

**EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS: A CASE OF FOUR
RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT, KWAZULU-NATAL**

BY

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the College of Humanities: School
of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

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Date submitted: August 2017

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Nozibusiso Nomvula Mthembu, declare that: **“Exploring ethical leadership in schools: A case of four rural schools in the Zululand District, KwaZulu-Natal”** is my own original work and that:

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I, Doctor S.E. Mthiyane,

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

Supervisor's signature

Date

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



18 November 2015

Mrs NN Mthembu 214584611
School of Education
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Dear Mrs Mthembu

Protocol reference number: HSS/1052/015M

Project Title: Exploring Ethical Leadership in schools: A case of four rural schools in the Zululand District

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 4 August 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have 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.

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

Yours faithfully

.....
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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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DEDICATION

This thesis is especially dedicated to:

My late dad, Mr William Ndwandwe and my mother, Mrs Linnah Ndwandwe (Ma-Dlamini), as well as my loving husband Mduduzi and my children Celo, Hlaka and Sphelele for all those days when I was not around. May this study be a motivation to you all that nothing is impossible if you put your mind to it.

ABSTRACT

Given the prominent ethical crises and scandals that have rocked basic education in South Africa recently (such as the selling of teaching and management posts, intimate relationships among staff members and learners, embezzlements of school funds, etc.,) the importance of empirical research on ethics in educational institutions seems obvious. The image of the education system continues to suffer as a result of poor quality learner results—both in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and the Annual National Assessments (ANA)—alleged group copying in NSC Examinations, abuse of the leave system by some teachers and many other corrupt and unethical practices by teachers, school principals, school governing bodies and other officials in the Department of Basic Education. The afore-mentioned people are entrusted with the leadership and management of schools and are expected to act in the best interests of the schools and learners and ensure that professional ethical standards are set and adhered to. This qualitative case study aimed to explore the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of school principals, school management teams (SMTs) and teachers about ethical leadership in four rural schools in the Zululand District, KwaZulu-Natal. It employed social constructivism as a research paradigm. A school principal, one SMT member and two PL1 educators were conveniently selected from each of the four schools to generate data. Theoretically, the study is framed by a combination of two theories, namely: Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical Leadership and Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism – Ubuntu). The findings reveal that poverty and lack of knowledge in rural communities was a contributory factor to unethical behaviour of school principals and educators. The findings also indicate that most school principals were selfish and did not care about their schools. They were running their schools as private property and spent most of the time absent from work; hired their own companies to work in their school; received bribes; they sometimes exchanged teaching posts for sexual favours and money, and engaged in general nepotism. The findings also reveal that some of the unethical practices seemed to originate from the District/Circuit offices, especially from circuit managers. Based on the findings and conclusions, this study recommends that the Department of Education, over and above the interview process, when recruiting the school principals, must also design an assessment tool to assess the character and the integrity of the potential school principal. Further, Ethics education should be made compulsory in Higher Education teacher training institutions. In addition, SACE should be de-politicised, decentralised, made more visible and play its developmental role more than it is currently doing.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

ANA	Annual National Assessments
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NPC	National Planning Commission
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	(i)
Declaration of originality	(ii)
Statement by the supervisor	(iii)
Ethical clearance certificate	(iv)
Acknowledgements	(v)
Dedication	(vi)
Abstract	(vii)
Abbreviations used in the study	(viii)
Table of contents	(ix)

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	4
1.3 Location of the study	10
1.3.1 Dynamics of rural schools	10
1.4 Problem statement	14
1.5 Purpose and rationale for the study	16
1.6 Significance of the study	19
1.7 Objectives of the study	21
1.8 Critical research questions	22
1.9 Clarifications of key concepts	23
1.9.1 Leadership	23
1.9.2 Ethics	24
1.9.3 Ethical Leadership	24
1.10 Delimitations of the study	25

1.11	Outline of the study	25
1.12	Chapter summary	26

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	27
2.2	Leadership and management	27
2.3	Leadership, management and ethics	301
2.4	Ethical leadership and school management	34
2.5	Policy landscapes to promote ethical leadership in SA schools	46
2.6	Dimensions of ethical leadership	47
2.6.1	Moral person dimension	49
2.6.1.1	Personal Traits	50
2.6.1.2	Personality and leader effectiveness	51
2.6.1.3	Trait versus process	52
2.6.2	Moral manager dimension	53
2.7	Ethical leadership and followers	54
2.8	Integrity	57
2.9	Ethical decision-making in school leadership	58
2.10	Chapter summary	65

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1	Introduction	66
3.2	What is Theory	66
3.3	Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical leadership	67
3.3.1	The ethic of justice	70
3.3.2	The ethic of critique	75

3.3.3	The ethic of care	78
3.3.4	Ethic of the profession	80
3.4	Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model	85
3.4.1	Being	86
3.4.2	Humanness	87
3.4.3	Compassion	88
3.4.4	Individualism	92
3.4.5	Moral necessity	93
3.4.6	Commonwealth	94
3.5	Chapter summary	96

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1	Introduction	97
4.2	Paradigmatic disposition	97
4.2.1	Social constructivism/ interpretivism	98
4.3	Philosophical assumptions	99
4.3.1	Ontology	100
4.3.2	Epistemology	101
4.3.3	Axiology	102
4.3.4	Rhetorical assumptions	103
4.3.5	Methodological assumptions	103
4.4	Research design	104
4.4.1	Background information to the case study schools	107
4.5	Research Methodology	111
4.6	Sampling	113
4.7	Data generation methods	114
4.7.1	Semi-structured interviews	115
4.7.2	Documents review	116
4.8	Data analysis	117
4.8.1	Techniques used to interpret and analyse the data	118

4.9 Establishing trustworthiness	120
4.9.1 Triangulation	121
4.10 Ethical issues	123
4.11 Limitations of the study	125
4.12 Chapter summary	126

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

5.1 Introduction	127
5.2 Discussion of findings	128
5.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership	128
5.2.2 Experiences of principals about Ethics and Ethical leadership	140
5.2.3 Causes of unethical behaviour	149
5.2.4 The perceptions of principals regarding education on ethics	155
5.2.5 Perspectives of principals on how to arrest unethical behaviour	159
5.3 Chapter summary	167

CHAPTER SIX

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PERSPECTIVES OF SMT MEMBERS ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

6.1 Introduction	168
6.2 Discussion of findings	168
6.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership	168
6.2.2 Experiences of SMTS about Ethics and Ethical leadership	179
6.2.3 Causes of unethical behaviour	188
6.2.4 The perceptions of SMTS regarding education on ethics	195

6.2.5 Perspectives of SMTS on how to arrest unethical behaviour in schools	195
6.3 Chapter summary	201

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATORS ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

7.1 Introduction	202
7.2 Discussion of findings	202
7.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership	202
7.2.2 Experiences of educators about Ethics and Ethical leadership	219
7.2.3 Causes of unethical behaviour	229
7.2.4 The perceptions of educators regarding education on ethics	237
7.2.5 Perspectives of educators on how to arrest unethical behaviour	240
7.3 Chapter summary	244

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION OF KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction	245
8.2 The following key themes emerged	245
8.2.1 Contextual conceptualisation of ethics and ethical leadership	245
8.2.2 Ethical leader models a good behaviour	250
8.2.3 Role of trust in ethical leadership	255
8.2.4 Egotism and self-interest	260
8.2.5 Decline of Ubuntu values in the community	266
8.2.6 The vulnerability of rural communities	272
8.3 Chapter summary	277

CHAPTER NINE

LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

9.1 Introduction	278
9.2 Lessons learned	278
9.3 Recommendations	285
9.3.1 Ethics in higher educational system	285
9.3.2 SACE to be decentralised and be visible	286
9.3.3 Recruitment process to be reviewed	288
9.3.4 School Governing Bodies constitution to be reviewed	290
9.3.5 Rotating system within the Department of Education	290
9.4 Contributions to knowledge	291
9.5 Research limitations	291
9.6 Implications of the study	292
9.6.1 Implications for DBE	292
9.6.2 Implications for SACE	292
9.6.3 Implications for school principals	293
9.6.4 Implications for educators	293
9.6.5 Implications for higher education	294
9.6.6 Implications for further research	294
9.7 Chapter summary	294
9.8 References	295

APPENDICES 220

A. Permission letter to the KZN-DOE to conduct the study	321
B. Permission letter from the KZN-DOE permitting to conduct the study	323
C. Permission letter to school principals	324
D. Individual Interview Schedule for school principals	327
E. Individual Interview Schedule for SMT members and PL1 educators	330

F. Questionnaire for school principals	333
G. Questionnaire for SMT members	340
H. Questionnaire for PL1 educators	348
I. Turnitin certificate	354
J. Language clearance certificate	355

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

There is a general view among many South Africans, judging by the ubiquity of negative print media comments and radio talk shows, that there is ethical/moral malaise at most schools. The following examples and many others provide evidence of this perception: (1) educators who have been reported as having sexual relationships with learners (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014); (2) lack of quality educators and quality education in public schools (Department of Basic Education, 2014; Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), 2011); Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading and Literacy Studies (PIRLS), 2010); and (3) principals who fail to take disciplinary procedures against educators who display unethical practices and principals who misuse school funds (De Klerk 2005, Human Rights Watch, 2001 & Roane 2013). They also ask questions like: “why on earth do educators and other educational leaders find it difficult to be moral?” The following statement by a fifteen-year-old learner who was sexually assaulted at school supports the general view of the public;

I didn't go back to school for one month after I came forward. Everything reminds me, wearing my school uniform reminds me of what happened. I have dreams. He [the educator] is in my dreams. He is in the classroom laughing at me. I can hear him laughing at me in my dreams. I sometimes have to pass down the hall where his classroom was. I thought I could see him, still there. I was scared he'll still be there.

(Human Rights Watch, 2001, p. 05)

According to Spaul (2013), it has become increasingly clear that the weight of evidence supports the conclusion that there is an on-going crisis in South African education, and that the current system is failing the majority of South Africa's youth. By using a variety of independently conducted assessments of pupil achievement, the report shows that – “with the exception of a wealthy minority – most South African pupils cannot read, write and compute at grade-appropriate levels, with large proportions being functionally illiterate and innumerate”

(Spaull, 2013, p. 03), Educators are, and have always been, the primary locus of schooling (Spaull, 2013). Further to compound extant problems, Castro, Duthilleul and Caillods (2007) have identified educator absenteeism (often without 'a clear cause'), lack of educator personal discipline, and classroom management as issues that have a severe impact on teaching and learning. Once the principal and educators behave unethically, for example, stealing school resources (Corruption Watch, 2014), that behaviour hinders teaching and learning. Inevitably, it impacts direct on the quality of education in school.

Most of the leaders including those in education are overwhelmed by the love for money, pride, vanity and excessive self-interest (Hamilton, Madison & Jay, 2008). In some schools, decisions are made because they are the easy option or because they are the popular option, and not because they are the option which is in the best educational interests of the learners at the school (Clarke, 2007, p. 10). In referring to serious allegations of unethical behaviour, we daily read about situations where school governing bodies are alleged to recommend educators for employment in various positions of responsibility at schools, not because of their knowledge and potential teaching and management skills but because of immoral secretive activities such as bribery and nepotism (Corruption Watch, 2014). This calls into question issues of accountability, responsibility, transparency, integrity, ethics and morality among all those involved in education. Thus, this study's focus is on ethical leadership in schools, since ethics protect leaders from behaviours based on external goods like fame, money and power. Ethics also helps people develop a sense of truth and meaning of life (Hamilton, Madison & Jay, 2008). Without any idea or understanding of what is right or wrong, people have no direction in life and feel they have carte blanche to do as they please. Ethics give people a certain sense of truth and positively affect their behaviour.

According to Waggoner (2010), school leaders are expected to take action about unethical practices in schools. Taking action is the most beneficial and effective option. However, taking action without ethics leads to a torn leader (Waggoner, 2010). Ethics prevent torn leaders because they act as stepping-stones that guide a leader to the best solution. Ethics encourage the pursuit of internal good, such as virtue. Virtues will help develop strong ethics. This produces good leaders who are not only able to differentiate between good or bad and right or wrong, but also make ethical decisions (Ciulla, 2004 & Waggoner, 2010). In line with common law principles, Principals (School Leaders) should act in the best interests of schools and ensure that professional standards are set and adhered to (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008). In emphasising this, De Klerk (2005) indicates that several South African schools are

characterised by a total lack of moral leadership, [including] non-accountability and an increasing ethical illiteracy. Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) describe principals as being either vehicles for positive change or at the core of the problems experienced by their respective schools. Further, the children they teach and raise today will become leaders of tomorrow. How the principals act today will strongly influence how the learners behave tomorrow. This theory stems from the saying “actions speak louder than words” (Mangena, 2011). Observation of exemplary action is a much stronger technique than verbal emphasis. Many leaders today say one thing, but act in other ways. Widely publicized cases of unethical practices at schools have aroused strong public concern about the impression of education system in this country the education received by the learners in rural schools (Corruption Watch, 2013; Roane 2013; SACE Annual reports, 2009-2013).

