (Saleebey, 2006). MacFarlane (2006) challenges people to shoot for the stars, to tell them what their goals would be, if they were not being realistic. Saleebey (2006) further refers to the part where the strengths perspective is accused of encouraging too much positive thinking. Another criticism of this approach is that it ignores problems or areas that need improvement (Gleason, 2007). Saleebey (2002) acknowledges that critics often claim that the strengths perspective ignores problems and glosses over real pain. In a qualitative research, flexibility allows the researcher to use different research methods, which are also unique to each context (Cohen et al., 2011). However, irrespective of all these limitations, I intend to use this theory to inform this research study.

2. 12 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature for this study. Literature was reviewed by exploring the policy guiding schools as a place of care and support and the rationale guiding this policy in schools. It also discussed the multidimensional nature of safety in schools and examined schools as a place for care and support using international, continental and local literature. In addition, the meaning of a vulnerable and orphaned learner was described, followed by an explanation of the role of teachers in care and support i.e. teachers as change agents. The challenges and benefits of teachers as agents of care and support and the various studies on teachers' care and support for learners were also explored. Lastly, the strength-based theory was discussed as the theoretical framework guiding this study. Therefore, the next chapter presents the research design and methodology that was employed in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. 1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher provided a review of literature in relation to care and support, taking into consideration the role of teachers in providing care and support for orphaned and vulnerable children living in the place of safety. The current chapter focuses on the research design undertaken in this study.

3. 2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This study falls within qualitative and it guided by the interpretive paradigm to explore the teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety. The following sections will discuss the major components.

3.2. 1 Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm is characterised by a concern for the individual (Cohen, et al., 2011). They further said that the interpretive paradigm aims to understand the subjective world of human experiences. According to Henning (2011), interpretive research focuses on the meaning and is aimed at understanding people's experiences and circumstances. Moreover, the interpretive research is time and context dependent, as interpretations depend on when they are made and the context in which they are made (Biggam, 2015). The crucial assumption for this paradigm is that reality is socially constructed, as individuals develop subjective meaning of their own personal experiences and give out own interpretation about the phenomenon. This gives way to multiple meanings (Biggam, 2008; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Cohen et al. (2012) explain that an understanding of how people interprets their world is the purpose of interpretive paradigm. The central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience (Cohen, et al., 2012). Myers (2009) contends that the principle of interpretive researchers is that access to reality

through social constructions such as language, consciousness is shared meanings. This paradigm provided the foundation of an insight on how human beings interpret the world they live in. According to Henning et al. (2011), the interpretive paradigm is concerned with meanings and tries to understand social members' definition and their context understanding. The compositional structure of the design therefore, is affixed and guided by the interpretive paradigm. This is in line with Cohen et al. (2011) who stated that in interpretive research paradigm people are studied with their opinions, attitudes, behaviours, characteristics and experiences.

3.2. 2 Qualitative research

Nieuwenhuis (2016) indicated that qualitative research is a methodology that is concerned with understanding the processes, cultural and social contexts that shape numerous behavioural patterns. Nieuwenhuis (2016) further explained that it employs a different range of gathering data techniques such as focus groups, interviewing, observations, etc. and seeks insights through structured in-depth data analysis. Creswell (2015) also noted that qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or a group ascribe to a social or human problem.

An interpretive, inductive, generic qualitative paradigm was followed, because it underlines the qualitative research approach that the researcher followed (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2001). This study is situated within the qualitative research approach. In other words, qualitative research begins with assumptions a worldview, the possible use of theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). It also gives insights into the real life situations and hence, allowed me to find meaning and understanding in the situations teachers find themselves (Henning, Rensburg & Smith, 2009). This paradigm views the experience of people as expressed by the people themselves (Henning, et al., 2009). Newby (2010) states that it is clear that the nature of qualitative enquiry is different and this difference is reflected in the character of the data, as well as the method used to analyse the data. Qualitative approaches are descriptive, soft and concerned with why and how things happen (Newby, 2010).

Qualitative research often seeks a depth of information and attempts to gain understanding and insights related to the meaning that individuals give to their experiences (Christiansen et al., 2010). This differs from quantitative research, which often seeks to measure one objective truth by collecting an aggregate of measurable data. Moreover, qualitative research is subjective and contextual, whereas quantitative research is objective and generalisable. For this reason, qualitative researchers commonly use interviews and observations to collect data. Natural setting is listed as one of the characteristics of qualitative research, whereby the behaviour is studied as it occurs. In that case, there is no manipulation or control of behaviour (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Qualitative research adopts a holistic approach, whereby the assumption exists that the context is critical and essential for understanding a particular situation. Christiansen et al. (2010) gave a definition of qualitative research as a study whereby the knowledge is provided to give the work plan of research.

Detailed and exact analyses of a few cases can be produced and this stated as another advantage of a qualitative research in which participants can be allowed to determine what is relevant for them and to present it in its contexts. However, a disadvantage of this is that these analyses maybe time consuming and the researcher can generalise the results to the broad masses in only a very limited way (Flick, 2015). In this study, the qualitative approach was used by the researcher to explore teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. This approach allowed the teachers to speak out on how they provide care and support to learners, thus allowing the themselves to be active participants in relation to providing care and support to learners regarded as orphans and vulnerable.

3.2. 3 Participatory arts-based research

In line with the qualitative approach, this study therefore adopts the participatory arts-based research style in order to explore teachers' constructions of care and support aimed at learners in a place a safety. Participatory research is regarded as a methodology that argues in favour of the possibility, significance and the usefulness of involving research partners in the knowledge-production process (Bergold, 2007). Creswell (2013) points out that individuals refer to

participatory research using different names, such as community-based inquiry (Stringer, 1996), collaborative action research or participatory research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). This study used the term participatory arts-based research to acknowledge the participative and collaborative nature of the inquiry, where teachers in a township area are regarded as partners and key role players in the care and support of the children they teach. In the next section, the researcher provides detailed features to support the choice of participatory arts-based research in this study. Flick (2015) stated that in order to gain deeper insights into the contextual structure of meaning and the dynamism inherent in social action, it is worthwhile considering the use of participatory research. This study focuses on teachers' construction of care and support for learners in a place of safety. Therefore, the use of participatory research in this research might open a platform for teachers to express themselves. This might require a great willingness from the participants to disclose their personal views of school-based care, as well as their own opinion and understanding.

3.2. 4 Arts-based research

This aspect of arts-based research will increase participants control in producing arts-based work and helps to highlight features of lived experience, otherwise overlooked (Guillemin & Drew, 2010). Knowles and Cle (2008) defined arts-based research as the actual making of artistic expression in all of different forms of arts and also the systematic use of artistic process. The use of arts-based research on the study was to get a deeper understanding from the teachers, in terms on how they provide care and support to vulnerable and orphaned learners. So it was aimed at understanding the teachers' practices and techniques through the use of collage. Teachers communicated their supporting strategies through the use of collage.

3.2. 5 Research setting

According to MacMillan and Schumacher (2010), research setting is when the research focus is on complex micro-processes, the selection of a site to locate people who are involved in a particular event is crucial. In this section, the researcher provides a detailed description of the

geographical location of the study. Furthermore, the profile of the school in which the study is located is also provided.

Geographical background of the research area

The geographical location of the current study is Umlazi district, the second largest township in the city of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province. Figure 3.1 provides a bird's eye view of Umlazi township within the city of Durban.

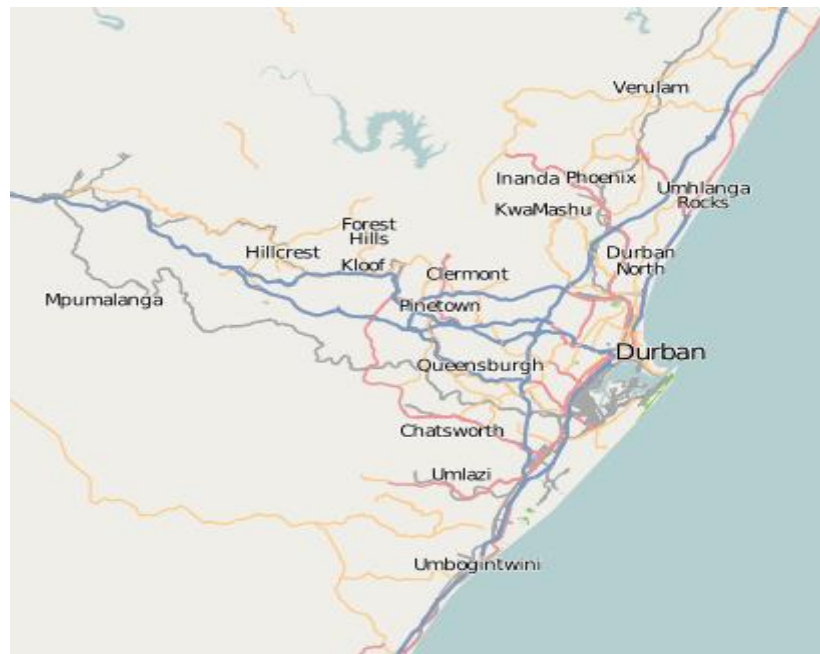


Figure 2: Map of Umlazi Township adapted from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umlazi>

Umlazi township is one of the many predominantly black townships found in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban. The township falls under South Central Local Council. It is mainly occupied by Blacks. The dominant residential ethnic group residing in the township are the Zulu speaking people. There are five townships neighboring Umlazi township and these are Folweni, Lamontville, and Kwamakhutha, which are for Black communities, while Chatsworth and Isipingo are for Indians and Blacks.

Council officials argue that there are over one million residents in Umlazi. There is also a high rate of unemployment, while most of the population engage in informal jobs. Umlazi residents

use private cars and public transportations such as buses, informal taxis and trains. The township has two shopping malls which are Umlazi Mega City and KwaMnyandu Shopping Centre. Umlazi has many public schools, one special school and one place of safety school. The township is characterised by large school learner population and overcrowded classrooms. The population from which the learners come from are largely semi-skilled and unskilled. Single parents' families and high youth unemployment are common. Teachers who are teaching in this township are a mixture of those who were educated at different teaching institutions.

The profile of the school

A place of safety provides a residential facility caring for children and the youth. Teachers provide care and support for orphans and vulnerable children by ensuring that they have shelter, clothing and food to eat and ensure that basic needs of the children are met. In a place of safety, they assist learners in their homework and general life skills. They care for children from birth to 17 years. This place opens for 24 hours and do not charge for their services. It is a home to more than 15 children and youth who are abandoned, abused and taken off from the street. The admission of children by this centre is either by a registered social worker or a police officer as specified in the Child Care Act. These learners are from Umlazi and other surrounding areas. The number of learners staying in this place keeps on changing because the learners sometimes stay for a period of three months and leaves. These children depend and survive on sponsorships and donations from both private and public donors who first call the school to find the exact number of learners. Within the centre, there is a principal and 9 teachers. The school starts from Grade R to 7.