Returning to the opening statement of observation, a general view is held among many South Africans, judging by the ubiquity of negative print media comments and radio talk shows, that there is ethical/moral malaise at most schools. This statement alone indicates how critical the situation in schools is in the eyes of the public. People are losing hope about the education system of this country. As a District Official, myself, I have attended several cases perpetrated by educators in the past five years. One educator from a secondary school impregnated a sixteen-year-old school girl who was doing grade 11. In the same school, another educator impregnated a grade 10 learner and forced her to terminate the pregnancy. School principals are using positions of power to abuse both funds and resources allocated by the provincial education department towards projects that improve public education. A survey conducted in this regard (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014) indicated the prevalence of selling exam papers. Even today, unethical behaviour of educators is still reported – recently (early 2015) a number of Grade Twelve learners did not receive their results due to the suspected cheating scandal that happened in many schools in KwaZulu-Natal and a few other provinces during the Grade Twelve examinations in 2014 (Sunday Times, 28 January 2014). In the cases being investigated by the Department of Education, it is alleged both the educators and learners were involved, and this is highly unethical (e NCA News, January 2014). These accusations result in the South African schooling system facing tremendous problems which plague to a point of dysfunctionality at almost every level (Bloch, 2009; Fleisch, 2008; Taylor, 2006 & Van der Berg, 2008). Therefore, this study will attempt to explore school principals and educators’ views, practices and experiences on ethical leadership in schools. Leadership involves influence (Yukl, 2002) and, therefore, leadership has a moral dimension because leaders

influence the lives of others. Through this influential dimension, leadership carries with it an enormous ethical responsibility (Northhouse, 2009).

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the study on ethical leadership in four rural schools in the Zululand District. I first provide the background to this study; proceeding to the problem statement; then the purpose and rationale for the study; the significance of this study; the study objectives and research questions; the definitions of key concepts of the study, as well as the demarcation of the study. Finally, I conclude the chapter by outlining the organisation of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Globally, educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world (Aikaman & Unterhalter, 2005). Since education is an investment, there is a significant positive correlation between education and economic-social productivity. When people are educated, their standards of living are likely to improve, since they are empowered to access productive ventures, which will ultimately lead to an improvement in their livelihoods. Poor quality schooling at the primary and secondary level in South Africa “severely limits the youth’s capacity to exploit further training opportunities. Thus, existing skills deficiencies among those who are the product of an underperforming school system (predominantly black youth) are likely to persist” (Spaull, 2013, p. 6). Furthermore, the National Planning Commission (NPC) 2012 argues that the quality of education for most black children is poor. This denies many pupils access to employment. It also reduces “the earnings potential and career mobility of those who do get jobs – and limits the potential dynamism of South African business” (NPC, 2012, p. 38).

The role of education therefore, is not just to impart knowledge and skills that enable the learners to function as economies and social change agents in society, but also to impart values, ideas, attitudes and aspirations important for natural development. South Africa’s education system experiences a range of problems extending beyond the simple issues of meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target two, which is to achieve universal primary education (United Nations, 2006). Our Education system is also suffering from poor quality outcomes, crime and other forms of unethical practices perpetrated by educators, school principals, school governing body members and other officials in the Education Department (Corruption Watch, 2013; Roane 2013; SACE Annual reports, 2009-2013).

Since Corruption Watch introduced its campaign to focus on corruption in schools in January 2013, more than 600 allegations of school corrupt activities have been received (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014). The categories of corruption indicate misuse of school funds as the most reported; followed by the pillaging of the national feeding scheme; favouritism/nepotism concerning staff appointments; procurement malpractices and selling of tests and examination documents (Corruption Watch, 2014). Furthermore, incidences of irregularities in school management are mounting daily when looking at the three latest sets of figures of the South African Council for Educators (SACE): from 413 complaints in the first report (2009) to 525 complaints in the last one (SACE Annual reports, 2009-2013). These SACE reports point out that complaints are mostly reported in the Western Cape and Gauteng; followed by those in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. In simple terms, it means most unethical activities occur in these provinces. Concerns reported include the misappropriation of public funds allocated for maintaining school buildings, upgrading learning materials and feeding learners.

Roane (2013) reports that some School Governing Bodies and principals are the main culprits in reported corrupt activities, as they use their positions of power to abuse both funds and resources allocated by the provincial education department towards projects to improve public education. Corruption is widely reported concerning principals' channelling state funds to their personal accounts, and abusing their power to conceal such corrupt acts (Roane, 2013). The constitutional right of learners to a basic education is thus compromised when funds are misused. Further, learners are bribed to do favours for educators (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014). A survey conducted in this regard (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014) indicated the prevalence of selling exam papers, especially in Mpumalanga (23%), and the misuse of school money or property in the Free State (30%), [as well as] the North-West provinces (31%). The majority (47%) of the participants in this survey indicated the school principal as the foremost persons behind such corruption (Corruption Watch, 2013). Financial mismanagement, theft of goods and corruption in procurement, including ghost educator salaries, bidding chains for school supplies and construction work are also reported (Brooks-Spector, 2014).

These unethical behaviours at school level do not only influence current learners, but also future generations, since a lack of quality education increases skills gaps already hampering economic growth in South Africa (Molteno Institute for Language and Literacy, 2014). The core business of the school is to develop a learner through teaching and learning (Department

of Education, 2005). Social-emotional competencies and ethical dispositions provide an essential foundation for life-long learners who can love learning and work (Beland, 2003; Cohen, 2001; Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004). These researchers all suggest that there are two core processes that promote children's school success and healthy development: (a) promoting children's social-emotional competencies and ethical dispositions throughout their school experience, and (b) creating safe, caring, participatory, and responsive school systems and homes. Therefore, schools should promote ethical behaviour so that learners shall be disposed to happy spaces where they are willing participants in the learning process and educators are ethical, inspiring and enthusiastic leaders.

It is crucial that school leadership steps-up ethically and morally to affect school society positively, in what Ciulla (2004) calls "the heart of leadership". Once the principal and educators behave unethically, for example, absent themselves from school or steal school resources, that behaviour hinders teaching and learning. Then it impacts direct to the quality of education in school. Ethical leadership involves leading in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others (Ciulla, 2004) and leaders have the influence to promote or inhibit such values. For this to happen, educators and other school leaders' morale and school climate deserve greater attention. There are leaders in schools that may in fact "say but not do" what is necessary and abuse power for private gain. In general, corruption is defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, which hurts everyone whose life, livelihood or happiness depends on the integrity of people in a position of authority (Lewis, 2011). Authority used in bad faith, fraudulently or dishonestly is prohibited by law (Hoexter, 2008). Power abuse, as set forth by Makumbe (1999), encapsulates the malicious, unaccountable, deceitful exercise of power. In line with common law principles, school principals should act in the best interests of schools they lead and ensure that professional standards are set and adhered to (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008), thereby placing their schools' interests ahead of their own. In order to elucidate how to act in the best interests of schools, Van der Merwe (2006) highlights the importance of moral or ethical leadership based on the creation of relationships around mutual needs, shared aspirations and values, rather than around power. Thus, leadership is considered ethical if it leads in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others (Trevino, Brown & Hartman 2003, p. 1). As leaders are by nature in a position of social power, ethical leadership focuses on how these leaders use their social power in the decisions they make, actions they engage in and ways they influence others (2003). Since leadership does not exist without power, leaders should be held accountable to those who gave them authority, as

well as to those affected. Only once leaders act in accountable manner can power be exercised with earnestness grounded in responsibility (Kessler, 2010). In emphasising such responsibility, De Klerk (2005) indicates that several South African schools are characterised by a total lack of morality leading, [including] non-accountability and an increasing ethical illiteracy.

More globally, a variety of unethical behaviours associated with educators have been reported—such as misappropriation of school funds, fraud, leakage of examination information before examinations are written, abuse of power and theft, all of which disturb the implementation of planned interventions within the education sector, and particularly progress towards Education for All (UNESCO, 2008, p. 56). The policy document, *Education for All by 2015*, is the result of governments, policymakers and educators who came together in Dakar in 2000 to discuss universal primary education. One of the identified goals was the achievement of universal primary education “ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality” (UNESCO, 2008, p. 56). According to Human Rights Watch (2001), in 2000 South Africa not only participated in the Dakar Conference but, along with other governments, pledged to ensure all South African children access to education.

The success of this goal depends on the provision of resources, gender equity, access, schools, curriculum, educator education, and educator quality. A variety of unethical behaviours associated with educators have been reported such as misappropriation of school funds, fraud, and leakage of examination information before examinations are written. According to Human Rights Watch (2001), educators can misuse their authority to sexually abuse girls, sometimes reinforcing sexual demands with threats of corporal punishment or promises of better grades, or even money. Girls are raped, sexually assaulted, abused, and sexually harassed by their male classmates and even by their educators. In South Africa, some girls have left school entirely as a result of their experiences with sexual abuse. Once the principal and educators behave unethically, for example, by absenting themselves from school or stealing school resources, that behaviour hinders teaching and learning. Then it impacts directly on the quality of education in school. Therefore, the universal goal that was planned to be achieved in 2015 “ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary

education of good quality” (UNESCO, 2008, p. 56) is compromised. Furthermore, quality can refer to both the inputs and the outputs of education, as Heyneveld and Craig (1996, p. 13 as cited by Spaul, 2013) explain: quality is a “concept comprising both changes in the environment in which education takes place and detectable gains in learners’ knowledge, skills and values”. While it is acknowledged that education should develop the “emotional and creative” capacities of children, and not only their cognitive faculties (UNESCO, 2005, p. 30), it is the latter which we can easily measure and for which we have objectively verifiable scientific evidence.

Educators are, and have always been, the primary locus of schooling systems around the world. Being the single most important element of the education system, the quality of a country’s educators is intimately related with the quality of its education system (Spaul, 2013). Similarly, a popular McKinsey & Company study finds that “The available evidence suggests that the main driver of the variation in pupil learning at school is the quality of the educators” (Barber & Mourshed, 2007, p. 12). All told, “the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its educators” (Barber & Mourshed, p. 41).

A quality educator, according to Spaul (2013), is someone who possesses the following four attributes (in no particular order):

- i. some requisite level of professionalism,
- ii. the inclination to teach,
- iii. the ability to teach, and therefore and,
- iv. the competence to teach.

Furthermore, educator quality is demonstrated by the convergence of curricular knowledge, sensitivity to student needs, thorough preparation, ethical behaviour and administrative organisation. A quality educator is expected to demonstrate these competencies. However, this ideal does not always occur. School principals greatly affect educator quality: “... the importance of educators’ work and their competence in performing it are crucially influenced by the quality of internal and external supervision” (UNESCO, 2008), which is mostly provided by the school leadership, especially the school principal. The unethical behaviour of educators that has been mentioned heretofore hinders the quality of education. This has a knock-on effect as the success of any educational system depends, in most cases, on the quality of the educators and the quality of ethical leadership provided by the school principals. If educators and school

principals demonstrate unethical behaviour, chances of achieving the goal of education for all will be slim.

Amongst others, Castro, Duthilleul and Caillods (2007) have identified educator absenteeism (often without a clear cause), lack of educator personal discipline, and poor classroom management as issues that have a severe impact on teaching and learning. Learners are often frustrated by other learners disrupting the teaching process; learners in classes where educators are absent do not receive appropriate instruction or are supervised by educators not prepared for these classes. Several studies cited by Castro, Duthilleul and Caillods (2007) outline the impact of educator absenteeism on learners such as: learner tardiness, learner absenteeism and a decline in learner performance. While some absenteeism is attributed to educator illnesses, other factors such as lack of educators, inability of educators to manage large classes or combined classes (Castro, *et al.*, 2007, p. 35). Moreover, classes left unattended even with educators present in the school (Castro et al., 2007, pp. 40-41) create adverse learning conditions for learners. Thus, there is no doubt that unethical behaviour such as educator-absenteeism hinders teaching and learning.

To conclude this section, with the above-mentioned allegations and reports about unethical behaviour of educators and school principals, one can reasonably deduce that some aspects of the education system in this country are in a crisis and something drastic needs to be done to address the un-ethical challenges at some schools. To promote ethical culture, the Department of Education (DOE) has enacted some policies to guide the behaviour of educators/school principals in schools and other officials in the Department of Education. The Ministry of Education has, in terms of section 3(4) (f) and (1) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), determined Norms and Standards for Educators as National Policy. Through this Act, the educators are expected to practise and promote an ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others (DOE, 1996). In addition, the South African Council of Educators has a Code of Conduct for educators which stipulates that they must act in a proper and becoming manner in such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute (SACE Act No. 31, 2000). Even though these policies have been enacted into law, several educators are still displaying unethical behaviours in schools and in the public (several cases of unethical conduct by educators are continually reported in the media). For example, in a certain area in Kwa-Zulu Natal, an educator was investigated for allegations of having sexual relations with pupils and handing out alcohol and marijuana to

them to cause trouble for the principal (eNCA Television News, 20 January 2015). Besides unethical behaviour that is demonstrated by educators, school principals are taken as the foremost persons behind unethical behaviour (Corruption Watch, 2013). As indicated in the introduction, school principals are involved in financial mismanagement, theft of goods and corruption in procurement, including facilitating the payment ghost educator salaries, rigging the bidding chains for school supplies and construction work, pillaging of the national feeding scheme; favouritism/nepotism and concerning staff appointments (Brooks-Spector, 2014 & Corruption Watch, 2014). In such cases, leaders should be a key source of ethical guidance for employees. In line with common law principles, principals should act in the best interests of schools and ensure that professional standards are set and adhered to (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008). This having been outlined, this study seeks to explore the perspectives, understanding and the practices of school principals and educators about ethical leadership in four schools (two primary schools and two secondary schools).

1.3 Location of the Study

The study was undertaken at four rural public schools at the Nongoma Circuit in the Zululand District, KwaZulu-Natal.

1.3.1 Dynamics of rural schools

It is noteworthy that Myende and Chikoko (2014) postulate that a rural school is any school found in a place led and governed by traditional leadership. Schools in rural settings are challenged by severe poverty (Howley & Howley, 2010; Maltzan, 2006; Tickamy, 2006), high levels of illiteracy and unemployment, poorly developed infrastructure, limited access to services (health, social welfare) and the looming presence of HIV and AIDS-related loss and grief, caretaking responsibilities and additional financial strain. Rurality remains a transitory concept dependent on either place-based conception (Chikoko, 2008). While Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008, p. 98) point out that poverty is one of the major characteristics of rurality in the South African context, Chikoko (2008, p.77) goes further to state that rural communities are often characterised by “*a cocktail of social ills*” (disease, poverty, low levels of education, limited facilities, etc.). Children in rural contexts of South Africa seem to be more vulnerable than others elsewhere. Rural schools as part of such communities would therefore be equally

marginalised and disadvantaged and therefore many learners become vulnerable (Chikoko & Khanare, 2012).

Rural schools have less equipment, fewer teaching resources and fewer specialised rooms such as libraries and science laboratories than urban schools. More schools in rural areas are without water, electricity and telephones than schools in urban areas. There are, however, some common aspects among rural areas across the world. According to Halsall (as cited by Masila, 2010), rural children tend to be at an educational disadvantage almost everywhere and he traces these disadvantages to economic as well as cultural reasons. Fleisch (2008) relates rural educators' testimonies that provide powerful evidence that links poverty to underachievement. According to Graaf (as cited by Masila, 2010), rural schools are poor quality schools where the basic necessities were lacking. He also contends that there are no facilities and that these are schools where many educators are not qualified to teach their subjects and some are not even interested in being qualified educators. Concurring with the foregoing contentions, Bot, Wilson and Dove (2001) state that many rural schools make use of water and sanitation that is unhygienic, giving rise to health concerns for both learners and educators. They also argue that the availability of electricity and telephones at schools have a significant impact on the quality of education.

Even when educators are teaching, the quality of their work may be lower. A study of schooling in rural South Africa found that, while 90% of educators claimed to be using a variety of active teaching methods, the responses from learners and the observations of the researchers strongly suggested that the majority of educators continued to use traditional, educator-centred methods of monologue and rote learning. Classroom activity was dominated by three modes: reading, writing and correcting (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). Rural educators often have less access to support services than their urban counterparts, and fewer opportunities to attend in-service courses. In some cases, they also have difficulty in accessing books and materials. In addition, because the parents tend, in general, to be less educated, they are less likely to notice and monitor the unethical behaviour of principals and educators.

I have personally noticed that most people in rural areas especially in Nongoma tend to be more submissive than others elsewhere. It is a common culture in rural areas to respect and not to question people in authority. Principals, educators and the department officials are "people in authority", according to the views of rural community. Even though people in rural areas notice unethical behaviour of educators and principals, they tend to tolerate it because of their cultural

common practice. They do not have the guts to confront situations. Based on my own observation as the person who was born and schooled in remote area and through my experience as an educator, HOD and Education Specialist for a number of years in rural areas I observed the following as the most common types of unethical behaviour in rural schools. 1) principals and educators having intimate relationships with learners, 2) principals and educators being involved in fraud and corruption, 3) principals not observing official hours of work; not always teaching, 4) malpractices when appointing educators and 5) and grade twelve examination cheating scandals.

As part of the of factors of concern that make a rural community more vulnerable and exposed to unethical behaviour practice by educators, most people in rural areas are not aware of their rights. For example, educators may have an intimate relationship with school children and the community perceive it as normal practice. Rural communities are less informed. Information is power. If they do not have information, they will not be able to make correct judgment. Rural communities are not aware of the policies which are meant to protect learners against unethical behaviour, such as South African Schools Act of 1996. Again, the community did not know that they have a right to just and fair administration (South African Constitution, 1996). In addition, monitoring by officials in rural areas does not occur as frequently as it does in urban areas, due to lack of resources and the long distance from department offices to rural schools and rural communities. Therefore, rural communities end up less equipped with relevant information.

Lack of literacy in rural areas may be the reason for school principal to steal school funds because School Governing Body (SGB) members, for want of literacy, could not easily notice unethical behaviour of the school principal. There is an unsettling observation (Howley & Howley, 2010; Maltzan, 2006 & Tickamy, 2006) that high levels of illiteracy, unemployment and poorly developed infrastructure remain a major challenge in rural areas to this day. Due to these challenges, most educators prefer to teach in urban areas than in rural areas. Therefore, shortage of qualified educators in rural areas force a rural community to tolerate unethical behaviour of the educators and school principals. This is partly because the community knows that once they act against the educator who demonstrated unethical behaviour, for them to get another educator will take some time.

Poverty may also increase the levels of unethical practice in rural areas. For instance, poverty may cause parents to accept the unethical behaviour (sexual relationship between the educator

and the learner) of the educator because of the “benefit” which comes with that. As Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008, p. 98) postulated, poverty is one of the major characteristics of rurality in the South African context. Several cases have been reported even on newspapers, where an educator would pay few thousand rands for impregnating a learner. Parents would then accept the money and close the case because they are desperate. Three Esiqiwini High School educators, in Mtubatuba, KwaZulu-Natal, have allegedly been involved in sexual relationships with learners, according to a report by Esa Alexander (2014). In 2013, an educator paid "damages" to a grade twelve girl's parents after he admitted having fathered her child (Esa Alexander, Sowetan newspaper, 2014).

In most African cultures, it is not strange for children to be raised by grandparents (Henderson, 2006). However, in the age of HIV and AIDS, this situation poses extreme difficulties, as grandparents or relatives are often not in a financial position to take on this additional responsibility (Foster, 2000; Department of Social Development, 2002; UNAIDS, UNICEF, USAID, 2003; Freeman & Nkomo, 2006). The grandparents who take care of these children are usually dependent on pension grants for their survival (Smart, 2003; Freeman & Nkomo, 2006; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007). Orphaned and Vulnerable Children who live with caregivers, who are usually extended family members, are reported as not receiving enough support in terms of care and affection (Avert, 2007; Cluver & Gardner, 2007). In some cases, children assume the role of being a parent to his siblings (i.e. a child-headed household) (Robson & Kanyanta, 2007; Van Dijk, 2008). In this case learners are becoming more vulnerable and educators tend to take advantage for them by having sexual relationships with them in an exchange of money because they have to support their siblings. In some of the rural areas there is an accepted practice that, if a school-going maiden introduces a partner to parents, it is acceptable to have a sexual relationship with the learner even if that partner is an educator. But it does not change the mere fact that is unethical. All these factors mentioned above, that is, to be less informed, high levels of illiteracy, poverty and cultural stereotypes makes rural a community more vulnerable, and those who are in authority like school principals and educators take advantage to them.

1.4 Problem Statement

Unethical behaviours such as corruption in South Africa seem to be occurring at unacceptable levels and these are reported regularly in all spheres of life e.g., among municipalities (Manala, 2010), police officers (Faull, 2007 & Staff reporter, 2012) and prominent even among sports players (SAPA, 2011). This is so severe that even Advocate Thuli Madonsela, the former Public Protector, commented that South Africa has reached a breaking point concerning the corruption that has reached epidemic proportions in both the public and private sectors (in Gould, 2012). Archbishop Ndungane similarly refers to corruption as a cancer that is eating up the South African nation (Reuters, 2012). Unethical behaviour in public schools is unfortunately not excluded from the corruption epidemic which was referred to above (Gould, 2012).

Highlighting the value of education in influencing children, Glenn (2011) and Wilson (2007) indicate that the youth can only become advocates for creating mind-shifts through the transformation of values, cultural beliefs and prejudices. Because of the immense importance of education for a society's future, Steyn, De Klerk and Du Plessis (2008, as cited by Serfontein and de Waal, 2015, p. 05) point out that a democratic society demands openness and honesty, specifically from school principals. Unethical behaviour such as corruption manifests itself as bribery, embezzlement, fraud, abuse of power, nepotism, conflict of interest, and favouritism (Lewis, 2011 & Oosthuizen, 2010). Corruption is therefore an umbrella term for "not following accepted standards of behaviour; displaying impairment of morals and showing improper conduct" (Pearsall & Hanks, 2006, p. 261). In the Education arena the practical examples of unethical behaviour at schools includes the following: (1) principals' dismissals for mismanaging approximately R5 millions of school funds (Department of Basic Education, 2013); (2) principals indirectly stealing food intended for impoverished learners through tenders with the education departments (Jansen, 2012); (3) 30 principals being currently investigated by SACE for misappropriating school funds, and (4) a principal suspended pending an investigation into alleged mismanagement, maladministration and provocation of parents and the community (SACE Annual Report, 2011/2012). To demonstrate the severity of this situation, Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) and Steyn *et al.* (2008) add further examples of rule-bending that are reported and related to school norms (educators fabricating learner marks; chronic absenteeism; favouritism in hiring or promotion practices; fraudulent cheques by a deputy-principal) and an inability to make sound decisions because of vested

interests). These examples indicate that not all school leaders' actions at schools always send positive ethical messages.

Likewise, Mangena (2012) also posits that a child who grows in an environment characterised by violence, intolerance and corruption, even if he or she were to have those innate abilities to lead, will be corrupted to the extent that the potential to become a good leader will diminish. The 2011 report compiled by the Centre for Development and Enterprise investigated the quantity and quality of South Africa's educators and synthesized the problems associated with educators and the teaching profession. Some of these problems which were unethical include the educators who do not teach/bunk classes; that do not teach sufficiently; educators who are poorly managed; educators who come late to schools or leave early; and do not teach on Fridays. Due to these and other reasons the study researchers conclude that "the shortage of good educators is a key reason why the education system is underperforming" (McCarthy & Bernstein, 2011, p.4). Ethical leadership is assumed to involve setting and pursuing ethical goals and influencing others in an ethical manner. Current approaches to ethical leadership have focused on the interpersonal component of leadership by analysing how ethical leaders exert their power and influence (Gardner, 2007 & Yukl, 2006). Previous researchers on leadership and ethics (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Trevino, Brown & Hartman, 2003) concluded that much has been written about ethics and leadership from a normative or philosophical perspective, suggesting what leaders should do. In the same vein, Mangena (2011) also emphasises in his study that the Western notions of ethical leadership focus more on the qualities and role of the leader while African notions of ethical leadership focus on both the role the leader plays in promoting communal/group interests and the role of those he or she leads.

Similarly, Ncube (2010) argues that most of the problems bedevilling Africa today are a result of lack of good ethical leadership. She, therefore, argues for *Ubuntu* as the panacea to Africa's problems. This calls to mind Malunga (2009), as cited by (Ncube 2010, p. 79), who points out that principle of *Ubuntu* as leadership philosophy emphasize collectivism and relationships over material things, including ownership of opportunities, responsibilities, and challenges. She proceeds to outline some of the *Ubuntu* principles (such as (1) modelling the way; (2) communal enterprise and a shared vision; (3) change and transformation; (4) interconnectedness and interdependency and empowerment; (5) collectivism and solidarity and (6) continuous integrated development) which she insists can be utilized to cultivate and nurture good leadership. In addition, Ncube argues that there is need for transformative

leadership in Africa which is premised on the philosophy of Ubuntu (2010: 77). While Mangena (2011) totally agrees with Ncube's central argument, he notes some gaps in the way in which she invites *Ubuntu* to deal with the problems of leadership in post-colonial Africa, which will be interrogated more on literature review part of this proposal.

Despite all the above knowledge about Ubuntu and other types of leadership, we still do not know what views, practices and experiences school principals and educators hold on ethical leadership in rural South African schools including the challenges they experience in managing their schools ethically. This study will be different in that it will seek to analyse ethical leadership in its entirety, the leadership component of setting ethical goals (Ethics and Accountability) and general ethical processes of influencing others to achieve specific ethical goals shared by a leader and his/her followers (role modelling).

1.5 Purpose and Rationale for the study

I have observed in my community that a number of creative and talented people failed to complete schooling, and as a result, remain stuck in the jobs they do not like. Some are serving many years in jail, while others are staying at home doing nothing and their children are suffering. That is the saddest part about the unethical behaviour of some educators. Even today, through my observation, a number of the learners drop-out from school because some educators have failed to accommodate their educational needs; educators absent themselves from school and some learners are emotionally, physically and sexually abused by the educators. Some learners cannot read and write not because they are intellectually incompetent but because they need little adjustment in curriculum delivery and in assessment. For example, learners who have dyslexia can be assessed orally in primary education and offered a scribe in Grade 12 (DOE, 2014). Once an educator fails to perform his/her duty to make it happen for the learning to take place, those learners who could not read and write will keep on repeating grades until they drop-out from the system. That drop out will not only influence the individual, but also the future generations since economic growth in any country is determined by the quality of education the learners receive. The worst part of allowing learners to drop-out from school as a result of unethical behaviour of educators, will contribute to increased levels of crime and corruption in the country.