The centre is made up of professional teachers who are paid by the state and these teachers have teaching qualifications. The school falls under public schools, though it does not have School Governing Body due to the fact that it consists of orphaned, abandoned and abused learners, including those who are taken off the streets. They teach according to the National Curriculum set by the National Department of Education (DoE, 2011). The school is funded by the state, meaning that it is a non-fee paying school. The government pays for the teachers' salaries, the school uniforms and textbooks. The teachers work together with the Social Welfare Department for the well-being and well fare of these vulnerable children. The Social Welfare Department

takes care of the feeding scheme. Social workers are there for emotional support of the children, while the caregivers are there to take good care of the children. Care givers play the parental role, they visit the teachers to check the learners' progress, they help the children with their homework and they even take these children to visit their families, as well as taking them to church.

3.2. 6 Sampling and selection of participants

Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011) describe qualitative sampling as a procedure of choosing a significant number of individuals for a study, in a way that individuals participants, will be good participants with an understanding of a given phenomenon in order to contribute to the research. The purposive and convenience sampling methods were chosen in order to get rich and accurate data. This was emphasised by Patton (2015), who argues that purposive sampling involves selecting information rich cases. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) outline the strength of using the purposive sampling method, being less costly and time-consuming, with generalisation being possible to similar subjects.

According to Cohen et al. (2011), purposive sampling is a sampling that allows the researcher to choose a sample that is easy to reach. To this effect, the researcher selected the location and the participants that would be certainly accessible. Christiansen et al. (2010) contend that in various cases, in order to obtain an in-depth knowledge and understanding about a particular issue purposive sampling is used with convenient sampling. The participants would be selected through purposeful sampling as researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell (2013). So, I chose this specific place of safety which was convenient for me because it is situated in Umlazi, which is also my place of residence. Moreover, I chose the location and participants because they were easily accessible for me (Christiansen, et al., 2010). The participants were selected purposively because of the study topic and with a belief that they have rich data since they had been teaching in the place of safety for more than three years.

Brief description of the participants

In this section, the researcher provides a brief overview of the participants in the study. The bio-sketches highlight the participants' age, gender, teaching qualifications, teaching subjects, length of service and extra-curricular role undertaken by each. Participants were asked to choose the name of their choice. Pseudonyms have been used ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

Participant 1...Pen: Is a female teacher who holds a Bachelor's degree in Education. She has been working in this school for three years. Pen teaches Languages and Mathematics at the Intermediate Phase. She is in her late twenties. She is young, dedicated and willing to learn more from the experienced teachers in the center.

Participant 2...Book: She is a female teacher in her late fifties and she teaches the Foundation Phase. In this phase as a teacher, you teach all the learning areas. These learning areas are IsiZulu, English and Mathematics. She has been teaching in the centre for 38 years. Book's has a Bachelor degree in Education. She is a motivator and a coordinator who negotiates with the Social Welfare department when the school needs assistance, for example, when they are having a trip with the learners, they need transport.

Participant 3...Hen: Is a female in her early forties. She teaches Technology at the Intermediate Phase. Hen has been working in this school for 6 years. Hens obtained a National Professional Diploma in Education and an Advanced Certificate in Education. Besides teaching learners, Hen is also the site steward. She also assists the school Principal with the administrative work.

Participant 4...Eagle: Is a female in her late fifties. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Education. She teaches Geography and English at the Intermediate Phase. Eagle has been teaching in the school for a period of two years. Besides her daily duties as a teacher, she is also the athletics Coach.

Participants' bio-sketches presented above provide a glimpse of their life and worlds in the place of safety school. These were the "knowledgeable people" as described by Cohen et al. (2012) who had in-depth knowledge about care and support of learners in the place of safety, where they spend most of their times teaching and interacting with the learners.

3.2. 7 Methods of data generation

Cohen et al. (2011) describe research methods as research procedures that are used to collect and analyse data. This was also supported by Wahyuni (2012) who poses that they consist of specific procedures, tools and techniques to gather and analyse data. It is the responsibility of the researcher to select and choose the methods that he or she thinks would provide him or her with a wealth of comprehensive and complex information. There are different methods of data generation in a qualitative research and these methods include the interviews, observations, visual methods, document analysis, life history and focus group discussion and interview (Cohen et al., 2011). In line with Cohen et al. (2011) assertion, qualitative research allows one to use multiple methods which are also interactive in nature (Maree, 2016). Therefore, the two main interactive methods used as my main data generation methods in this qualitative research is the: collage and focus group discussion, in order to explore and understand the teachers' constructions of care and support of learners in the place of safety – a residential area for orphaned and other vulnerable children in Umlazi. However, the researchers' field notes were also used to get in-depth and rich descriptions of data (Maree, 2016). The participants were asked to interpret their understanding of care and support using multiple methods

3.2.7.1 Focus group discussion method

Focus group discussion is a method of data generation which emphasises the meaning of a phenomenon and it requires the researcher to immerse themselves in other people's lives (Redmond & Curtis, 2009). Cohen and Crabtree (2006) further explained focus group discussion as a process of producing data that is used to explore behaviour, thoughts and people's feelings during discussions. Newby (2010) indicates that focus group discussion should be clear on the agenda and the focus should take place in a setting that is conducive to discussion, have skilled moderator who can prompt participants to speak, promote thinking and reflection and should have a record to keep.

Stewart and Shamdasani (2007) went on to say that the during a focus group discussion, the researcher aims to obtain the participants' reasons for holding a certain view, by listening to

others the participants could easily answer a question or decide to modify their answers. Babbie (2011) stated that in a focus group discussion, it offers the researcher the opportunity to interview several respondents simultaneously and systematically. Punch (2013) also gave a similar explanation, arguing that focus group discussion is a term where the researcher works with numerous participants simultaneously rather than one (Punch, 2013).

It helps to bring to the surface a well facilitated group that can contribute, on an aspect of a situation that might not otherwise be exposed (Punch, 2013). This makes the discussion an attractive data gathering option, when research endeavors' to probe those aspects of people's behaviour. The data from the focus group discussion (hereafter, FGD) are the transcripts of the group interaction. They are inexpensive, data-rich, flexible, stimulating, recall-aiding, cumulative and elaborative (Cohen, et al., 2011). In the context of this study, the researcher engaged four teachers because they had been in the place of safety for several years. The researcher believed they were knowledgeable, therefore, they would provide rich data, considering that they could have developed some skills working with learners in the place of safety. The researcher did one FGD with the four participants. FGD took place during the first week of data generation and the collage was done on the second week of data generation. The generated data were audiotaped to guarantee data safety and for transcription purposes.

3.2.7. 1 The collage method

Situated within the participatory arts-based research, collage is a creative technique where different materials artefacts and objects are pasted on a particular theme or topic (Thomson, 2008). Veale (2005) gave examples of the ways in which creative methodologies, including drawings and drama, have been used effectively and sensitively in a large-scale community regeneration project in Rwanda, in order to understand their experiences of vulnerable children and post-conflict.

Collage have been used in investigation in three different process namely: the reflective, method of elicitation lastly as a means to intellectualize ideas (Butler-Kisber, 2008, 2010). Moreover, when collage is used as a method to intellectualize the phenomenon, they can also be useful

especially when being done as creating the series using a bunch of collages pertaining to that phenomenon (Butler-Kisber, 2010).

The research and development study reported by Leitch, McKee, Barr, Peake, Black and White (2006) illuminates the widespread use of collage in a participatory research of similar socially and politically sensitive nature in Northern Ireland. In another regards, the collage is also used in actualising teachers' voices: to get teachers to freely and openly express themselves about their constructions of school-based care and support for learners in the place of safety. There may also be teachers who might be shy during the discussion process and who do not feel comfortable in a group discussion, as well as other participants who might be reserved in a focus group discussion, but more open and talkative in a friendship group when doing a collage (Hill, 2006). Therefore, the use of collage was recommended in this case, to give these participants an opportunity to express their views more freely. The advantages of collage are that it can be used to communicate what words cannot say as not every information can be summarized to language (Eisner, 2008; Gauntlett, 2007). It is also a creative task that might encourage reflection and going beyond standardised ways of answering questions, and leaves time for participants to think (Gauntlett, 2007). Therefore, the use of collage in this study enabled the teachers to express themselves more easily and made their participation in research more pleasurable.

3.2.7. 2 The triangulation purpose

Cohen et al. (2011) refer triangulation as where more than two methods for collecting the data are used in data generation. In addition, triangulation is where data is authenticated from different people with a data collection method in descriptions and arranging it in themes (Creswell, 2005). Triangulation in this study involved the use of multiple methods: the focus group interview and the collage, which formed the major data collection strategies for the qualitative study.

3.2.7. 3 Data generation process

The focus group discussions process at a place of safety

This first data generation method employs a focus group discussion (hereafter, FGD) with the teachers. One focus group discussion consisting of 4 participants was done in a convenient place chosen by the participants which is the staff room. The place was cool, quiet, had enough space for more sitting arrangements, and there was enough lighting. During the process of focus group discussion, I used an audio recording device to generate data with the permission of the participant. Although there was a noise from afar because a building that was under construction close to staff room. However, this process lasted for one hour and it took place during the week on the 11 August 2016 at 13:00 pm. I had to negotiate with the school Principal to allow the teachers to be with me for just one hour.

Focus group discussion structure

As a facilitator, before the process started, I introduced myself and welcomed my participants for this study. I also explained the purpose of the study to the participants which is to explore teachers' construction of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. I went further to explain to them that the study also explore the school-based strategies used in improving care and support for learners in a place of safety. I also explained to the participant again that their participation in the focus group discussion was voluntary and the participants were free not to answer any questions that they felt uncomfortable with. I then gave the participants the chance to introduce themselves, and to choose pseudonyms to replace their names. The FGD lasted for one hour.

The data generation process using 'collage'

This is the second phase of the data generation that took place on 16th of August 2016 which lasted for one hour twenty minutes. The collage process had five stages. As the researcher, I started by doing the preliminary analysis of the data generated through the FGD with my

participants to get a general overview of the teachers' constructions of care and support. This was also informed by the second data generation method, where teachers worked together to chat forward the strategies deemed necessary for improving care and support aimed for learners in the place of safety. Therefore, the collage activity as a data generation method took place in a convenient space selected by the participants at the Umlazi Place of Safety. The participants-led collage involved the following stages:

Stage 1: Fast-paced collage workshop

This stage outlines the process of the collage which was explained to the participants and an example of an already made collage was provided to the participants to have a clear knowledge and idea of what a collage is. As the researcher, I also explained the process of using the collage to gather data while doing research. During this stage, I provided the participants with newspapers, magazines, scissors, glue stick, while two of the participants brought their own scissors and glue stick. The participants were issued a consent form which they signed to voluntarily participate in the study during this stage and stage took only 10 minutes.

Stage 2: Forming collage groups

Since I had four participants, I divided them into two groups consisting of two members each. This only took two minutes to do.

Stage 3: Doing the collage

In trying to understand their strategies of care and support in their school, I asked the participants to think and write down the existing resources and structures they have in order to improve care and support for the vulnerable and orphaned learners in the place of safety. The cutting, pasting and writing took place at this stage. They were also asked to use a combination of pictures, drawing, text and phrases to show how school-based strategies improve care and support for learners in the place of safety. As they were working on their collage I kept on probing them. After they were done, the sharing of collages was encouraged, the teachers pasted their collage on the wall and had a 'walk about', where everyone viewed the collages. This stage lasted for 50 minutes.

Stage 4: Collage presentations and discussions

Each group selected one person to present their collage. This was a way of engaging all the participants in thinking and sharing ideas. Collage presentation and discussion process took 20 minutes. Each group had 10 minutes to present and discuss.

Stage 5: Stocktaking after the collage presentations' and discussion

Participants were a little bit tense at the beginning of the session. They said it was not easy to make choices because there were many pictures to choose from. It was their first time doing collage but they mastered the process so quickly. This stage took the participants' 5 minutes to do.

Field notes

The time allocation for collage activity was two hours for the whole session. An audio tape was used during collage activity. Mtsweni (2008) defined field notes collectively to mean all the data collected on the research site, including pictures taken and other materials.

Date: 14 July 2016

Time: 12:30 Pm

Place: Umlazi Place of Safety

It was my first time entering the premises of Umlazi Place of Safety. The security guards at the gate welcomed me, they showed me the Principal's office. I was nervous, not so sure of whether the Principal would afford me the permission to conduct the study in their school. The school building was not in good condition because it was still under construction. There was water and electricity connection. Some of the rooms did not have electricity due to the fact that the building was under construction. The school was fenced, but this did not prevent thieves and vandalism to occur.

Date: 18 July 2016

Time: 12:30 Pm

Place: Umlazi Place of Safety

It was lunch time; I saw a few learners with dishes and cups. I noticed one of teachers in the room with the learners, helping them to dish up for themselves. I observed that only girls were in the school premises. Even the teaching staffs, together with the Principal, are all females. I noticed a good interaction between the staff members, as they were sitting together, talking and laughing.

Date: 04 August 2016

Time: 13:00 Pm

Place: Umlazi Place of Safety

When I entered the premises, it was quiet and as I got closer, was when I realised that teaching and learning was going on. I also saw one of the female teachers in the class with 3 learners. The teacher and the learners were all seated, while the learners were listening attentively to the teacher. I also noticed that the school cleaners were busy cleaning the premises.

Date: 11 August

Time: 13:00 Pm

Place: Umlazi Place of Safety

This was the day of my first data generation, the teachers who were my participants in this study were already gathered in the staff room. The environment was not that much conducive for a focus group discussion to take place because the premises were under construction. They chose the room, so I had nothing to say in that regard. They felt it was the best place since the whole building was under construction. There was a little bit of machine noise, though it emanated from afar. There was an open space leading to the next room where other teachers were seated.

3.2. 8 Data analysis

Qualitative data generation is a very complex process, leaving the researcher with tons of data which need to be analysed. In this section, the researcher discusses the data analysis process undertaken.

Qualitative researchers agree that there is no single definition to data analysis. According to Littman (2010) and Anderson and Arsenault (1998), data analysis refers to an on-going process throughout the research process. While Cohen et al. (2012) reveals that data analysis that fall within a qualitative approach is a difficult process that contains steps of organizing, accounting for and summarizing the data at the same time making sense out of it as per participants' patterns, themes, categories and regularities. This is also supported by Braun and Clarke (2013), who also emphasise grouping and patterns with recording themes within the data, as essential in describing a phenomenon with a detailed research questions. In the context of the current study, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2013) in order to provide a deeper understanding of the teachers' constructions of care and support of learners in the place of safety. The following features of thematic analysis were considered to be important when doing qualitative data analysis: familiarization with data, forming primary codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, describing and giving names to themes then producing the final report (Mouton, 2008).

I listened to the audio recorded material, followed by the transcription of the data. This was followed by the systematic analysis of the data through coding. I moved from coding to themes. According to Clarke and Braun (2014), themes help in revealing what is essential about the data that relates to the research question. The developing themes were then reviewed in relation to the coded data and the entire data set. I had to check the themes against the generated extracts of data and to explore whether the themes worked in relation to the data. I ended up putting a number of potential themes together for a broad theme. I formulated two broad themes. I concluded the final phase of analysis by producing a report.

This was carried out according to Mouton's (2008) explanation that when working with qualitative data, one must establish how the respondents interpret a particular occurrence by examining their views, values, attitudes and experiences in a bid to appropriate their constructions of the phenomenon.

3.2. 9 Trustworthiness

Mack (2010) indicated that trustworthiness is used in qualitative study, where measurement is not important, but deals with description. It is also viewed by Creswell (2013) as more than just a set of procedures, but rather involves a personal belief that shapes the procedures in process. Qualitative research project has four issues of trustworthiness that demands attention: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Christiansen et al., 2010). Therefore, the purpose of this research was to explore teachers' construction of school based-care and support for learners in a place of safety. So, in ensuring and enhancing trustworthiness in this study, the four issues of trustworthiness were considered: -

Credibility- is described by Christiansen et al. (2010) whereby the research findings show the realities and lived experiences of the participants. Maree (2007) asserts that the researcher strives to produce findings that are believable and convincing. Several strategies to enhance credibility in research include these: data-gathering procedures are explained, data are presented transparently and negative instances are reported (Maree, 2007). Biases are acknowledged, the relationship between claims and supporting evidence is clearly expressed and procedures are used to check the quality of the research. The researcher ensures credibility by using well recognised research methods and triangulation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). My constant presence and professionalism in doing research ensured the participants of its credibility. I also ensured that the information gathered from the interviews is a true reflection of the participants' viewpoints and not my own (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

The following is an example of the selective words from the participants about the construction of care and support to learners.

Hen indicated that:

“To give learners a chance to express their views and allow them to feel important and valued.”

Book went on to say: “

Learners like to be listened and this makes them feel very happy and special if us as teachers gives them that chance irrespective of how young they are. They always have stories to tell. So it important as teacher to be dedicated and give your time to them. They love that very much.”

Pen said:

“When we as teachers are listening to them it makes them feel comfortable.”

Eagle added that:

“When they see you are listening to them attentively, they smile and that gives them hope in life.”

Transcriptions were given to the participants in order for them to ensure that the words were true reflections of what was transcribed, while the researcher’s supervisor did a member checking to enhance credibility of the study.

Transferability- Transferability refers to the fit or match between the research context and other similar contexts as judged by the reader (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). In addition, Scott and Morrison (2005) understand transferability as how well the similar study can be transferable into other people’s context by understanding in-depth of that study. Provision of background data was meant to establish the context of the study and detailed description of the phenomenon to allow comparisons to be made. Christiansen et al. (2010) went on to say it is the degree to which the findings of the research study can be applied. The data generated from this research would not be generalised. The study provided a thick, rich description of the research process, the role of teachers in providing care and support to learners, as well as the strategies employed to provide care and support, but these may not be transferred, but might be applicable in other comparable contexts. As Morse (1994) argued, transferability refers to whether particular findings from a qualitative study may be transferred to another similar context or situation and still conserve the particularised meaning. To address issues of transferability, the researcher provided the focus group discussion scheduled and collage workshop guidelines were used in this study so that other researchers can adopt and adapt. The use of literature review and the theoretical framework were also meant to enhance transferability, which helped to explore (Maree, 2007) the data analysis and interpretations of the findings of the study.

Dependability- Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that in a qualitative research, dependability is where quality of data generation integrated processed is being assessed including the theory generation and the analysis of data. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) refers to dependability as the ability to track the process and procedures used to collect and interpret data. An adequate audit trial was provided to provide an explanation on data generation, analysis and research procedures followed in conducting the research study. All these were used to address the issue of dependability.

Confirmability- This is used to measure how well the findings examination are supported by the data that is generated by the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher ensured that the work's findings were the results of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and the preferences of the researcher. The study was discussed in the field with other researchers in order to verify the information gathered, thus ensuring confirmability and to avoid biasness. As Morse (1994) argues, confirmability means obtaining direct and often repeated affirmations of what the research has heard, seen, or experienced, with respect to the phenomena under study. In this study, the researcher tried to hold neutral viewpoint and implement analysis without a tendency to manipulate data. The researcher ensured that the presentation and the discussion of the findings revealed the participants' description of the phenomenon under study. Once again, in order to lessen biasness, analysis and findings were discussed with the supervisor and then finalised afterwards.

3.2. 10 Ethical considerations

According to Reardon (2006), ethical standards must be taken into consideration by all researchers from the start of their careers. Permission from the Department of Education was obtained prior to undertaking the research. An ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal was also approved. Signed consent forms from the Principal and the participants were received. This was also emphasised by Christiansen et al. (2010), who argued that prospective participants should be issued consent letters to sign which contains the details of the study, with the option of participating or withdrawing at any stage of the research. The

participants must be completely informed about the study and given an assurance of confidentiality of their names and sensitivity would be protected during interviewing (Henning et al., 2009). In this, study the objectives and focus of the study were clearly elucidated and clarified to the participants, as well as the significance of their participation.

Campbell et al. (2008) highlighted on the issue of freedom of participation when they state that there must be some discussion at the beginning of the interview, about feeling free to give information in order to alleviate pressure by the participants. The participants received consent letter requesting their participation and that they should feel free to pull out at any time they wish to do so. The participants were informed about the collage workshop and their roles. I asked the participants to bring their own magazines if they had. I did this to ensure that they became active participants and not just being passive. As all the participants were Zulu speakers, it was easy to converse, even though English was encouraged as teachers have to be well spoken in all languages so that they can understand care and support policies and guidelines, of which most are written in English. Furthermore, the researcher's contact details and those of her supervisor were made available, in case of further clarification by the school Principal or the participants.