School principals are regarded by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) not only as the key delivery agents of the professional management of their schools (Schools Act, 1996b: s.

16(3), but also concerning the preparation of plans to improve schools' academic performances (Schools Act, 1996b: s. 16A (1) (c) (i)). There is established consensus among scholars such as Greenfield (2004), Mncube, Harber and Du Plessis (2011) and Steyn (2012) that the contexts within which principals operate, play a major role at effective schools. In the midst of all these contexts, according to Bergman, *et al.* (2011), principals become either vehicles for positive change, or remain at the core of the problems experienced by their respective schools. Consequently, the school principal and the educators' failure to perform their duties is a form of misconduct, according to SACE. This deprives the learners' access to their right of basic education (Republic of South Africa, 1996a SASA, 1996b).

For anecdotal reference: during my schooling years, one of my standard five (grade seven) educators used to beat us up to fifty strokes/lashes on our bodies (as punishment for failing a class test). He usually gave us a test out of fifty marks, if you obtained five answers wrong, he would lay five strokes on our buttocks. I remember the other day when I obtained twenty nine out of fifty in my History test, the educator gave me twenty-one lashes, and I struggled to sit on my desk the entire week. Another incident happened when I was in secondary school; my principal had a sexual relationship with learners whom he used to call them "freshness". Those learners even developed behavioural/attitudinal problems with females' educators at school. They proudly perceived themselves as better than anyone else, even the educators. In this incident, the school principal was abusing his power by having unacceptable relationships with learners. That principal's behaviour also caused tension in the chain of command between staff members and learners. Consequently, the whole school lost focus and became a problematic school.

When I was an HOD, I was involved in an incident where an educator was attacked by a parent suspecting him of having a sexual relationship with his/her daughter. Other cases that I have observed include educators involved in using fraudulent certificates when seeking employment, bribery in school-based promotion posts, educators sleeping with the school principal in the exchange for promotion and some educators illegally supplying schools with the cleaning materials and stationery. There were also various reports and allegations of selling promotion reports to learners in order to be admitted to the next grade and leaking of test and examination papers. Even today, unethical behaviour of educators is still widely reported – recently (early 2015) a number of Grade Twelve learners did not receive their results due to the suspected cheating scandal that happened in many schools in KwaZulu-Natal and a few other provinces during the Grade Twelve examinations in 2014 (Sunday Times newspaper 28

January 2014). In the cases being investigated by the Department of Education, it is alleged both the educators and learners were involved, and this is highly unethical (eNCA News, January 2014). In addition, other allegations that have surfaced are that, some educators' rape and impregnate school girls, molest boys and force learners to have sex in front of them. Most educators teach at a pace which only accommodates learners who are average. Those who are highly gifted and slow are left behind. In fact, teaching is about acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support (DOE, EWP 6, 2001, p. 16). Each educator is expected to believe that each learner has the potential to learn and the right to achieve his potential in order to live a rich, self-actualizing life (Landsberg, 2006).

As an Education Specialist based in the District Office, I have observed and attended a number of cases perpetrated by educators for the past five years. One educator from secondary schools in the area impregnated a sixteen-year-old school girl who was doing grade 11 in the same school. Trying to cover the situation, the educator influenced the girl not to mention him but instead to shift the blame on a little boy in the area. In the same school, another educator impregnated a Grade 10 learner, and the ugly part of it, the educator forced the learner to abort the baby. These unethical behaviours of educators are sometimes suspected to cost the lives of young children due to a number of suicide cases that are reported in the District Office are caused by sexual relationships between educators and the learners. All the above-mentioned allegations and reports on the unethical behaviour of some educators lowers the quality of education while the offending educators put learners at risk. Previously, the teaching profession was treated as the most important and respected one and was even called the "noble profession". Because of the unethical behaviour of some school principals and educators in the work-place as well as in public, this ruins the reputation of the teaching profession.

Reports on ethical scandals and accusations that schools are susceptible to principals and educators perpetrating unethical behaviour triggered me to want to conduct this study. These accusations result in the current untenable situation of the South African schooling system facing tremendous problems and plagued with dysfunctionality at almost every level (Bloch, 2009; Fleisch, 2008; Taylor, 2006 & Van der Berg, 2008). Therefore, this study examined Ethical Leadership theories that are related to ethical leadership and explored the perspectives, experiences and practices of school principals and educators about ethical leadership in schools. Basically, in this study, the issue will not be simply what ethical and effective leaders do, but what educators and school leaders should confront regarding daily ethical behaviours,

and, in some cases, what they should overcome, in the rural settings to be ethical and effective (as school principals and educators).

Given the above problem, plus the stated purpose and rationale, this qualitative case study seeks to explore the understandings, perceptions and experiences of school principals and educators about ethical leadership approaches and practices in rural schools and what they suggest should be done to arrest the tide of unethical conduct among the various stakeholders in the four rural public schools in the Zululand District.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study hinges on the premise laid by Hargreaves and Harris (2015), who argue that more is known about leadership. Naturally, at its core, leadership is related to influence and power. Barring an organisational setting, a leader has by hierarchical status the legitimate right and obligation to exhibit a certain amount of decisive authority towards his subordinates (Ciulla, 2004). S/he allocates scarce resources, distributes working tasks, rewards, and disciplines. In order to understand leadership comprehensively, one has to acknowledge that the exhibition of leadership always bears the risk of potential misuse of those authoritative privileges. Academic literature delivers several examples of those ‘dark or toxic sides’ of leadership (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Leadership is about how dots are joined up to create system coherence as much as it is about the existence of the dots themselves (Fullan, 2005). School leadership is the most important determinant of learner achievement in the school (Leithwood, Seashore, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). Following that notion, leadership can also be looked at regarding ethical sensitivity. While I agree with the scholars such as Hargreaves and Harris (2015) that much is known about leadership, I argue that there is very little that is known about ethical leadership especially in rural schools (Cuellar & Giles, 2011; Neill & Bourke, 2010; Winston, 2007). Emerging from the literature on ethics and leadership little has been researched on ethical leadership specifically in schools, most of the studies seem to have been conducted in the business sector (Trevino, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006; Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008; Trevino, den Nieuwenboer & Kish-Gephart, 2014). Therefore, this study is important because it is hoped it will contribute to new knowledge about ethical leadership in schools—especially from a rural perspective.

Given the number of ethical scandals described above and their consequences, it should come as little or no surprise that social scientists have increasingly put business ethics and ethical

leadership on the forefront of their research agenda (see Brown & Trevino, 2006; Trevino, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006). An overwhelming majority of the ethical leadership literature has taken a prescriptive or normative approach, suggesting what leaders should do. However, this approach does not help in explaining why leaders sometimes deviate from such moral standards (De Cremer, Van Dijk & Pillutla, 2010). More recently, there has been a shift towards a more descriptive and predictive approach of ethical leadership (e.g., Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). The most common approach to leadership and ethics stems from Brown, Trevino, and colleagues (Brown & Trevino, 2006). In their seminal work, based on qualitative (Trevino, Brown & Hartman, 2000) and quantitative (Brown, *et al.*, 2005) research, they define ethical leadership as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown, *et al.*, 2005, p. 120).

Reviewing literature on authentic literature, existing work raises two main areas of differences to ethical leadership. First, the literature stresses the importance of a leader actively influencing followers’ behaviour by applying so-called transactional patterns. On the opposite, authentic leadership does not imply such an influential element. Second, authentic leadership focuses even more on leader characteristics and capabilities. Most importantly, authentic leadership emphasizes the significance of authenticity and self-awareness which are somewhat less related to ethical leadership (Brown & Trevino, 2006 & Trevino & Brown, 2007). On the other hand, Dane and Sonenshein (2014) unpack the nature and the consequences of ethical expertise, which they define ethical expertise as the degree to which one is knowledgeable about and skilled at applying moral values within a given work context. It is significant that Dane and Sonenshein propose that ethical expertise enables individuals to overcome a range of challenges associated with ethical decision-making. They draw a distinction between “convergent” and “divergent” ethical expertise (Dane & Sonenshein, 2014, p. 3). Ethical decision-making refers to complex and difficult ethical dilemma situations where people usually perceive it to be very difficult to judge the ethical behaviour (Maesschalck 2004, p. 474). Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005 argue that the four perspectives of paradigm (ethics of justice, critique, care and profession) should help educational administrators solve real-life, complex dilemmas that they frequently face in their schools and in their communities. By using different paradigms, educators should become aware of the perspectives they tend to use most often when solving ethical issues (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005, p. 7).

To conclude, leadership involves influence (Yukl, 2002): for one to understand how ethical leaders influence their followers and provide them with ethical guidance a little bit deeper in what characterizes ethical leaders will be important. According to (Trevino, *at al.*, 2003), there are two aspects to ethical leaders. First, they are moral persons, who are perceived as fair, honest, trustworthy and as principled decision-makers who care about people and the broader society. Second, ethical leaders are moral managers, who take proactive actions to influence the ethical behaviour of their subordinates. Such actions for instance include communicating the importance of ethics and values, but also using rewards and discipline to hold subordinates accountable for their actions. Two theories have been introduced to explain how, by acting in an ethical manner, leaders create ethical followers (Trevino & Brown, 2005). According to social learning theory (Bandura, 1986), people learn and imitate by observing the actions, attitudes and values of attractive and credible role models. Ethical leaders are such attractive role models, because they treat others in a fair, honest and caring way (Brown & Trevino, 2006), and this attractiveness is further enhanced by their power and status (Bandura, 1986). In addition, by practicing what they preach, ethical leaders are also perceived as credible role models (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Thus, for starters, leaders provide ethical guidance merely by being ethical role models.

Given the above background, problem statement, the purpose and rationale, this study is significant because it will contribute new knowledge by adding contributing perspectives from educators and school principals on ethical leadership in relation to a rural education district in KwaZulu-Natal. Research (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006 & De Cremer, Van Dijk, & Pillutla, 2010) indicates that rural areas are least researched; and so, such crucial data is significant if we are to comprehend the phenomenon of ethical leadership better. The findings of the study will be useful to the education policy makers and implementers in the various fields of education. This will also be useful to authorities who appoint school Principals as well as those who monitor the performance and functionality of schools.

1.7 Objectives of the study

This research project is driven by the following objectives:

- To elicit conceptualisations, practices and experiences of school principals and educators regarding ethical leadership in rural schools.

- To elicit reasons from participants reasons why, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, school principals and educators engage in unethical behaviour.
- To find out if the participants acquired sufficient education on ethics (if any) while training to become educators or if they were receiving adequate in-service training on ethics.
- To find out what and how, according to the participants, should be the ways to arrest the tide of unethical behaviour among school principals and educators at schools.

1.8 Critical research questions

This study seeks to find answers to the following critical questions:

- What are the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of school principals and educators regarding ethical leadership in rural schools?
- Why do school principals and educators, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, continue to engage in unethical behaviour?
- What are the views of participants regarding the effectiveness of education on ethics the educators and school principals acquired while training to become educators (if any) or do they believe they were receiving adequate in-service training on ethics in education?
- What and how do the participants suggest should be done to arrest the tide of unethical behaviour among school principals and educators at schools?

1.9 Clarification of key concepts

It is critically important to define key concepts used in the study as this will help the reader to appreciate and follow the argument that is being made (Mangena, 2011). The following key concepts; Leadership, Ethics and Ethical Leadership will be briefly defined below:

1.9.1 Leadership

Leadership has been described and defined in many ways, but a common perception among the varied accounts is that ethics is central to leadership (Ciulla, 2006; Piccolo, Greenbaum & Eissa, 2012). With so many definitions of leadership, the question has evolved from “what is leadership?” to “what is *good* leadership” (Ciulla, 2004, p. 13)? In her book, *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership*, Joanne Ciulla (2004) defines “*good leadership*” as “morally good and technically good or effective” (Ciulla, 2004, p. 13). Thus, Ciulla believes ethics is the heart of leadership and a *good* leader is ethical and effective.

Leadership is a relationship between people (Northouse, 2009). From this perspective, leadership is centered in the communication between leaders and followers rather than on the unique qualities of the leader. Thought of as ‘relationship’, leader becomes a process of collaboration that occurs between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2009, p. 03). Therefore, the ability to ethically influence others is a major determination of effective leadership. In his book, *Ethics and Leadership*, William Hitt (1990) lists three requirements of leaders that allow them to capitalise on their ability to influence ethical conduct. These three requirements are to “(1) achieve an understanding of ethics; (2) serve as a role model in making ethical decisions; and (3) develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff” (Hitt, 1990, p. 4).

It stands to reason, then, that leadership in general can be defined as the process of influencing others to achieve specific goals shared by a leader and his/her followers (Gardner, 2007; Locke, 2003 & Yukl, 2006) and thus comprises two main components, for examples, the task-oriented component of setting goals and making strategic decisions and the interpersonal component of guiding others toward these goals. Similarly, Mangena further states that *leadership* is about both influencing and being influenced by others. It is about taking on board the views of the masses (Mangena, 2011).