3.2. 11 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to four teachers in a place of safety school in Umlazi Township. Therefore, the findings that emerged in this study were only limited to the experiences of this teachers. The purpose of the study was to produce data that could be generalised within the context of this study, and not the data that could be generalised with other school contexts. The participants used both English and IsiZulu therefore a translator was required. It was limited by the use of qualitative research and within the interpretive approach.

3. 3 CONCLUSION

Qualitative research provides a plethora of research designs and methodologies from which research could be located. In this chapter, the researcher provided and discussed in detail, the research design and methodology chosen for the current study. As determined by the research,

the participatory arts-based research design and methodology was chosen as being suitable in order to ensure that all participants had a voice in their constructions of care and support, without limiting them to spoken and written words only. The next chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretations of the research findings.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4. 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data that were generated from the focus group discussion and collage. Themes and categories that emerged from the study are presented as the data. Verbatim quotes are used and applied by the researcher where necessary, in order to authenticate the voices of the participants. The discussion of the findings is also supported by existing literature and the theoretical framework that was adopted in this study. A brief summary is provided at the end of the chapter.

4. 2 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Two themes that emerged during the data analysis are used as headings to present the data in this chapter. Theme one: Teachers' constructions of care and support as revealed in their roles and responsibilities; and Theme two: Teachers' strategies to improve care and support for the vulnerable and orphaned learners' in the place of safety. These themes are discussed in detail in the following section.

4.2. 1 THEME ONE:TEACHERS' CONSTRUCTIONS OF CARE AND SUPPORT AS REVEALED IN THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In this theme, as the researcher, I started by asking the participants to talk about their understanding of care and support, as well as how they supported and cared for their learners who were regarded as vulnerable and orphaned in their school. Many ideas came up, which were shared by the participants that led mainly towards their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, drawing from the participant's responses on the nature of their roles and responsibilities, the researcher categorised them as listening to learners' voices; building learners self-esteem and confidence; Spiritual supporters; and engaging the learners to work as a team (collaborative learning). The teachers' constructions of care and support as revealed in their roles and

responsibilities were grouped into four sub-themes that emerged from the data as discussed in the following section.

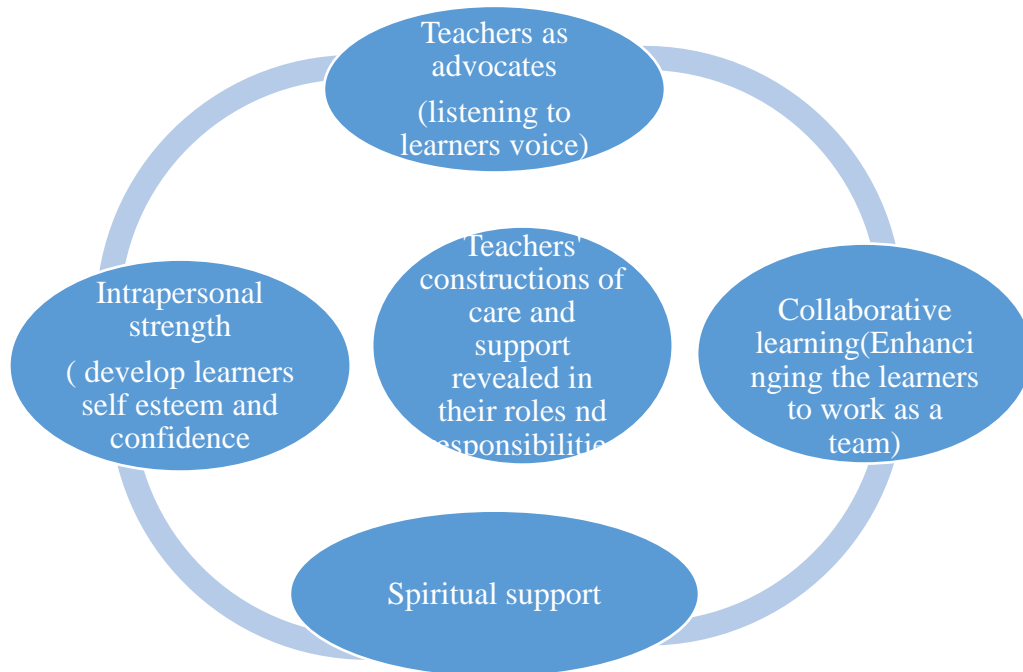


Figure 3: Teachers' roles and responsibilities in caring and supporting OVC learners, the researcher-constructed diagram.

4.2.1. 1 Teachers as advocates (Listening to learners' voices)

All the responses from the participants showed evidence that their care and support for OVC learners is embedded in their roles and responsibilities as advocates of the OVC learners' holistic wellbeing. This is done by listening to their demands and the problems presented to them by the learners. The data showed that the teachers allowed the learners to talk about their problems and this brought joy and happiness to the learners and, made them feel relaxed and safe. The following responses from some of the participants illustrate this:

Book:

"Learners like to be listened to and this makes them feel very happy and special if us as teachers, give them that chance, irrespective of how young they are. They always have

stories to tell. So it important as teacher to be dedicated and give your time to them. They love that very much”.

Pen:

“When we as teachers are listening to them, it makes them feel comfortable”.

Eagle:

“When they see you are listening to them attentively, they smile and that gives them hope in life.”

Some of the participants also identified that it is vital to pay attention to learners by supporting them emotionally and giving them the opportunity to express their views, which in turn makes them feel accepted and significant, while not feeling left out. The participants identified their duties as being comforters, motivators and mediators. During the focus group discussion, one of the participants commented as highlighted below:

Hen:

“Some of the learners have experienced some form of emotional abuse, so they need to be motivated and made to go through counseling, which is our duties as teachers, this therefore enables us to give learners a chance to express their views and allow them to feel important and valued”.

A similar opinion was also shared by Book and Eagle:

“I check my learners’ moods daily and when I see one who is not happy, I try to open up a conversation and it helps me figure out what the problem is, comforts the learner and resolve it the best way I can”.

“I can comfort the learners, I am able to be a mediator and motivate them if I see they are facing a challenging condition” (Eagle).

Another factor that indicated the roles performed by the teachers was the material and physical support given to the learners by the participants. The following excerpt by a participant indicated that teachers perform the roles of mothers to their learners.

Pen:

“During the first period, as an elderly teacher, I usually come to school with fruits, when I notice a learner crying, I put my books aside and focus on that learner and I take either sweets or fruits to give it to that particular learner and this helps the learners to open up and talk to me”.

The findings of this study revealed that the teachers’ roles as advocates, while listening to the voices of their OVC learners, were related to the emotional, physical and material support they offered to their learners while comforting, motivating and mediating in their problems. As advocates, teachers become concerned in the holistic wellbeing of their learners, which is shown in the excerpts above. The findings of this study resonate with McCombs’ (2015) study which found that teachers as agents of care and support, help in listening to each learner’s voice by creating a productive learning climate for the learners. Knoell (2012) also showed in his study that teachers’ become active listeners to the learners, as part of showing their care and support for them. Matters’s (2006) study also revealed that teachers are seen as mentors, role models and friends, whom the OVC learners look up to. A similar study by Noddings (2012) described teachers as people who listen, act, reflect, get personally involved and respond to the learners’ suffering with concern and compassion. The strength-based theory indicates that people must be fully involved in identifying their goals and building on their strengths and resources (Barwick, 2004). This implies that when teachers are not fully involved in their roles in caring and supporting the OVC learners, they end up not building and actualising their potentials as agents of change. Therefore, the next section discusses the teachers’ roles of helping the OVC learners in the development of the learners’ intrapersonal skills.

4.2.1. 2 Development of intrapersonal strength (self-confidence)

The findings of the study revealed that the participants helped the OVC learners to develop confidence and self-esteem in themselves. This might not be a surprise, because it can be linked to the previous roles performed by the teacher in giving emotional, physical and material support to the learners. Being active listeners to their learners gave the learners the opportunity to appreciate themselves and feel valued, thereby developing self-esteem and confidence. Therefore, in this regard, data from the participants revealed the development of intrapersonal strength, as was expressed by some of the participants:

Eagle:

“When learners have positive attitude, they value themselves highly and they see themselves as competent and powerful and in control of their lives, this is a sign that they are having positive self- esteem. But all of this becomes much possible if us as teachers, play a positive role in their lives.”

Hen:

“The motivation and comfort we give to them help a lot in boosting their self-esteem and confidence.”

One of the participants, ‘Pen’ indicated that the OVC learners perform well in their academics, which make them happy and proud. This finding is influenced by the fact that the teachers appreciate, encourage and acknowledge the learners when they do well in their class work. The following excerpts show how the participants expressed their views.

Pen:

“If a learner is performing better and us as teachers indicate that, we do acknowledge that, they become proud and happy. They automatically show more interest in their studies”.

Another of the participants Eagle noted:

“Their confidence needs to be boosted from time to time, because the achievements of others can have an impact on them especially on their performance.”

Book:

"I usually encourage them about the importance of education."

The data revealed that the teachers' roles were to enable the OVC learners to develop self-esteem and confidence within themselves. This was evident in the participants' responses as they acknowledged, encouraged and appreciated their learners. This finding resonates with the study by Loots (2011), which reported that when learners are made to feel as part of the school by teachers' caring for them, the learners are less likely to be absent from school and this improves their self-esteem. Bhana (2012) also indicated that teachers are called foot soldiers of care, because they offer encouragement and psycho-social support to vulnerable learners. Jabbarifar, (2011) confirms this and revealed that teachers play a significant role in detecting the learners' beliefs about their abilities and helping them to improve it. The study by Sarma and Olivera (2013) also noted that teachers develop increased self-esteem and self-confidence while dealing with OVC learners issues, while at the same time, they are able to use interactive teaching methods in their classes to engage their learners. Therefore, the above discussion indicates that teachers' support for OVC learners enable the learners to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in their academic lives. The next section explains spiritual support as a way of caring for OVC learners by teachers.

4.2.1. 3 Spiritual support

All the participants indicated that they supported the OVC learners spiritually by firstly putting their needs and care in prayers every morning before the start of classes. According to the participants' responses, prayer is a powerful tool to begin the day with the OVC learners. The data showed that the teachers encouraged and taught the OVC learners how to read their Bibles, how to pray and to take prayers as vital for their daily living, thereby making the learners feel motivated and hopeful in confronting any challenges in their future. In this regard, data from the participants revealed the roles of teachers in caring and supporting the OVC learners through prayers as expressed by the following participants:

Eagle stated:

“In this school we pray, this allows both teachers and learners to be refreshed in the morning. This allows learners to be excited and motivated”.

In a similar view, Pen commented that:

“Every morning at the assembly we pray together with the learners. But before we pray, we take turns in reading the Bible. This serves as a good tool to motivate our learners, especially in the morning, so that they start the day feeling fresh”.

Book was also of the view that:

“... learners now know that in this school, we don’t start a day without prayer. To thank the Lord Almighty for keeping us and reminding them that prayer is a very powerful tool to fight challenges in life”.

Another participant, Hen, argued:

“We do encourage them to read the Bible during their spare time, as this will help to instill values such as respect and discipline”.

The findings from the above verbatim quotes from the participants showed that the teachers encouraged, motivated and taught the OVC learners how to pray and to see prayers as ways to overcome and face challenges in life. The findings are consistent with the study by Mayimele (2009), which revealed that the availability of religious teachers in schools contributes to the spiritual foundation for learners by helping the learners to grow in faith and in hope. Furthermore, Mayimele (2009) indicates that teachers’ offer of spiritual support to OVC learners is vital. Drawing from the strength based approach; Hammond and Zimmerman (2012) assert that the strength and potential of the OVC learners can only be developed if the teachers act as agencies that would help in the transformation of these learners through enabling an effective engagement among the learners and mentoring these learners. Ainscow (2013) also posed that care and support for the vulnerable and orphaned learners offered by teachers go beyond formal education. This is concurred by Subbarao, Mattimore & Plangemann (2001), who argue that care also enables learners to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging, which is essential for them

to learn and develop life skills, to participate in society and to have faith for the future. Therefore, the findings of this study clearly revealed that the teachers do not only give emotional, physical and material support, but they also provide spiritual support to the OVC learners in order to help them develop hope and faith, and enable them to overcome any challenges they face in life. The next section discusses collaborative learning as a way of caring for and supporting OVC learners by the teachers.

4.2.1. 4 Collaborative learning

Another theme that emerged from the participants' responses showed that the teachers supported the OVC learners academically by providing opportunities during school hours, for the learners to read and work together as a team. The data showed that the group work helped to increase the instructional time for the learners who were struggling academically; encouraging collaborative learning and helping to boost the learners' confidence. Meanwhile, learners who excel academically were rewarded, as well as those who are well behaved. Some of the comments made by the participants are as follow:

Pen:

“Most of the times, the learners are rewarded with certificates for reading well or excelling in the activities they are given”.

Book:

“We try to complement them more by assisting them to work together, rather than criticizing their mood and behaviour”.

Some of the participants, during the focus group discussion, revealed that when the learners work together, it helps them to develop their self-esteem. According to one of the participants, Pen:

“As a school, we read together at times and the feeling of seeing other learners comment each other helps to boost their self-esteem”.

Eagle also commented that:

“...when learners work together, it gives a room for the shy learners to express themselves and it promotes self-esteem”.

From the above data, it is apparent that the teachers supported the learners academically by promoting collaborative learning among them, as they received rewards in the form of certificates for reading well and excelling in class activities, assisting them to work as a team, making them to learn and read together and ensuring peer mentoring amongst the learners, which helped to boost the learners' self-esteem. The study by Matters (2006) concurred with the above findings, as it also revealed that teachers have an increased high expectation for their learners; helping them develop problem-solving skills and also engaging the learners in collaborative learning (i.e. providing opportunities for the learners to work together in groups. “The fundamental principle of inclusive schools is that all children should learn together, while their individual differences and learning needs are accommodated and appropriate support is provided” UNESCO (1994, pp. 12-14).

In theme one, the findings revealed teachers' constructions of care and support of OVC learners are embedded in the roles and responsibilities they perform in schools. The verbatim quotes from the participants revealed the teachers as advocates' i.e. ensuring the holistic wellbeing of the OVC learners, as the teachers become active listeners to the learners' voices, mentors, role models and comforters . Furthermore, the study also showed that the teachers' roles and responsibility enabled the OVC learners to develop self-confidence and self-esteem as they engaged them in collaborative learning and also supported the learners spiritually to attain their fullest potentials in life.

A closer look at the findings in the themes showed that the teachers performed pastoral role by showing care and support to their OVC learners. In addition, just as the literature reviewed has shown us that the OVC learners were in need of food support. This is in contrast to the findings in this theme. Therefore, evidence of the above claim is found in the strength-based approach (Cederbaun & Klusaritz, 2009), which emphasises the discovering, affirming and enhancing the capabilities, interest, knowledge, resources, goals and objectives of the individual learners by the

teachers. Although teachers are aware of their roles practically, their roles are fragmented and much more needs to be done in order for them to be able to care and support the OVC learners. Hence, the next theme will be looking at the teachers' strategies to improve the care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners' in the place of safety.

4.2.2 THEME TWO: TEACHERS' STRATEGIES OF IMPROVING CARE AND SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE AND ORPHANED LEARNERS IN THE PLACE OF SAFETY.

In response to the main research question two on the teachers' strategies of improving care and support for the orphaned and vulnerable learners in a place of safety, the participants worked together to represent what they envisioned an improved care and support should look like. The two collages depicting the teachers' strategies are shown below.



Figure 4: Participants' collages representing strategies to improve care and support in a place of safety developed by the researchers participants.

The findings in the previous theme suggested that the teachers' understanding of care and support is embedded in the roles and responsibilities that they play in their respective classes and

school, such as helping learners to develop self-esteem/confidence, engaging them to work together, listening to their problems and offering them spiritual support by teaching and training them how to be hopeful and trust in God. However, one of the theories of psychology, the strength-based theory (Hammond, 2010), pays attention to the significance of identifying people's capabilities and how it enables people to develop holistically. The second theme that became apparent from the data analysed from the collage presented above gave the discussion of the participants' understandings of the strategies of improving care and support for OVC learners in a place of safety. The analysis of the data from the collage and focus group discussion suggested many strategies which were grouped into four themes namely nutritional strength, cultural awareness, entrepreneurship skills and recreational resources. These themes were presented, analysed and discussed in detail below.

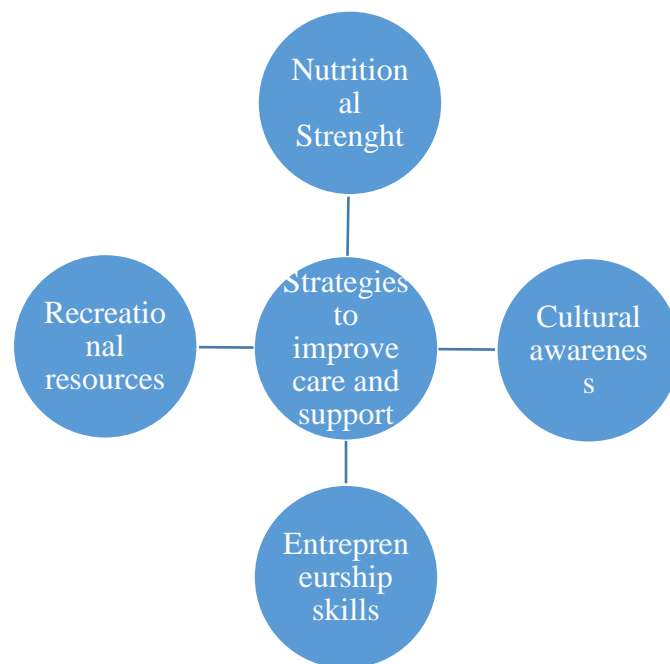


Figure 5: strategies of improving care and support for OVC learners in a place of safety constructed by the researcher.

4.2.2. 1 Improving nutrition

According to all the participants, their responses revealed that care and support goes beyond food and drink, this is because as teachers in the place of safety, they believed it was their duty to encourage healthy eating among the learners. The teachers revealed that most of the children were from poor homes, so it was essential for them to eat healthy in order to develop physically and to be fit, to reduce the risk of diseases by becoming overweight and lastly, it helped them to perform well academically. This was shown in the following quotations:

Eagle:

“Most children come from poor backgrounds and because they are of this age, then it becomes vital to encourage good eating habits and the consumption of healthy food”
(Collage).

Book:

“It is very important for learners to eat healthy because it reduces the risks of contracting diseases” (FGD)”

Hen:

“When learners eat healthy, this will reduce the risk of becoming diabetic and overweight. They will stay health and fit” (Collage).

Additionally, some of the participants mentioned that the food support from the department of education is not enough, hence they need more support and also contributions from other agencies to help in the feeding scheme. According to Eagle, it is their duty as teachers to make the little food supplied and given to these learners healthy and good for their consumption.

“...the department is supporting learners with the food, although it is not enough, so we make sure that they eat enough that is healthy” (FGD).

Book affirmed:

“We also need other agencies like NGOs to help and assist us in providing for these learners” (Collage).

The findings from the above verbatim responses from the participants indicated that the school needed more improvement in its strategies to care and support OVC learners. According to the participants, more food and assistants are still needed to ensure these vulnerable learners are properly taken care of, as it relates to their nutrition, because most of them come from poor households, while poor nutrition affects the OVC learners' physical and mental development and also negatively influences their academic performance. The findings of this study are consistent with Brown, Beardslee and Prothrow-Stith's (2008) study, which found that eating healthy also indirectly influences school performance. Therefore, unhealthy eating can leave learners' susceptible to illnesses or lead to headaches and stomach aches, resulting in school absenteeism. A study by Chauhan (2015) in India identified the use of a school feeding program for appraisal of the state use of schools as sites for discharging social policies, looking to improve the nutrition of learners, while reducing sickness and school absenteeism. In essence, the study identified that collaboration with other stakeholders in the community and the more government inputs are needed to encourage healthy eating by the OVC learners, in order to prevent many chronic diseases and health problems later in life, which are often attributed to unhealthy eating. The strategies used by teachers in this study are to encourage healthy eating habits in the learners.

4.2.2. 2 Cultural awareness

The participants identified that the OVC learners need to be taught more and made aware of the morals and values that are embedded in their culture. The teachers suggested for more culturally inclusive programs be placed in the school curriculum. According to the responses from the participants, the data identified that the teachers believe that engaging the learners practically in their cultures, their dances and discussing with them about the values, traditions and norms in their culture and other cultures, might help to shape their moral development and also positively influence them in their way of life. The following responses indicate the views on cultural awareness from the participants:

“...Teaching the learners other cultures and their culture is one of the aspect that we are doing at school and also the morals in it. Our children have many dance groups and most of the time we are talking about our different traditions” (Pen, FGD).