1.9.2 Ethics

Mangena (2011) argues that the definition of *ethical leadership* requires us to define ethics first as *ethical leadership* as a unique leadership quality which is relatively new in contemporary society. According to Mangena (2011), readers are mostly interested in knowing what *ethical leadership* entails. He therefore posits that it will be like putting the cart before the horse to define *ethical leadership* before defining the term *ethical*. To this end, the term *ethical* originates from the term *ethics* (Greek *techne ethike*) which is the scientific study of morality or the field of philosophical research that has morality as its object of study (Capurro, 2009, p.2). By *morality* is meant the habitually practised customs, that is, behavioural rules and values in each society regarding what is considered as good or bad for oneself, for others and for the society in its various facets (Assmann, 2000).

1.9.3 Ethical leadership

Leadership is considered ethical if it leads in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others (Trevino, Brown & Hartman 2003, p. 1). As leaders are by nature in a position of social power, *ethical leadership* focuses on how these leaders use their social power in the decisions they make, actions they engage in and ways they influence others (2003, p. 1). Leaders who are ethical are people-oriented and are also aware of how their decisions impact others as they use their social power to serve the greater good instead of self-serving interests (2003, p. 1). Ethical leadership, as further defined by Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005), captures employees' perceptions of ethical behaviour inferred from the leader's conduct. More specifically, ethical leadership is defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making" (2005, p. 120). To act in a normatively appropriate manner is to act consistently with general expectations regarding how leaders should behave in a work context. For example, "normatively appropriate" implies that leaders are fair, honest, principled, and trustworthy in taking responsibility for their own actions, and use rewards and punishments where appropriate to hold subordinates responsible for their actions. At the same time, normatively appropriate conduct is deliberately vague because expectations regarding correct behaviour depend on the organizational context (Brown et al., 2005). The last part of the definition reflects the fact that

ethical leaders consider the ethical consequences of their decisions, and make principled and fair choices that can be observed and emulated by others (Bass & Avolio, 2000).

1.10 Delimitations of the study

Pajares (2006) explains that delimitation addresses how a study was narrowed in scope, that is, how it is bounded. In addition, delimitations are the boundaries which the researcher sets to limit the generalisability of findings. Further, delimitations are restrictions that a researcher imposes prior to the inception of the study. For the purposes of this study, it was delimited to only four schools (two primary and two secondary schools in the Nongoma Circuit of the Zululand District). Further, the target population for the study was comprised only of school principals, SMT members and educators. Other stakeholders such as learners, parents and members of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were not be involved. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to other schools or districts in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

1.11 Outline of the study

This study is organised into nine chapters which are laid out as follows:

Chapter One is an introductory chapter which provides the background to the study, the study focus, the problem statement, the research aims and critical questions guiding the study, as well as the motivation and rationale for the study. It is also in this chapter that I define a few key concepts used which form the basis of this study. It also provides the organisation of the thesis and concludes with a chapter summary.

Chapter Two reviews international, continental and national literature pertinent to ethical leadership.

Chapter Three presents and discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study which are: Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical Leadership and Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model.

Chapter Four consists of a detailed discussion of all the methodological issues relating to the research enterprise underpinning this study. The multiple case study design is introduced, as

are the methods of data generation and analysis. This chapter also includes a section on the trustworthiness of data, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

Chapter Five consists of data presentation and discussion on data generated from school principals.

Chapter Six consists of data presentation and discussion on data generated from SMT members.

Chapter Seven consists of data presentation and discussion on data generated from PL1 educators.

Chapter Eight consists of presentation and discussion of key themes emerging from the findings.

Chapter Nine provides the lessons learned, recommendations and implications for further studies.

1.12 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of this study. I presented the background to and the rationale for doing this study. I also contextualised the problem that I identified in literature through a literature review of the unethical behaviour of principals, educators and other stakeholders within the education department. Thereafter, I provided definitions of key concepts as well as demarcation of the study. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of the chapters of the study. In the next chapter, I review literature on ethical leadership which is relevant to my study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented an introduction and the background of this study. In this chapter, I review literature on ethical leadership which is relevant to my study. I commence by discussing leadership and management in detail under the following themes: School leadership and management as a process, school leadership, management and ethics, ethical leadership and school management that promotes ethical leadership in South African schools, policy landscapes to promote ethical leadership in South African schools, the dimensions of ethical leadership, ethical leadership and followers and integrity. Finally, I discuss ethical decision-making in school leadership and conclude with a summary of the chapter.

2.2 School leadership and management as a process

A school leader is a person who dramatically affects the thoughts, feelings and/or behaviours of a significant number of individuals (Castro & Moore, 2015). Further, authors further posit that school principals are expected to guide their schools through the challenges posed by an increasingly complex environment. Principals are expected to respond to increasingly diverse learner characteristics, including economic backgrounds, physical and mental disability and cultural backgrounds. According to Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015), a principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by acting with integrity, with fairness and in an ethical manner. They further state that principals should demonstrate integrity, dedication, humility, openness, creativity, honesty, forward-thinking competence, inspiration, intelligence fairness and assertiveness. In a related sense, Stefkovich and Begley (2007, p.53) posit that “the profession must mainly focus on students’ best interest” and educational leaders “should recognize children’s rights, acknowledge children’s diversity and respect while making responsible choices.” Therefore, a school leader needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). Before I embark on the details flowing from the literature that pertains to ethical leadership, I will first discuss leadership in general. According to Yukl (2006, p. 8) leadership is “the process of influencing

others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives”. The idea of influence put forward by Yukl (2006) is also supported by Northouse (2010, p. 3) who defines leadership as “a process whereby individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. These definitions suggest several components central to the phenomenon of leadership. Some of these are: (a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership as involving influencing others, (c) that leadership happens within the context of a group, (d) leadership involves goal attainment, and (e) that goals are shared by leaders and their followers. The very act of defining leadership as a process suggests that leadership is not a characteristic or trait with which only a few certain people are endowed at birth. In other words, to be categorised as good leaders, school leaders must be able to connect and detect the inner states of the individual in the institution in order to be positively influence them. Leadership touches the thoughts and feelings, it has a power to control and drive individual behaviour. Therefore, to be able to connect and detect the inner states of the individual in the team will increase the spirit of acceptance between the team members that will lead to the achievement of a common goal.

Defining leadership as a process clearly suggests that leadership is a transactional event that occurs between leaders and their followers. Effective leaders are expected to motivate followers towards exerting extra effort; increasing followers’ job satisfaction; improving their performance beyond expectation; increasing followers’ perceived leader effectiveness; and cultivating creativity and innovation in organisations (Zaidatol Akmalih, Sdeghi & Habibah, 2011; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). In addition, both Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) propound theories of transformational leadership that regard effective leaders as those who cause followers to identify with the goals articulated by the leaders (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). The actions that leaders can undertake to be effective leaders can be organised into three clusters: task-oriented actions (i.e., performance or initiating structure); people-oriented actions (i.e., maintenance or consideration); and ethical actions (i.e., moral character) (Hui, Chiu, Yu, Cheng & Tse, 2007). Examples of performance actions include making timely decisions; motivating employees; giving directions; drawing up plans and meeting deadlines. Maintenance actions comprise respecting the decisions of subordinates; resolving conflicts; listening to views of subordinates; helping subordinates to achieve organisational and sometimes personal goals; and being supportive when subordinates encounter work problems (Hui *et al.*, 2007).

Likewise, Yukl (2011) views leadership as the ability to influence followers, peers and bosses in a work or organizational context. Interestingly, Yukl further posits that without influence, it is impossible to be a leader. Of course, having influence means that there is a greater need on the part of leaders to exercise their influence ethically. Leadership operates in groups which means that it is about influencing a group of people who are engaged in a common goal or purpose (Yukl 2011, p. 4). In his book, *Ethics and Leadership*, William Hitt (1990) lists three requirements of leaders that allow them to capitalise on their ability to influence ethical conduct. These three requirements are “(1) achieve an understanding of ethics; (2) serve as a role model in making ethical decisions; and (3) develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff” (Hitt, 1990, p. 4). Leadership is the process of influencing others to achieve specific goals shared by a leader and his/her followers (Yukl, 2006; Gardner, 2007) and thus comprises two main components; (1) the task oriented component of setting goals and making strategic decisions and the (2) interpersonal component of guiding others toward these goals. Accordingly, ethical leadership is assumed to involve setting and pursuing ethical goals and influencing others in an ethical manner (Yukl, 2011).

Leadership includes the achievement of goals. In other words, the extent to which the organisation achieves its goals and performs its task is the most general measures of leadership effectiveness (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). Effective leaders should be capable of engaging followers fully in the organisational strategies. For leaders to be effective requires good relationships with followers as these relationships enhance followers’ wellbeing and work performance. In addition, these relationships may possibly connect followers to their group more closely through loyalty, gratefulness and a sense of inclusion (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). In short, leadership is about directing a group of people towards the accomplishment of a task or the reaching of an endpoint through various ethically based means. Leaders direct their energies and the energies of their followers to the achievement of something together (Yukl, 2011). Based on the literature on ethical leadership I can conclude by stating that, for the leader to be effective and to influence ethical conduct she/he must first understand the concept ethics before developing and implementing the plan of action. Failing to understand the ethics may lead to leaders’ energies and the energies of their followers to the achievement of something different because the activities on the action plan must be aligned with the goal which is the influence ethical conduct. So, if the leader does not have a clear understanding of ethics, the development and implementation of an action plan will be impossible.

In addition, Brown (2014) posits that the goals that work best conform to certain attributes or characteristics. They are difficult and challenging, but not impossible to accomplish. They are clear and easily understood. All the involved employees need to know what is expected of them if they are to accomplish the goals. Leaders and followers share objectives (Yukl, 2006), leaders must make sure that everybody knows what the goal is and how to get there. Brown (2014) further states that goal-setting will be successful only if the goals are properly developed and the individuals trying to achieve the goals are committed to them. The main reason for studying leadership is to determine effective leadership which is imperative to all organisations including educational institutions (Boonzaier, 2008). Leadership effectiveness is the successful exercise of personal influence by one or more people that result in accomplishing organisational objectives congruent with the organisation's mission while earning the general approval of its stakeholders (Cooper & Nirenberg, 2012). Further, according to Yukl (2013), there are ten most fundamental leadership functions for enhancing collective work in teams and organisations and these are that: (1) effective leaders assist employees in interpreting the meaning and relevancy of events and to identify emerging threats and opportunities; (2) Effective leaders help to create alignment on objectives and strategies; (3) effective leaders build task commitment, enthusiasm and optimism; (4) effective leaders foster mutual respect, trust and cooperation; (5) effective leaders strengthen a collective identity for their group or organisation by creating a unique identity and resolving issues of membership in consistency with this identity; (6) effective leaders help employees to organise, perform and coordinate activities efficiently; (7) effective leaders encourage and facilitate collective learning and innovation; (8) effective leaders promote and defend unit interests and help to obtain necessary resources and support; (9) effective leaders develop employees' skills and empower them to become change agents and leaders themselves and that (10) effective leaders set an example of moral behaviour, and take necessary actions to promote social justice. Leadership means that leaders work with their followers to achieve objectives that they all share. Leaders who are willing to expend time and effort in determining appropriate goals will find these goals achieved more effectively and easily, if followers and leaders work together (Yukl, 2011).

Finally, leaders are not better than followers, nor are they above followers. Leadership is a relationship between people. Therefore, the ability to ethically influence others is a major determination of effective leadership. On the contrary, leaders and followers are intertwined in a way that requires them to be understood in their relationship with each other and as a

collective body of two or more people (Dubrin, 2007; Yukl, 2011). Plato already saw this quite clearly in his “Statesman”, where he noted that people are not sheep, and leaders are not shepherds; instead he (Plato) regarded the leader as a weaver, whose main task was to weave together different kinds of people into the fabric of society (Plato, 1971, as cited in Ciulla, 2004, p. 322). The above paragraph clearly indicates that people are unlike physical resources and need to be treated differently as they have feelings, are influenced by relationships, are motivated, need to be communicated with and react to conflict and change. If people leadership and management are viewed from the unique context of South Africa, the philosophies related to Ubuntu (the importance of the individual as part of the group) particularly need to be understood and considered. As I posited before, leadership also touches feelings and thoughts. As a result, it has a power to influence the individual behaviour. So, I understand the notion that leaders are not better than followers, nor are they above followers. Based on the complexity and the diversity of followers in our days, I therefore view a leader as an educator, a coach and a counsellor to followers. I therefore agree with Northouse (2009) that leaders must have certain traits and skills which separate them from the average person.

2.3 School leadership, management and ethics

From definitions in the literature, I realise that leadership (1) is a process, (2) involves influence, (3) occurs within a group context, (4) involves guiding and directing followers towards goal attainment and (5) is visionary, inspirational, invitational and transformational. Based on the literature on ethical leadership in organisations worldwide, the realisation appears to be dawning that good ethics is synonymous with good leadership, implying that the emphasis is increasingly on values based and ethical leadership. In supporting this statement Bush and Middlewood (2005, p. 4) state clearly that “*leadership* should be grounded in firm personal and professional values”. As leaders in education, school principals and educators need to set the moral tone in their schools. On the one hand, it has been noted that Menkes (2011) defines leadership as realizing potential in others and oneself. Moreover, he suggests moving from the old definition of leadership, which emphasizes the leader’s influence over others, and proposes a cycle of exchange and growth between leaders and followers (Menkes, 2011).