In agreement, Hen pointed out that:

“I believe the learners need to be taught about other cultures and their importance. They need to learn morals; the curriculum needs to include more program on culture, so that these learners would able to learn morals” (Collage)

Eagle also noted that:

“...They also need to know about their cultural awareness, and about other cultures from other learners. The importance of reserving virginity, as well as the importance of loving their culture by understanding it” (FGD).

‘Book’ revealed that teaching learners their cultures and the morals practiced in it, especially teaching them about virginity testing, might help in reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS. This is shown in the following quote:

“...because of HIV/AIDS, we do encourage the importance of virginity, as well as circumcision to learners. This will reduce the risk of contracting this pandemic. Also, learners need to know more about their culture and their values” (Collage).

The responses indicated that the teaching and making learners to become more aware of the values in their cultures and other peoples’ culture might help them to live morally and reduce the spread of HIV and AIDs in the society. This finding resonates with the study by Kenny (2014), that safe and enabling school should be a school that has culturally inclusive programs, integration of cultural minorities and a school that moves from an education system where teachers and staff are keepers of knowledge, to a more liberal paradigm of the teacher facilitating the democratisation of knowledge. From the strength based theory, it is vital to teach learners to have a holistic respect for the dignity and uniqueness and of other people and to recognise their way to experience and construct their social realities (Noble, Perkins & Fatout, 2015; Platt, 2006; Saleebey, 2006b). Therefore, this finding indicated the various roles that teachers are expected

to fulfill, which are outlined in the two government policies namely, the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), as well as the Revised National Curriculum Statement Policy (2001).

4.2.2. 3 Entrepreneurship skills

The findings also pointed out that there were certain critical skills that needed to be imparted in the learners, which could influence their life after high school. In particular, some of the participants spoke about teaching the OVC learners entrepreneurship skills from subjects like economic and management sciences (Hereafter EMS) and business studies, in order to prepare them for the future, considering the high rate of unemployment in the country. The OVC learners are made to acquire and develop various entrepreneurial skills on how to make money, how to own a business and how to manage a business. The verbatim quotes below confirm the findings of the study:

According to Eagle:

“Economically, they learn skills through subject like EMS as to how money works and on how to handle it” (Collage).

Book adds that:

“Most learners come from poor backgrounds, so entrepreneurship is also encouraged, this will help learners to start businesses of their own (FGD).”

Pen:

” We teach learners business skills; we understand that there is a high rate of unemployment in our country. So, by teaching them skills, we are preparing them for the future” (Collage)

Some of the participants mentioned that apart from teaching them skills theoretically, the learners are being taught practical skills, sometimes on how to make money. This is shown in the following quotes:

“We sometimes teach learners how to bake” (Eagle, FGD).

The findings from the above verbatim theme statements of the participants showed that the teachers understood the importance of teaching the OVC learners entrepreneurship skills, helping them to develop skills that would be of benefit to them in future. The data also revealed that irrespective of the OVC learners' backgrounds, it is important to equip them with skills that would be beneficial to them in future and should not be seen as vulnerable. The findings from this study are in line with the findings by Meintjes, Henrico and Kroon (2015), which revealed that schools can expose learners to protective resources or assets through curricula, community involvement and entrepreneurial activities, in order to enhance resilience among the learners. In addition, the strength-based approach identifies that the capacity, skills, connections and potential in learners should be valued and developed (Pattoni, 2012). Moreso, OVC learners' problems can be addressed by focusing on their skills, support system and interest (Nissen, Mackin & Tarte, 2005). Therefore, the findings of this study have clearly revealed that the teachers identified encouraging and helping the OVC learners to develop entrepreneurship skills as one of the strategies in improving care and support in the place of safety.

4.2.2. 4 Recreational activities

As indicated in the collage (see figure 2), the participants identified different sport activities that help to enhance the OVC learners physically, cognitively, to distress, be fit, acquire skills and encourage them to relate and respect their fellow peers. The participants indicated the contributions of some stakeholders in the community, who also encouraged the learners in sports by donating sporting gears to them. Some of the participants quoted as follow:

Eagle:

“Sporting activities help to enhance physical strength, respect amongst each other, develop them mentally (how they think and focus) and other sets of skills which can be found through sporting activities” (Collage).

Hen:

“Sports are also important in the sense that they allow learners to engage with professionals through certain sports. For example, the EThekweni municipality was here and donated sporting gear and jerseys for the learners because the learners enjoy sports very much” (FGD).

Pen:

“The physical aspect is also important, and we take learners outside to play or gym (Physical Education) to decrease their stress levels” (Collage).

One of the participant revealed that exposing learners to various sports activities is another way of motivating them to love school. This was indicated by the participants:

Book:

“I expose learners to various kinds of sports activities and to instil the love of sports, sporting codes and by doing that, it helps to draw learners attention to school” (FGD).

The findings from the above responses identified that the school is a place where teachers engage learners into sport activities, which helps them to develop mentally, physically, academically and socially. The data also revealed that the engagement of sports activities in schools encouraged the OVC learners to attend and love school. In addition, partnership with stakeholders from the community in sports helps to contribute positively to the learners’ holistic development. This finding resonates with the study by Matters (2006), which identified that while engaging in co-curricular activities with the learners, they become fit and healthy. Knoell (2012) showed that teachers become active listeners and also funny as they actively engage in co-curricular activities with their learners. The strength approach identifies that the communities are also seen as agencies, as they work together and partner with the schools’ authorities and teachers to nurture resilience in these particular learners. This finding is in contrast to the study by Akesson (2015), which found schools to be places of violence, exposing children to the realities of war and occupation and not safe for learning. Therefore, the verbatim quotes from the participants’ shows the significant of sporting activities as a strategy in schools, which helps to improve the holistic development of the OVC learners in a safe place.

In the study, the findings in theme two have identified the various strategies used by teachers to improve care and support of OVC learners in a place of safety. Meanwhile, the study showed that the strategies used by teachers to improve the care and support of their OVC learners included (1) improving their nutrition (2) creating cultural awareness (3) developing their entrepreneurship skills and (4) engaging them in sporting activities. The teachers are perceived as major role players in providing care and support to learners. Literature showed in the strength based theory, that the discovering, affirming and enhancing the capabilities, interest, knowledge, resources, goals and objectives of the individual by an agent helps the person to develop holistically (Cederbaun & Klusaritz, 2009). For example, the encouragement, care and support given to the OVC learners by the teachers might enable them to discover their potentials, develop resilience and become assets. The strength-based theory also highlights the OVC learners as people with potentials, power and in-built strengths, as well as people who transform and overcome their problems, challenges and difficulties through care and support.

4. 3 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the data generated from the focus group discussion and the collage. The data were presented in themes and sub-themes generated from the study. Quotes from the participants were also included verbatim to ensure that their voices were presented and not left out. The relevant literature reviewed and theoretical framework were used as a lens to discuss the findings. The next chapter presents the summary of the study, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at exploring teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners in a place of safety. Secondly, since teachers alone cannot be able to provide care and support for these learners, the study also revealed that teachers in the place of safety do receive support from other stakeholders in order to build their strength and be more equipped in terms of providing care and support to the OVL.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Two themes were identified and discussed in the previous chapter and the following conclusions were made.

5.2.1 The role of teachers in providing care and support to learners in a place of safety

The findings from this theme indicate that teachers' constructions of care and support are found in the roles and responsibilities which they perform towards the learners. According to the findings, the study showed that the teachers cared and supported their OVC learners firstly by being active listeners, i.e, when the learners need to talk or have a problem, the teachers were always there to listen and assist them; secondly, building the learners' self-confidence and self-esteem; thirdly, guiding and supporting the learners spiritually and lastly, engaging them to work together in the classroom. Therefore, the findings from the study showed that the teachers in the place of safety were aware that they were dealing with vulnerable learners and the degree of vulnerability of their learners varies. However, the teachers were doing their best to ensure that these learners feel safe, loved and have a sense of belonging.

5.2 2 Teachers' strategies to improve care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners in a place of safety

The findings from the second theme suggested that the teachers' strategies of improving care and support of OVL in the place of safety were attributed to the improvement and provision of nutritional meals for the learners. This finding suggests that the teachers showed an understanding that care and support go beyond providing food and drink for the learners, but in the place of safety, healthy eating and food were encouraged. So, this study showed that learners in the place of safety do not just need food, but they need healthy food. In addition, the findings in this theme also indicated that the teachers encouraged the importance of learners to be taught and made aware of their cultures and other people's cultures, as it would help in the reduction of HIV/AIDS in the society. Meanwhile, the third theme that emerged in this section identified the significance of training the OVL in entrepreneurship skills, as the teachers indicated that it would help them to develop critical and creative skills on how to make money and own a business in future. The final theme that emerged from this study also identified that the teachers believed that engaging the learners in recreational activities and by developing and providing more recreational resources with the support of stakeholders, would help to enhance the learners physically and cognitively, while also helping them to acquire skills and improve their interaction and respect for one another.

5. 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study showed that the teachers understood their roles and responsibilities in caring and supporting OVC learners in a place of safety, as well as their ability to identify the strategies that could be used to improve care and support in a place of safety. It was indicated that there were various ways in which other schools and the Department of Education could adopt to enhance the teachers' roles in the place of safety and ensure that the OVL are properly cared for and supported. However, adequate support from other stakeholders is also needed by the teachers to support and care for OVL. The following could be done to enhance the teachers' roles and responsibilities in the place of safety:

- Liaising with teachers from other schools, encouragement of staff development, sharing information and exchanging ideas, as well as being more equipped in order to meet the needs of the learners.
- The teachers need to be supported by the DoE, working together with the Social Welfare Department.
- Teachers should encourage the learners to showcase their culture by respecting their culture and to tolerate other people's cultures, because of diversity.
- Teachers in the place of safety school should be more passionate and caring about the learners beyond teaching them subject content.
- Teachers must have formal training in counselling, particularly in relation to the development of protective factors.
- Camping is recommended, where teachers would take learners to interact with other people from outside.
- Teachers need to organise seminars and workshops, then invite business people to educate the OVL about how to start their own businesses and saving money, as this would help the learners to fight poverty.

5. 4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The followings are recommended for further research:

- A comparative study would be recommended, comparing teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for vulnerable and orphaned learners in two or more places of safety or in a different province.
- A similar study can be done in a similar context but on a larger scale.
- This study was about teachers' voices, another study would be recommended, but focusing on the learners' voices.
- This study was conducted in a township; further study would also be recommended in the rural areas.
-

5. 5 CONCLUSION

In this study, it was revealed that teachers' supportive relationship with learners in terms of care could help in building the learners' self-esteem, a sense of belonging or connection and, also a sense of meaning which is created when they believe that what they can do could make a difference. This is supported by Nadge (2005) who emphasises that promoting resilience in schools is a key protective factor in learning, as well as psychological development, in and beyond the classroom context. So, in the context of this study, when teachers in a place of safety provides care and support to the orphaned and vulnerable learners, they are building learners strength, giving hope to the learners and building their confidence. These learners need to succeed in life, irrespective of all the difficulties that they may come across. Teachers value diversity because they promote different traditions. They also promote respect, cooperation and care amongst others

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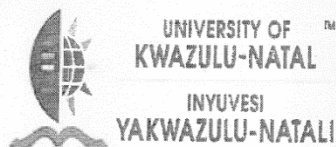
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23 June 2016

Ms Nompumelelo Virgina Nene 203509307
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Nene

Protocol reference number: HSS/0782/016M

Project Title: Teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 02 June 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Ms Fumane Khanare
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo & Ms B Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/838

Miss NV Nene
P1052
Umlazi
Durban
4031

Dear Miss Nene

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' CONSTRUCTIONS OF SCHOOL-BASED CARE AND SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS IN A PLACE OF SAFETY"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 30 June 2016 to 30 June 2017.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

uMlazi District

Adv. MB Masuku
Acting Head of Department: Education
Date: 05 July 2016

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 beyond the call of duty
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

APPENDIX C: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

P 1052 Data Groove

Umlazi

4031

20 May 2016

Director – The Research Unit

Resource Planning; KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Private Bag X9137; Pietermaritzburg; 3200

Dear Director

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

My name is Nompumelelo Virgina Nene. I am a Masters Students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, School of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, my student number is: 203509307. The research I wish to conduct for my study Master's dissertation involves **“An exploration of Teachers’ Constructions of School-based Care and Support for Learners in a Place of Safety”**.

I am hereby seeking your consent to approach a place of safety in Umlazi Township the area is under Umlazi District, in order to provide participants for this project.

The primary objective of this study is to explore teachers’ constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. The other objective is to explore school-based strategies to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety.

Upon completion of this study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a bound copy of the full report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0745054742, and email: nompumelelonene8@gmail.com

Yours Sincerely

Nompumelelo Virginia Nene

Student No: 203503907

Cell phones Numbers: 0745054742 or 0837237857

Email: nompumelelonene8@gmail.com

My supervisor is Dr. Fumane Khanare who is located at the School of Education in Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: 031 260 3525; khanare@ukzn.ac.za

Ms. Phume Ximba

Research Ethics Offices: HSSREC

Private Bag x 54001

Durban, 4000

Telephone 031 260 53587 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION

P 1052 Data Groove
Umlazi
4031

The Principal

Letter of Request School Principal's Permission

My name is Nompumelelo Virgina Nene, and I am a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, School of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, my student number is: 203509307. I am required to do a research to write up a thesis. Your school has been selected to participate in this research project. The title of my research is: **Teachers' Constructions of School-based Care and Support for Learners in a Place of Safety**. I hereby wish to request permission to carry out my research at your school.

Objectives of the Research:

- To explore teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety.
- To explore school-based strategies to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety.

Significant of the Research Project

The research is significant in four ways

1. Generating knowledge which may be useful to the teachers in order to develop their understanding of school-based care
2. Allowing participating teachers to voice out their thoughts, experiences and feelings about care and support for learners.
3. Through the voices of teachers themselves, the Department of Education may gain ways of developing and school-based care and support and how to improve it.
4. Teachers may also gain an insight oh how providing care and support to learners can be useful to improve learners' potential

Furthermore, this study may come up with ideas which may benefit policy makers to amend policies to be in line with the current needs on the aspects of school-based care and support.

Research Plan and Method

Firstly, there will be one Focus Group Interview with all the participating teachers lasting for approximately 20 minutes. The second session will consist of focus group, which will be stimulated by a collage done by all the participants. Each focus group discussion will last for 45 minutes to an hour. I will audio and video record both their focus group interview and collage process. Participants will sign informed consent regarding their voluntary participation on the study. However, participant's identities will be protected at all levels, as pseudonyms will be used for both participants and the school. Participants will be informed about the recordings will take place during the interviews and discussions. Participants will be informed that they are free to withdraw from the study at any point of the study. Lastly, obtained data will be only used for research purposes and will be kept with the university after six years it will be burnt.

School Involvement

Where I receive your consent to carry out the study, I will seek informed consent from the teachers than arrange suitable and convenient time for data generating to take place at your school.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me, my contacts are: 0745054742 or 0837237857 email: nompumelelonene8@gmail.com. You may contact my supervisor: Ms. Fumane Khanare at 031 260 3545.

Yours Sincerely

Nompumelelo Virginia Nene

Student No: 203509307

Cell phone numbers: 0745054742 or 0837237857

My supervisor is Dr. Fumane Khanare who is located at the School of Education in Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: 031 260 3525; khanare@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms. Phume Ximba

Research Ethics Offices: HSSREC

Private Bag x 54001

Durban, 4000

Telephone 031 260 53587 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH

DECLARATION

I (**Full names of Principal**) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to the school..... (**Full name of the school**) participating in the research project.

.....
SIGNATURE OF THE PRINCIPAL

.....
DATE

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

P 1052 Data Groove

Umlazi

4031

20 May 2016

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Nompumelelo Virgina Nene I am a Masters candidate at Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The research study currently undertaking is for the fulfillment of M. ED degree in Educational Psychology.

I am interested in exploring teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. The research aims at exploring teachers' constructions and their strategies to improve school-based care and support for learners. Therefore, to gather information for my study, I am interested is asking you some questions.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion and by use of a pseudonym.
- The focus group session may last for about one half hours and may be split depending on your preference.
- I cordially invite you to participate in a collage process. This will involve a session of a collage workshop in the use of charts, pens, glue stick etc., and the use of cameras, ethics in taking photographs and what collage is all about which will last for an hour. The second session.
- Any information given to by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research study only.
- Data will be sorted in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to participate in the focus group interview and collage process, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

Equipment	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		
Collage activity		

Should you wish to contact me my contact details are: 0745054742 or 0837237857 email: nompumelelonene8@gmail.com.

Student No: 203509307

Cell phone numbers: 0745054742 or 0837237857

My supervisor is Dr. Fumane Khanare who is located at the School of Education in Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: 031 260 3525; khanare@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms. Phume Ximba

Research Ethics Offices: HSSREC

Private Bag x 54001

Durban, 4000

Telephone 031 260 53587 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH

DECLARATION

I..... (Full names of participant)

herby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to: **YES** **NO**

Consent

Yes **No**

Audio record my focus group interview and collage activity

Video record my collage process

Photograph the collage process

APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

You are invited to participate in this study which explores teachers' construction of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety in Umlazi. The study explores school-based strategies to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety. Participation in the focus group interview is voluntary and you are free not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with or to withdraw from participation at any time.

Introduction by Facilitator

Hello, my name is Nompumelelo Virginia Nene. Thank you for taking the time to participate in the focus group interview in relation to the study mentioned.

Introductions by the participants

Let's do a quick round of introductions. Can you tell the group your name, your qualification(s) and specialization(s), number of years you have been teaching in this school; your roles and responsibilities as a teacher in this school and your favourite role (if any).

(NOTE TO THE INTERVIEWER: The following questions will guide the interview)

1. First, I would like to hear generally about the different types of learners you have in this school and their different challenges.
 - a. This could be through your school records, observation, conversations with other teachers or learners, your classroom experiences and so on.
 - b. Give clear examples of each challenge mentioned in 1 (a).
2. At this point I would like to focus more on the school's response in relation to care and support of learners in this school.

What do you consider to be care and support of these learners?

Probe: This should be your own understanding of what you consider to be care and support of these learners in this school. Provide a clear explanation and tell why you say so.

3. What are the current forms of care and support do the learners in this school receive? **Probe:** Remember you can draw from both human and non-human care and support.

4. Who provide care and support to these learners?
 - a. You can draw from a range of resources (teachers, SMT, Principal, school policies, national policies, parents, DoE personnel etc.)
 - b. How exactly do the people mentioned in section (b) above provide care and support to learners in the place of safety? Give clear examples of the roles played by each resource mentioned above.
5. Is there anything else we have not yet discussed, yet you consider to be care and support for the vulnerable learners in the place of safety?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX G: COLLAGE ACTIVITY

You are invited to participate in this study which explores teachers' constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety. The explores the strategies are used by the teachers in a place of safety to provide care and support to learners and to explore school-based strategies that could be employed to improve care and support for learners in a place of safety. Participation in the interview is voluntary and you are free not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with or to withdraw from participation at any time.

Session 1: Collage making

In this session participants will identify the resources available to them at and through the school and which they draw on; but also their own assets (strengths) (Khanare, 2008, 2009). Exploring these two areas will provide opportunity to 'deep' discussion and reflection.

(NOTE to INTERVIEWER: *The following questions will guide the collage*):

Using a combination of pictures, drawing, text and phrases, teachers make collage identifying any resources which are available within and outside the school that they use to provide care and support in the learners. The process includes:

- Explaining what 'collage' is
- Showing teachers examples of collages
- Teachers work in groups and make their own collages in which they show how they school-based strategies improve care and support for learners in a place of safety.
- The following prompt will be used: "Use a combination of pictures, drawing, text and phrases to show how school-based strategies improve care and support for learners in a place of safety."

Probe: This might include assisting them in class and outside, academically and socially.

- Sharing of collages: teachers will paste their collage on the wall and have a 'walk about' where everyone views the collages.

Session 2: Collage interpretation

(NOTE to INTERVIEWER: *The following questions will guide the collage presentations*):

- From your experiences, do you think school-based initiatives are important in order to care and support to these learners in a place of safety? Why do you think so?
- Can you describe your collage: What is in the collage? Why did you choose the items that are in your collage?
- How do you use them in providing care and support for these learners?

Probe: Remember learners can be cared and supported from a range of issues (socially, academically and emotionally and psychologically), so clarify your responses.

- From your collage which strategies do consider to be most needed by teachers in order to improve care and support of vulnerable learners in a place of safety
 - a. Who should be involved in coming up with those strategies? Why?
 - b. How will they help school to improve care and support aimed at these learners? Give clear explanations in your responses.
- Can you describe what you, other teachers or learners have done to make sure that there are resources in the school in relation to providing care and support to these learners?

Session 3: Oral reflection about participating in a collage activity

- Was it your first time to create a collage? If not, where and for what purpose?
- What have you learnt from participating in this collage activity?
- What was interesting? What was challenging?
- Would you like to have these collages? How do you intend to you use them? With who? Why?