On the other hand, the term “management” seems to be favoured when referring to the actions and processes that need to be in place in order to reach the goals of the organisation, leadership

places the focus on getting the people to move towards those goals. John Kotter (1996) states that good management brings about order and consistency by drawing up plans, designing organisational structures and monitoring results. In line with this, House (1977) adds to the preceding description of management the following dimensions: implementing a vision, the development of a strategy, coordinating and staffing and handling day-to-day problems. The two authors above award the following attributes to leadership: coping with change, developing a vision, giving direction, aligning the staff, communicating the vision and inspiring them to overcome the hurdles. Leadership, therefore is the ability to influence people towards the achievement of the goals.

Likewise, Kotterman's (2006) research findings demonstrate that differentiating leaders and managers in large organizations is rather complex, mainly because people favour managerial skills as opposed to leadership skills. Basically, individuals assume that managing is easier than leading. Further, Kotterman (2006) suggests that individuals within any given organization have little understanding of the differences between the role of the manager and the leader. Finally, he states that successful management is an important job and it should be respected, further emphasizing that it should not be confused with leadership (Kotterman, 2006). In this context, Potts (2001) goes even further to state that leaders are more important than managers, mainly because of ethical behaviour. According to Potts, management has no defining moral or ethical dimension, and only serves the interests of individual groups. The only concern of management is survival. Thus, if ethics is taken out of leadership, what is left is management (Potts, 2001). The majority of the attempts to define management follow the same old actions of (1) doing things right, (2) planning and budgeting, (3) processes and systems, (4) organising and staffing, (5) control and problem solving, and (6) producing order, predictability, and the results expected by stakeholders (Osland, et al., 2007). In contrast Mintzberg (2009) criticizes the separation between management and leadership, and he states that leadership is management practiced with success. Further, findings from his research point that management is still sustained by past behaviour. He also destigmatizes management by stipulating its formal authority and status. In his concept, the manager performs three roles, which are (a) interpersonal roles, (b) informational roles, and (c) decisional roles (Mintzberg, 2009). Interpersonal roles relate to the manager's position as a liaison and a leader. Informational roles refer to the manager's monitoring role, disseminating information, and acting as a spokesperson. Decisional roles relate to the manager's entrepreneurial skills, handling of disturbance, resource allocation, and negotiating skills (Mintzberg, 2009). Researching

leadership and management proves to be confusing, since authors publish manuscripts from a perspective that implies a) that on occasion the leader and the manager are not the same individual; b) that in other instances the leader and the manager are the same individual, and c) some managers are leaders, but others are not. Some authors simply use leader and manager as interchangeable words, and thus, imply the two roles belong to the same individual (Sahin, 2012; Cater, Lang, & Szabo, 2013; Huhtala, Kangas, Lamsa, & Feldt, 2013).

Further, some scholars clearly state that management and leadership are used interchangeably, that there is some degree of overlap, question the two concepts, and admit the ongoing scholarly debate (Buttigieg & West, 2013). The latter go a step further and state that managers are referred to as risk-averse bureaucrats and leaders are referred to as inspirational visionaries. Mintzberg (2009) proposes that the manager has interpersonal roles and one of them is to be the leader (Mintzberg, 2009).

This calls to mind Joanne Ciulla (2004, p.13) who, in her book, *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership*, defines *good* as “morally good and technically good or effective”. Further, Ciulla (2004) believes ethics is the heart of institutional leadership and a *good* leader should be ethical and effective. Authors have described and defined ethical leadership in many ways, but a common thread among the varied accounts is that it has to do with influence and ethical behaviour is central to leadership (Piccolo, Greenbaum & Eissa, 2012). Ethics are the moral principles that govern an individual’s way of thinking and acting (Mitchell, 2012, as cited in Castro & Moore, 2015). Ethics can also be defined as that branch of philosophy dealing with values that relate to human conduct, especially with respect to the rightness or wrongness of specific actions and to the goodness or badness of the motives for and ends of, such actions (Gebler, 2010).

Furthermore, Van Zyl and Boshoff (2010) claim that leadership sets the example as behavioural role models and their philosophies and behaviour resultantly can be seen to affect the ethical behaviour of employees. It could be argued that all approaches to leadership and change should be underpinned by a set of ethical values that influence the actions of leaders and the consequences of change initiatives (Burnes & Jackson, 2011; Burnes & Oswick, 2012). Leaders consequently have a critical role to play to promote ethical behaviour in their institutions, especially in education, as the 21st century educational leader faces the intimidating task of remaining ethical while continuing a voyage that combines the leader’s personal and professional beliefs (Cuellar & Giles, 2012). As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, an educational leader needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role

model, having an intellectual influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). Research has demonstrated a link between an individual's ethical perspectives and his/her leadership style (Castro & Moore, 2015, p. 55). For the leader to be able to influence people or followers, they have to be trusted. You cannot be a leader without followers; followers must first *choose* to accept a leader before leadership may commence. Followers accept leaders they can trust. Trust is considered the glue of leadership and promotes long-term success (Waggoner, 2010). Trust is usually gained in two ways. First, followers look up at a leader's history and observe them in the present. A trustworthy past and present is realistic with good ethics (Waggoner, 2010). Secondly, according to Maxwell (2014, p. 12), "People buy into the leader, then the vision". The people find the leader and then the dream. That's how the Law of Buy-In works. People don't at first follow worthy causes. They follow worthy leaders who promote worthy causes they can believe in. People buy into the leader first, then the leader's vision (Maxwell, 2014).

By understanding the ethics of leadership, we gain a better understanding of leadership, because some of the central issues in ethics are also central to leadership. These include the personal challenges of authenticity, self-interest and self-discipline, moral obligations related to justice, duty, competence and the greatest good (Ciulla, 2004, p. 302). Good ethics build and continue from prior behaviour that enforces the positive characteristics that promote trust. This identity developed with good ethics promotes long-term success because more trust equals more effective leadership. Without good ethics, it is extremely difficult for a leader to develop integrity, authenticity, an identity or other traits that produce effective leadership. Without these characteristics, it is impossible for a leader to develop trust. Without the glue of ethical leadership, it is very unlikely that a leader will be effective. As can be observed by now, good personal ethics are the backbone of effective leadership. The abundant variables that determine effective leadership are affected by good ethics. Without ethics, a leader is likely to fail and with ethics a leader is more likely to develop effective leadership (Waggoner, 2010).

2.4 Ethical Leadership and school management

It is important to note, at the outset, that Ciulla (2004) extends the definition of the concept "leadership" to "what is good leadership". As I elucidated in the introduction of this chapter, in her book, *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership*, Ciulla (2004) defines *good* as "morally good and

technically good or effective” (Ciulla, 2004, p. 13). She believes ethics are the heart of leadership and a *good* leader is ethical and effective. Thus, ethics are central to leadership precisely because they involve the process of influencing others to accomplish goals in ways that ultimately shape the values, climate and culture of an organisation (Northouse, 2010). Therefore, the ability to ethically influence others is a major determination of effective leadership. Ethics give people a sense of truth and positively affect people’s behaviour (Waggoner, 2010).

In the past, the ethical dimensions of leadership have gained an increased level of interest in scholarly as well as practice-oriented literature (Brown & Trevino, 2006; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Kalshoven, 2011; Den Hartog & De Hoogh, Eisenbeiss, 2012). The theoretical reference points to most of current research on leadership and ethics as the concept of ethical leadership is forwarded (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). Their definition of ethical leadership focuses on normatively appropriate conduct of leaders and the promotion of that same behaviour to followers serves as the theoretical foundation numerous studies ground on. Subsequently, recent scholarly work focused on investigating the effects ethical leadership may have on the organisation (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009; Hannah, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). Empirical results concerning the relationships between ethical leadership and job satisfaction (Brown, *et al.*, 2005), and organizational citizenship behaviour (Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008) have been documented. The outlined relation between ethical leadership and job satisfaction has been confirmed in previous studies (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Rowold *et al.*, 2009; Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008).

Reports about the unethical conduct of educators, as have been discussed in the introductory chapter, are widely publicised (Steyn, *et al.* 2008; Oosthuizen, 2010; Bergman & Gravett, 2011; Lewis, 2011; Jansen, 2012; Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2013; Corruption Watch, 2014; Seedat, van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009) & Grant, 2009). The world has seen that there are unethical and even toxic leaders, who exploit the loopholes in management systems and seek to fulfil their personal desires at the expense of their organisations and its employees (Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007). Given the prominent ethical scandals in virtually every type of organisation widely publicised cases of ethical abuses have involved large corporations and the “misuse of company resources, misrepresentation of financial performance, and aggressive and illegal marketing practices” (Winston, 2005, p. 238). Such issues and their likely causes are well documented in the general and business literature.

Ethical scandals in the banking sector and the oil industry have aroused strong public concern and led to a lively debate on business ethics, making ethical leadership one of the “hot topics” in organisational practice (Eisenbeiss 2012, p. 792). Now more than ever before, the importance of an ethical dimension of leadership seems obvious. Eisenbeiss (2012) further accentuates the aspect of altruism and regards ethical leaders as engaging in virtuous behaviours beneficial to others and refraining from acts that could harm others. This ethical restraint readily strikes resonance with Ciulla (1995), who views the respect for the rights and dignity of others as an essential characteristic of ethical leadership. Adhering to Aristotle's work, Northouse (2001) suggests five principles of ethical leadership: ethical leaders respect others, serve others, are concerned about justice, manifest honesty and build the community. Driven by widely publicised cases of unethical behaviours in organisations, research on business ethics has gained prominence in organisational psychology (Brown, *et. al.* 2005). Researchers have developed and tested a number of theories and frameworks designed to explain why people make unethical decisions in the workplace (Trevino, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006; Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008; Trevino, den Nieuwenboer & Kish-Gephart, 2014).

Similarly, organisations are expected to assume responsibility and to increase their efforts in demonstrating ethical governance and promoting ethical leadership throughout the organizational hierarchy (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Barders & Salvador, 2009). The pertinent literature reveals that current research on ethical leadership focuses on an empirical-descriptive Western-based perspective. The widely-shared definition of ethical leadership, “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct and the promotion of such conduct to followers” appears to be rather vague as it does not specify any norms ethical leaders can refer to (Eisenbeiss, 2012, p. 792). Thus, researchers such as Giessner and van Quaquebeke (2010) have called for more collaboration between normative and descriptive approaches in ethics research and demanded specification of the relevant norms for ethical leadership (Eisenbeiss, 2012).

In addition, a number of studies have been conducted on ethical leadership (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006; Resick, Hanges, Dickson, & Mitchelson, 2006; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Yukl, 2010; Kalshoven, 2011; Zhu *et al.*, 2011; Den Hartog & De Hoogh, Eisenbeiss, 2012), and this emergent interest in ethical leadership could be ascribed to the significant impact leaders have on employees’ conduct in organisations and, ultimately, on the organisation’s performance (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). According to researchers such as Ardichvili and Jondle (2009), Hannah, et al.,

2011), ethical leadership is of great importance to handling moral incidents and fostering employees' ethical behaviours in organisations given that good leaders are obliged to set a moral example for their followers. Studies examining ethical leadership are significantly associated to employees' prosocial behaviour, counterproductive behaviour, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Zhu, 2008). The research on ethical leadership to date seem to suggest that ethical leaders inspire high levels of commitment; trust and foster desirable behaviours among followers (Brown, *et al.* 2005; Den Hartog & De Hoogh 2009; Piccolo, *et al.* 2010; Kalshoven, *et al.* 2011). Researchers have also found positive relationships between ethical leadership and both employee in-role and extra-role performance (Detert, *et al.*, 2007; Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011), employee satisfaction with the leader and their willingness to report problems to the management (Brown, *et al.*, 2005), employee voice behaviour (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009), ethical climate and employee job satisfaction (Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009), employee willingness to make an extra effort and leader effectiveness (Toor & Ofori, 2009), employee perception of job characteristics, such as task significance, autonomy, and employee motivation (Piccolo, *et al.*, 2010) as well as employee trust and their affective and normative commitment (Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2009; Neubert, *et al.*, 2009).

Researchers have explained different the types of leadership such as transactional leadership, transformational, servant, authentic leadership, etc. Each leadership type has its own value depending upon its different features, characteristics, etc. (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006; Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008). The major distinguishing feature of ethical leadership is its stress on characterised moral perception, moral judgment, moral management, and moral impression (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008). Ethical leadership is mostly related with self-actualization, moral relationship, moral perception and unbiased dealing (Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008).

So, ethical leadership is based on personal characteristics and qualities of the leader, which are perceived by their employees as normatively appropriate like honesty and fairness. Resick, *et al.* (2006) also describe ethical leaders as people-oriented. The people orientation component in ethical leadership reflects genuinely caring about, respecting, and supporting subordinates and where possible ensuring that their needs are met (Trevino, *et al.*, 2003, as cited in Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). Acting in a normatively appropriate manner is to act consistently with general expectations regarding how leaders should behave in a work context. 'Normatively

appropriate', implies that leaders are fair, honest, principled, and trustworthy in taking responsibility for their actions, and use rewards and punishments where appropriate to hold subordinates responsible for their actions (Piccolo, *et al.*, 2012). Ethical leaders, as described by Brown and Trevino (2006), should exhibit traits that are consistent with normative ethical principles such as honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness. These leaders should make fair and principled decisions, and actively consider the appropriateness of those decisions in terms of their ethical consequences. Such leaders will demonstrate moral management behaviour, communicate ethics, reward employees for ethical compliance, and not compromise ethical standards in the pursuit of short-term organisational performance (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Piccolo, *et al.*, 2012). According to Brown, *et al.*, (2005), leaders become attractive, credible and legitimate as ethical role models in part by using behaviour that is normatively appropriate and that suggests altruistic motivation to stimulate ethical follower behaviour. If such normatively appropriate behaviour is exhibited by principals, it could very well prompt ethical behaviour in educators that share the transactional space of the school, in this instance.

In addition, ethical leaders provide examples of ethical behaviour for their followers by serving as legitimate role models of behaviour and ethical norms (Spangenberg & Theron, 2005). Secondly, ethical leaders reward positive and helpful behaviours, which in turn incentivize the followers to act in ethical ways. An ethical leader exhibits ethical behaviour and promotes ethical conduct through explicit reinforcement of the behaviour. Reinforcement can be done through instilling ethical codes, policies and rules in a visible manner in the organisation, as well as through rewarding the compliance of employees' behaviour with these codes, policies and rules (Spangenberg & Theron, 2005).

In creating a fair and trustful environment, ethical leaders consequently stimulate ethical and pro-social employee behaviours in organisations (Mayer, *et al.*, 2009; Stouten, *et al.*, 2012; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Acting fairly and in a trustworthy manner has been demonstrative of employees' integrity levels (Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2009). Also, Resick, *et al.* (2006) have recognised integrity (which is going to be discussed in detail late in this chapter) as a key attribute of ethical leaders' personal conduct as a determining factor in the effective employment of codes of conduct, policies, procedures and support structures to achieve fair and trustful environment. An ethical leader, as a moral exemplar, encourages subordinates to display moral behaviours not only by coaching and guidance but by rewards and sanctions that can elicit the followers' compliance to do so (Brown & Trevino, 2006;

Mayer, *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, ethical leaders are principled decision-makers of great virtue such as integrity, determination, fairness, honesty, humility, tolerance, enthusiasm, courage and responsibility that are worthy of emulation by followers (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Mayer, *et al.*, 2012).

According to De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) an ethical leader needs to be a proactive communicator about what is (un-)ethical behaviour, be transparent and openly share information. This will provide followers with constructive and useful feedback about what is expected from them in order to thrive within companies or, as the case may be, within the whole school matrix. This feedback also enhances followers' self-efficacy because ethical leaders are very consistent in clarifying how followers' actions and tasks can contribute to achieving the organisation's goals (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Furthermore, ethical leaders are characterised as honest, caring and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions (Trevino & Brown, 2006). They also set clear and ethical standards, which are frequently communicated to their followers. In addition, ethical leaders treat their followers with respect, keep promises, allow employees to have an input in decisions and clarify expectations and responsibilities (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). Likewise, ethical leadership consists of four central ethical orientations which are: (1) humane orientation, (2) justice orientation, (3) responsibility and sustainability orientation, and (4) moderation orientation (Eisenbeiss, 2012). All four central ethical orientations present established leadership attributes in general leadership literature in the social sciences as well. However, a comparative analysis with social scientific literature on ethical leadership shows that current approaches have concentrated on humane and justice orientations but have neglected both responsibility and sustainability orientation and moderation orientation (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Humane orientation signifies treating others with respect and dignity and seeing them as ends rather than means. It may also be explicated as a leaders' full recognition of the rights of others, their compassionateness and concern about people's wellbeing. Current approaches to ethical leadership refer to different aspects of humane orientation by stressing the importance of leader altruism, leader respect for the rights and dignity of others or leader-people orientation (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011; Eisenbeiss furthermore, includes making fair and consistent decisions with no discrimination against others (Trevino, *et al.*, 2003; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Yukl, 2010; Eisenbeiss, 2012). It has been postulated that, for procedures to be fair they have to be applied consistently regarding people and time; to be non-biased by third parties; and to include gathering and employing accurate information (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Justice orientation

can be revealed through leaders' consistent decision making; respect for diversity; and non-discriminatory treatment for others regarding sexual differences, nationality, religion, political beliefs, economic or social status. Leader justice has been proposed as a core element of ethical leadership (Northouse, 2010; Eisenbeiss, 2012). Johnson (2009) also emphasised justice as a central principle for ethical leaders as it results in fair and equal treatment of others (Eisenbeiss, 2012).

Responsibility and sustainability orientation resemble leaders' long-term views on success and their concern for the welfare of society and the environment (Eisenbeiss, 2012). It concerns a leader's sense of responsibility towards himself and the community and may be expressed by a long-term focus on organisational performance; reflection upon the impact of decisions on society and the natural environment; and consideration of the interests and needs of future generations (Ferdig, 2007; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011; Eisenbeiss, 2012). The responsibility and sustainability orientation reflects a leader's position towards more indefinite and distal targets (i.e., society and the common good) and seems to refer particularly to the leadership component of setting goals.

Moderation orientation refers to restraint and humility, which balances leader behaviours. It can be elicited through leaders' self-control, their ability to restrain emotions and personal desires, humility, as well as careful and wise attempts to find a balance between organisational objectives (ethically neutral or positive) and stakeholder interests (e.g., between financial, profit and socially responsible investment; between short-term and long-term objectives; between organisational and team interests). As an ethical principle, moderation orientation aims to balance legitimate organisational objectives and/or stakeholder interests (Eisenbeiss, 2012). All four central ethical orientations present established leadership attributes in *general leadership literature in the social sciences* as well (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Ferdig, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011). However, a comparative analysis with *social scientific literature on ethical leadership* (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Resick, Hanges, Dickson, & Mitchelson, 2006; Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011) showed that current approaches have concentrated on humane and justice orientation but have neglected both responsibility and sustainability orientation and moderation orientation.

The aforementioned neglect led Eisenbeiss (2012) to critique the current ethical leadership literature based on conceptual vagueness of the ethical leadership construct as its focus is on

on a Western-based perspective and the focus on the leadership component of influencing others. The author further states that, the most widely used definition of ethical leadership in the social sciences takes a relativistic approach to ethical leadership, centering on “normatively appropriate behaviour” and leaving open what norms ethical leaders may refer to when promoting them to followers emphasized that they intentionally chose this vague phrasing because normatively appropriate behaviour can vary across organizational or societal culture. However, he claims that ethical leadership behaviour does not always mean to compliance with the prevalent organisational norms (Eisenbeiss, 2012, p. 793). I agree with this, because according to Ashforth, Gioia, Robinson & Trevino (2008) not all organisational values are moral. Eisenbeiss further argues that all the current approaches to ethical leadership proceed from a Western perspective on ethical leadership and do not consider viewpoints, principles or values of other cultural clusters. For instance, in his normative approach to ethical leadership, Northouse (2001) proposes five principles/characteristics of ethical leadership and these are: (1) respect others; (2) serve others; (3) are concerned about justice; (4) manifest honesty; (5) and build community. Yet, this homogeneous sample selection reflects only views of Western cultures, businesses and industries, presenting a one-dimensional access to the concept. Eastern cultures may consider other values and principles essential for ethical leadership (Eisenbeiss, 2012)

Another important concept in predicting the extent to which leaders express the central orientations is their cognitive moral development (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Cognitive moral development refers to individuals’ thoughts concerning right or wrong behaviour and their capacity for principled reasoning (Kohlberg, Boshoff & Van Zyl, 2011; Eisenbeiss, 2012). It is worth noting that Kohlberg (1969) proposed a six-stage model for cognitive moral development that delineates the development of individuals’ increasingly sophisticated and complex cognitive processes of moral decision-making which will be discussed further in the next chapter as part of the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study. Most social scientific empirical-descriptive research on ethical leadership is based on the work conducted by Brown, *et al.* (2005, 2006), using their definition of ethical leadership and applying the corresponding measure (Detert, *et al.*, 2007; Mayer, *et al.*, 2009; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Piccolo, *et al.*, 2010). Social scientific literature on ethical leadership also acknowledges the importance of leader justice and fairness. Brown, *et al.*, (2005) and Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) include fairness in the terms of principled choices and non-favouritism in their conceptualization of ethical leadership while Northouse (2010) proposes leader justice as one

of the core elements of ethical leadership. Likewise, Johnson (2009) emphasises justice as a central principle for ethical leaders as it results in fair and equal treatment of others. Furthermore, Eisenbeiss (2012) posits that current approaches to ethical leadership have focused on the interpersonal component of leadership by analysing how ethical leaders exert their power and influence. However, using ethical ways and means to influence others may be necessary but may not suffice for ethical leadership (Eisenbeiss, 2012). For instance, in some cases, school principals may treat their direct educators and learners in an ethical manner by acting fairly and compassionately and by promoting their personal and professional development but, at the same time, set and communicate unethical goals such as achieving great results in short-term without sufficient resources and a well-articulated strategy. In principle, it is immoral to expect great results without sufficient support and infrastructure because, indirectly, you are driving educators to cheat and to teach for the examination not for the helictical development of the learner. To analyse ethical leadership in its entirety, I feel that the leadership component of setting ethical goals should be given more research attention. Linda, Brown and Hartman (2003) state that ethical leaders are concerned about the means used to achieve their business goals, not just the ends. In addition, ethical leaders may be seen beyond quick-fix solutions that might deliver immediate, bottom-line results but also could be detrimental to the organisation/business and its reputation over the long term.

In setting ethical goals, four central principles of ethical leadership which are presented above that cover a large variance in the various approaches seem to be relevant: humane orientation, justice orientation, responsibility and sustainability orientation, and moderation orientation (Eisenbeiss, 2012). These are relevant for leadership in the terms of setting goals or influencing others (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Resick, Hanges, Dickson & Mitchelson, 2006; Ferdig, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Kalshoven, Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2011). Social scientific approaches to ethical leadership have rarely considered responsibility and sustainability aspects in their empirical-descriptive research. Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) include leader environment orientation in their measure of ethical leadership. However, they cover only a narrow aspect of responsibility and sustainability orientation, notably efficient handling of resources. By contrast, Ferdig (2007) illuminates the concept of sustainable leadership and proposes that such leaders reach beyond their self-interests and account for the long-term viability of interconnected living systems. Sustainability is based on the original idea of a more appropriate use of environmental socio-economic resources to enable future generations to also enjoy those resources instead of exhausting them in the short term (Bell & Morse, 2003). Responsibility

and sustainability orientation taps specifically the leadership component of setting goals and making strategic decisions and therein may mirror the leader's concern about long-term success, the welfare of the wider community, and environmental protection (Eisenbeiss, 2012; Brown, 2014). I also feel that issue of responsibility and sustainability are equally important as human and justice orientation. So, to full address the issue of ethical leadership all four central principles of ethical leadership will be considered in future.

In addition, Mangena (2011) also emphasises that the Western notions of ethical leadership focus more on the qualities and role of the leader while African notions of ethical leadership focus on both the role the leader plays in promoting communal/group interests and the role of those he or she leads. Ncube (2010) in her study *Ubuntu a Transformative Leadership Philosophy*, blames the post-colonial state for causing conflicts, failures, scandals and corruption which have led to the general suffering of the citizenry including women in most African countries. In the main, she argues that these problems are a result of the lack of good leadership (Ncube, 2010). She further argues that most of the problems bedeviling Africa today are a result of lack of good leadership. She, therefore, argues for Ubuntu as the solution to Africa's problems. She proceeds to outline some of the Ubuntu principles which are; modelling the way, communal enterprise and a shared vision, change and transformation, interconnectedness, interdependency and empowerment, collectivism and solidarity and continuous integrated development which she thinks can be utilised to cultivate and nurture good leadership. Ncube's argument here is that there is a need for transformative leadership in Africa which is premised on the philosophy of Ubuntu (Ncube, 2010, p. 77). For her, simply put, Ubuntu as a transformative leadership philosophy requires leaders to model the way for others. Malunga (2009) adds that as a role model, the leader legitimizes his or her relationship by a commitment to such African values as honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, compassion, empathy, dignity and respect for others. Ubuntu is thus treated as the ethical benchmark of African societies and provides a guide to the Africans in whatever settings they are in (Mangena, 2007). In a much broader sense, Mkhize (2008) enters the fray referring to Ubuntu as the process of becoming a human being and calls for a mode of being in the world which requires each person to maintain social justice, to be empathetic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience. In a much more refined sense, Ubuntu is further described by Bekker (2008) as the capacity for compassion, reciprocity, and dignity. I understand the point put forward by Ncube that Ubuntu be taken as the solution to Africa's problems. But we also have to take into consideration that Ubuntu is very abstract unless in its praxis; one of the elements

of Ubuntu is to be empathetic to others. Most of the time I have taken notice of the fact that people are opportunistic: they will manipulate leaders who are empathetic. Therefore, I feel that the four central ethical orientations which are: (1) humane orientation, (2) justice orientation, (3) responsibility and sustainability orientation, and (4) moderation orientation put forward by Eisenbeiss, (2012) together with Ubuntu will be the solution to Africa's problems in general and the Zululand District schools in particular.