Is there anything else we have not yet discussed, yet you feel could be done to improve participation when using collage method?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX H: COLLAGE WAIVER

I (**Print name**), give my permission for a photograph to be taken for me use in the project: **(An exploration of teachers’ constructions of school-based care and support for learners in a place of safety)**

This collage will be used for research purposes, including colloquiums, symposiums, research modules, research articles, research blogs and I will be consulted and further permission sought if my collage is to be used for exhibitions and/ or other dissemination purposed. No further use of this collage will be made without my express permission.

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

APPENDIX I: SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT: 11 AUGUST 2016

RESEARCHER: 1. *First, I would like to hear generally about the different types of learners you have in this school and their different challenges.*

a. This could be through your school records, observation, conversations with other teachers or learners, your classroom experiences and so on.

b. Give clear examples of each challenge mentioned in 1 (a).

HEN: They are vulnerable, although they go through situations but as a teacher you ended up not following the curriculum as it is because of the way they are. I cannot move with the curriculum whereas I am leaving the learners behind. ...so my focus is to make sure that learners enjoy each and every moment they spend with me as a teacher. I can comfort the learners, I'm able to be a mediator, and I am able to motivate them if I see they are facing a challenging situation and bring their focus back into the activities being done in class.

RESEARCHER: *You mentioned that the learners tend to be vulnerable, could you further explain that point*

HEN: Some of them have experienced some form of abuse (emotional, sexual, etc.), so those students need to be motivated and go through counselling of as a teacher both these duties are my responsibility.

BOOK: Sometime learners can be stubborn and moody. For example, during the first period as an elderly teacher, I usually have fruits so what I do is that I check their moods on that day and I'd notice the one learner was crying. So in that situation I'll put my books aside and focus on that learner, I take either sweets or a fruit and I'll give it to that particular learner. This helps in that it opens up a conversation and I am able to figure out what the problem, comfort the learner and resolve it in the best way possible during class. For example, one learner would say: 'my mother hasn't visited me in a while and this really makes me sad' in that situation I have to listen attentively and comfort the learner. After such a situation the learner would then feel a lot better and say that they are now ready to read or take part in the class activity.

PEN: Our learners' sometimes are a bit rude which is an extension of their moods and this differs from day-to-day. And sometimes if there is another learner who is performing quite better than they are, the learner will become threatened and becomes rude and bullies the other learner.

RESEARCHER: *They don't like to be challenged?*

PEN: No they do not, everything that happens will be done on the learner's pace since they felt challenged and this leads to the learner being very arrogant towards authority. So the work at hand will only be done once their mood has changed.

RESEARCHER: *Now before I move on to the Eagle, have you experienced a situation whereby one learner will report on the behaviour of another, and make you realise something you might have missed or not observed?*

PEN: They do, at times they converse among each other and try to reach a resolution, sometimes they threaten each other like 'if you don't stop that, we will report you to the teacher'

RESEARCHER: *Let's hear what the 'Eagle' has to say*

EAGLE: I have 5 learners who all arrive at different times, and all have different personalities and moods. So how I conduct class activities has to at times stimulate their thinking and at times relax them and allow them to have fun.

RESEARCHER: 2. *At this point I would like to focus more on the school's response in relation to care and support of learners in this school.*

What do you consider to be care and support of these learners?

Probe: *This should be your own understanding of what you consider to be care and support of these learners in this school. Provide a clear explanation and tell why you say so*

HEN: To give learners a chance to express their views and allows them to feel important and valued. This makes them feel comfortable, especially when hugged or rewarded for well behaviour and performance.

EAGLE: In this school we pray, this allows both teachers and learners to be refreshed in the morning. This allows learners to be excited and motivated.

HEN: To give learners a chance to express their views and allow them to feel important and valued

BOOK: Learners like to be listened and this makes them feel very happy and special if us as teachers gives them that chance irrespective of how young they are. They always have stories to tell. So it important as teacher to be dedicated and give your time to them. They love that very much

PEN: When we as teachers are listening to them it makes them feel comfortable

EAGLE: When they see you are listening to them attentively, they smile and that gives them hope in life

RESEARCHER: *So what else can be viewed as care and support towards the learners?*

BOOK: We try to complement them more, rather than criticizing their moods and behaviour.

PEN: The others have covered most things

BOOK: The learners become obsessed with the teachers, but in a good way because they value the teachers and love us. They get hurt if we bring our own children to school, as we are everything to them.

PEN: Every morning in the assembly we pray together with the learners. But before we pray, we take turns in reading a bible. This serve a good tool to motivate our learners especial in the morning. So that they will start the day feeling fresh

BOOK: Even the learners now they know that in this school we don't start a day without prayer. To thank the Lord Almighty for keeping us and reminding them that prayer is a very powerful to fight challenges in life

HEN: We do encourage them to read bible during their spare time as this will help to instil values such respect and discipline.

RESEARCHER: *How do you manage a situation where learners get jealousy?*

BOOK: I spoke to them about it, but it hardly made a dent.

RESEARCHER: *So what else that you do can be seen as support towards them?*

PEN: As a school, we read together at times and the feeling of seeing other learners commend each other helps to boost their self-esteem. Most of these times the learners are rewarded with certificates for reading well or excelling in the activities they are given.

HEN: Their confidence needs to be boosted from time to time, because the achievements of others can have an impact on them especially on their performance.

HEN: I can comfort the learners, I'm able to be a mediator and I'm able to motivate them if they are facing a challenging situation and bring their focus back into the activities done in class. This help a lot in boosting their self-esteem and confidence

EAGLE: When learners have positive attitude, they value themselves highly and they see themselves as competent and powerful in control of their lives this is a sign that they are having a positive self- esteem. But all of this becomes much possible if us as teachers plays a positive role in their lives

PEN: If a learner is performing better and us as teachers indicate that we do acknowledge that, they become proud and happy. They automatically show more interest in their studies

RESEARCHER: 3. *What are the current forms of care and support do the learners in this school receive? Probe: Remember you can draw from both human and non-human care and support.*

So when it comes to support and care services, we can draw from human and non-human care support, that to provide care and support for the learners can be found through a wide range of resources. These range from teachers to the school principle; so what can be said about to role of the principal when it comes to the support and care of learners?

HEN: The principal tries to motivate us as teachers and rewards the learners from time to time.

RESEARCHER: *How many learners are currently enrolled at the school?*

HEN: The learners come and go, but to date they are around it is a small number. At times the principle will take on a class on his/her own.

PEN: When the principal enters a class room and maybe there was a situation whereby one of the learners was misbehaving or having moods and the learner is either sleeping or refusing to cooperate. When the principal enters and asks ‘what is going on? or what seems to be the problem?’ the learner will quickly get up and the principle what enquire as to why the learner is lying down, then the principle will try to comfort and reason with the learner in for the class activities to proceed.

BOOK: Even with us as teachers there are times when you get angry or frustrated with certain situations but we find a way to handle it so as to not show discomfort towards the learner. At times I keep water on my table, so when I feel that way I simply have a sip then go to the principle for guidance.

EAGLE: A number of times I go to the principal report the problem I’m facing at the time. I will immediately get the assistance I need.

RESEARCHER: 4. *Who provide care and support to these learners?*

- a. *You can draw from a range of resources (teachers, SMT, Principal, school policies, national policies, parents, DoE personnel etc.)*
- b. *How exactly do the people mentioned in section (b) above provide care and support to learners in the place of safety? Give clear examples of the roles played by each resource mentioned above.*

HEN: The DoE provides; resources and workshops; they do visits to the school;

RESEARCHER: *What is offered at the workshops? Do you go to attend these or are the facilitated within the school?*

PARTICIPANTS (1, 2, 3, and 4): We go out to the workshops.

BOOK: The workshops feature teachers from other schools and provinces. When asked the subject advisors make themselves available for the school.

EAGLE: The DoE will come and offer advice as well as proposals for change.

RESEARCHER: *So you have not received a response as yet?*

EAGLE: No we have not

RESEARCHER: *With regards to the parents, how do they provide support towards the learners and the teachers?*

HEN: The parents are not really involved due to the fact that when learners are outside of the class room they are usually in the hands of their care givers who are not their parents but play

that roles since learners stay within the facility. The care givers are able to play multiple roles for the learners while they are still within the facility of the school.

BOOK: The care givers go out of their way to make the learners feels safe and loved. At times they request that the learners visit them during holidays and teach the learners things like baking and cooking, some even take them to their churches.

RESEARCHER: *Is there any form of support from local businesses?*

PEN: For the kids only not the entire school, SADTU brought stationary for the learners.

RESEARCHER: *Is there anything else that you feel I missed and would like to make note of?*

EAGLE: When we go to workshops, we are able to request for transportation from social welfare which will drive us to and from the workshop. The learners are also provided with transportation to events.

HEN: Whether the kids have to go to court or child services, the school finds a way to provide transport for the learners. When we go out care given tag along because sometimes the kids are beyond our control and only the care givers are able to handle the kids.

BOOK: Even as teachers we are able to go for counselling ourselves within the school. Once my personal issues are resolved I can be able to focus on the kids. The school has a policy that when you enter the school gates you have to leave your problems at the gate because the learners are delicate and do not need to be frustrated by your personal things.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

APPENDIX J: EDITOR'S NOTE

29 DECEMBER 2016

Re: LANGUAGE EDITING STATEMENT

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby confirm that I have edited the thesis titled **TEACHERS' CONSTRUCTIONS OF SCHOOL-BASED CARE AND SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS IN A PLACE OF SAFETY** by **NOMPUMELELO VIRGINA NENE**, for the degree **MASTER OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**.

Regards

H. Mapudzi

Dr. Hatikanganwi Mapudzi

PhD (Communications), M. A (Journalism & Media Studies), PGDip (Media Management),
B.Soc. Scie. (Hons) (Communications), B. Applied Communications Management.

APPENDIX K: TURNITIN

Teachers' construction of school based care and support for learners			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
% 11	% 6	% 3	% 8
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	Backes, Sabine, Bieg, Sonja and Mittag, Waldemar. "The role of intrinsic motivation for teaching, teachers' care and autonomy support in students' self-determined motivation", Fachportal Pädagogik. DIPF, 2011. Publication	<% 1	
2	Submitted to University of Derby Student Paper	<% 1	
3	www.foundation.co.za Internet Source	<% 1	
4	Submitted to University of South Africa Student Paper	<% 1	
5	Submitted to University of the West Indies Student Paper	<% 1	
6	www.americkinesiology.org Internet Source	<% 1	
7	Submitted to North West University Student Paper	<% 1	