Following the findings of Ncube's (2010) study, Mangena (2011) conducted a study on ethical theory that he thinks is best suited for the post-colonial African leader. His study relies on Martin Prozesky's ten qualities of ubuntu which are: toughness, gentleness, hospitality, rejecting aggression and shunning the ugly side of competitiveness, bearing no grudges and being strong and resilient (Prozesky, 2003, pp. 6-7). Mangena (2011) argues that most of the challenges facing African leadership today are not only requiring Ubuntu as a general transformative philosophy as stated by Ncube (2010) but as a specific ethical guide that leads to the promotion of the common good of the entire community. Mangena also argues that ethical leadership is an urgent matter in Africa because of the leadership challenges facing the continent today which have led to vices such as despotism, violence, ethnic wars, and corruption (Mangena, 2011, p. 105). These may well extend to problems that have besieged school leadership and management in the Zululand District.

Although Mangena agrees with Ncube's central argument on the need to marshal Ubuntu to transform leadership in Africa, he also notes some gaps in the way in which she invites Ubuntu to deal with the problem/s of leadership in post-colonial Africa. Mangena (2011) states that "It is important to observe that while Western notions of ethical leadership focus more on the qualities and role of the leader, African notions of ethical leadership focus on both the role the leader plays in promoting communal/group interests and the role of those he or she leads". He further argues that the Western leadership philosophies and their theoretical underpinnings do not apply in Africa because the essence of the Western perspective on ethical leadership is grounded on the concept of efficacy (Mangena, 2011, pp. 101 -105). I am in agreement with Mangena because as Africans our focus is the maximum benefit for the community, not the maximum benefit for the individuals. But the role and quality of the leader is also essential in influencing the team in working towards the communal goal. Mangena further outlines what he considers to be the qualities of Ubuntu which can be utilized to build a leadership ethic which can transform leadership in post-colonial Africa. He argues that although Ncube's six Ubuntu principles of (1) modelling the way; (2) communal enterprise and a shared vision; (3)

change and transformation; (4) interconnectedness and interdependency and empowerment; (5) collectivism and solidarity and (6) continuous integrated development) are important for the transformation of African Leadership, they must be contextualised and nuanced in order to be adequately explained how Ubuntu as a leadership philosophy can be transformative (Mangena 2011).

Pointedly, Mangena states that leaders in Africa are not supposed to be “Great men” but servants of the people. Servant leadership is ultimately about servitude and that the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by those who are led in response to the clear servant stature of the leader (Greenleaf, Beazley, Beggs & Spearsl., 2003). Servant leadership stands in line with approaches to mere ideal leadership (Graham, 1991). In the theory of servant leadership, the key focus of leader attention is towards his/her respective followers rather than economic goals of the team or organization. The servant leader’s main motivation is towards the exhibition of leadership influence on the development, empowerment, and nurture of followers. Accordingly, a vital characteristic of ethical leaders is a strong sense of concern for others. Empirical work by Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008), Walumbwa, Hartnell & Oke, (2010) investigated the potential beneficial impact of servant leadership on organizational outcome criteria and revealed positive relations with followers’ organizational citizenship behaviour, self-efficacy, commitment to the leader, and perceived justice climate (Liden, Wayne, Zhao & Henderson, 2008; Walumbwa, Hartnell & Oke, 2010).

It is useful to note that while Western philosophies of leadership implore leaders to influence others and make decisions that impact others, leaders in Africa must follow the collective will of the masses (Mangena, 2011). This means that a leader must have a shared vision with his or her followers and this shared vision is captured in the philosophy of Ubuntu (Mangena 2011). I agree with Mangena about the African notion of leadership but the Western philosophies of leadership whereby leadership implore leaders to influence others and make decisions that impact others will also be taken in to consideration in building a new African ethical leadership philosophy. Donald Brown once said in his book *Experiential Approach to Organisational Development*: “Change is coming down upon us like an avalanche, and most people are utterly unprepared to cope with it, tomorrow’s world will be different from today’s, calling for new organizational approach” (Brown, 2014, p. 01). This shows that at some point people need a “great” or “super” leader to be able to cope with change. Effective leadership influences

process, stimulates change in subordinate's attitudes and values, augments followers' self-efficacy beliefs and fosters the internalization of the leaders' vision by utilizing strategies of empowerment (Resick, *et al*, 2006: 345-359). Effectiveness is the degree of goal achievement in every organisation. Leaders are expected to set the tone for the organisation and influence the communication and decision making.

2.5 Policy landscape that promote ethics and ethical leadership in South African schools.

The question of ethics is linked with the history of mankind. Ethics deal with the character, conduct, and morals of human beings (Northhouse, 2010 & Reina, 2010). The ethical question deals with good or bad and right or wrong behaviour. In other words, ethics have to do with the actions of human beings and therefore prompts adjustments in the actions and attitudes of the public manager in relation to colleagues and the public, as well as in relation to self (PSA, 1994). Ethical values and integrity as a basic value as well as the rule of law are key elements of every democratic society (RSA, 1996). There are number of laws and policies that have passed in South Africa to promote ethical leadership. It is however, essential to provide an overview of some of the laws and policies in order to show that these directives could indeed serve as supporting mechanisms for developing and sustaining high levels of professional ethical behaviour in schools.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 in section 195(1) (a) of the Constitution requires that “a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained”. Further, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) envisages that the actions of public officials be in line with the values and principles such as (transparency, fairness, consultation, etc.) in public administration and be upheld by all public personnel in the provisioning of services to society (South Africa, 1996). The Constitution is the highest law and can be identified as the foundation of service delivery in the South African Public Service (Constitution 1996, Section 2). In practice, this indicates that all laws, actions and institutions exercising governmental power are subject to the Constitution. These principles (transparency, fairness, consultation, etc.) in particular enhance ethical conduct of public officials including educators in South Africa.

The Public Service Act 103 of 1994, Section 20 promotes high standards of ethical behaviour and further stipulates procedures to be followed when dealing with ineffective and inefficient

officials. Section 20 of the Act also deals with misconduct and is a prime example of the efforts to limit corruption. In addition, the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999, Section 2 aims to secure transparency and accountability in order to promote the sound management of expenditure, revenue, liabilities and assets. Financial management should therefore be sound in order to prevent corrupt activities.

Furthermore, the Department of Education (DOE) has enacted laws and policies to guide the behaviour of educators in schools and other officials in the Department of Education. The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, Section 17 stipulates various Acts which are regarded as forms of misconduct such as that an educator must be dismissed if he/she found guilty of having a sexual relationship with a learner. Besides, Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), through this Act, the educators are expected to practise and promote an ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others. Furthermore, the SACE Act No. 31 of 2000 provides for a Code of Professional Ethics for educators who are expected to act in an ethical, proper and becoming manner such that they do not bring the teaching profession into disrepute. SACE like all the other professional councils, maintains and improve standards of professional conduct through its code of professional ethics. Section 5 (c) (i) commands that SACE “must compile, maintain and from time to time review a code of professional ethics for educators who are registered or provisionally registered with the council”. In addition, the Standards for Principals (2016) also demands that school principals should subscribe to ethical standards which should guide their behaviour as they lead and manage their schools. School principals are expected to model a good behaviour to be a good example to educators.

2.6 Dimensions of ethical leadership

There are seven dimensions of ethical leadership (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011). First, fairness is an important form of ethical leader behaviour. Ethical leaders act with integrity and treat others fairly. According to Brown et al., (2005) ethical leaders receive positive evaluations from followers, because they treat employees in a fair and respectful way, and create a trusting environment that positively influences employees’ satisfaction and dedication (Weaver, Trevino & Agle, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Hence, ethical leadership also involves aspects of fairness such as to consider three general steps: description, reflection

and prescription, and to gather more information about the issue. When obtaining information, it is important to stay neutral Waggoner (2010).

In creating a fair and trustful environment, ethical leaders stimulate ethical and prosocial employee behaviours (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). They make principled and fair choices, are trustworthy and honest, do not practise favouritism, and take responsibility for their own actions (Trevino, *et al.*, 2003; Brown, *et al.*, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Secondly, ethical leaders allow subordinates a say in decision-making and listen to their ideas and concerns and provide followers with voice (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2009). Sharing power also allows subordinates more control and makes them less dependent on their leaders (Yukl, 2006). Humbleness in a leader is a facet of human decency and probity. The leader should not employ symbols of grandeur to gain respect and force others into silence/submission. The leader should demonstrate competence along with caring so that respect is truly won (Khoza, 2011, p. 81). Third, ethical leaders are transparent and engage in open communication which known as role clarification (Brown, *et al.*, 2005). Ethical leaders clarify responsibilities, expectations, and performance goals, so that subordinates know what is expected from them and understand when their performance is up to par. Subordinates do not worry unnecessarily about unclear expectations and know how they can meaningfully contribute to meeting the unit's or organization's goals. Ethical and skilful principals focus their attention on the key aspects of the school which is vision and communicate it clearly and convincingly to all the other members of the school. They also invite other stakeholders through participatory communication strategies (Leithwood, 2003). Still on this point of open communication, ethical leaders believe and trust their followers. It's one thing to communicate to people because you believe you have something of value to say but it is another to communicate with them because you believe they add value to the school. To acknowledge followers' opinions also helps to build the culture of shared vision and indicate how much you care/respect for them.

At the core of the shared culture and value addition are attributes that Ladkin (2008, p. 64) considers as important, namely, leading skilfully and ethically in such a fashion as to exhibit three dominant attributes: "visionary" in recognizing themselves and the situations, "consistency" similarity among himself and other's ideas and communication, and "rationality" achievement of goals. Ladkin (2008, p. 64) further posits that leading skilfully "engages in recreation of the ethical aspects of a leader's efforts" and whether the leader's

purpose fits with the full awareness of the human atmosphere. An important one is people orientation or having a true concern for people (Trevino, *et al.*, 2003). The people orientation component in ethical leadership suggests genuinely caring about, respecting and supporting subordinates and where possible, ensuring that their needs are met (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011). Before the leader reflects genuinely, caring about the followers, he must first sense what is happening among people and know their hopes, fears and concerns. According to Maxwell (2014, p. 11), “leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand” which suggests, for leaders to be effective, they need to connect with the people. Maxwell (2014) further states that, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care about them.” You develop credibility with people when you connect with them and demonstrate that you genuinely care and want to help them. And thus, they usually respond in kind and want to help in return. In addition to fairness, power sharing and role clarification (De Hoogh & Den Hartog (2008), Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) also include people-oriented behaviour, integrity, ethical guidance, and concern for sustainability as attributes required of an ethical leader.

Ethical leadership also incorporates two important dimensions and these are: the moral person dimension which overlaps with the ethical dimensions inherent to more traditional leadership styles and the other dimension is that of ethical leadership as moral manager (Trevino, Hartman & Brown, 2000). Moral persons also possess personal traits and characteristics such as honesty, integrity and trustworthiness (Toor & Ofori, 2009; Brown & Mitchell, 2010).

2.6.1 Moral person dimension

In his book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, Maxwell states that “people buy into the leader, then the vision” (2014, p. 12). People do not at first follow worthy causes. They follow worthy leaders who promote worthy causes they can believe in. People buy into the leader first, then the leader’s vision. Then the first aspect of ethical leadership is that of the moral person, which represents observer’s perception of the leader’s personal traits, character and altruistic motivation (Trevino, Hartman & Brown, 2000). True leadership always begins with the inner person. People can sense the depth of a person’s character. The moral person aspect is reflected as fair and principled decision-makers, caring about the wider society, including other people, and leaders that behave ethically in both personal and professional life (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leaders are thought to embody certain traits which represent the characteristics

that people display consistently over time. Studies on the attributes of perceived ethical leaders recognize integrity as a central characteristic of the individual leader (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2008).

2.6.1.1 Personality Traits

According to Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011), there are five personality traits and these are: agreeableness, openness, extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism. Agreeableness describes an individual as *being altruistic, trusting, kind and cooperative*. Openness describes an individual as being imaginative, curious, artistic, and insightful. Extraversion describes an individual as being active, assertive, energetic and outgoing. Conscientiousness describes an individual as being dependable, responsible, dutiful, and determined. Lastly, neuroticism describes an individual as being anxious, hostile, and impulsive and stressed (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). In addition, Brown and Trevino (2006) posit that two of the Big Five; which are main leadership personality are positively related with ethical leadership, namely agreeableness and conscientiousness. Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) also concurs with Brown and Trevino (2006) that agreeableness and conscientiousness are closely related to ethical leadership. “Agreeableness” reflects the tendencies of being kind, trusting and taking the needs of the other human beings into account. Likewise, individuals with high levels of agreeableness are described as caring, empathic to others and sharing their power. Furthermore, Jensen-Campbell and Graziano (2001, as cited in Yate, 2011) state that individual’s high on agreeableness are more likely to use constructive tactics to help others. The use of constructive tactics is a key component of ethical leadership (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Leaders high in agreeableness tend to be trustworthy and display a concern for others. Those rated high in conscientiousness tend to be goal oriented, self-disciplined, and well organized. This may lead to an ability to define leader-follower constructive interactions, suggesting a capacity to function as contingent reward leaders, thus affecting employee attitudes and conduct (Bono & Judge, 2004, as cited in Yate, 2011).

Furthermore, individuals high on conscientiousness also show character traits like those possessed by ethical leaders. For instance, they think carefully before acting, adhere closely to their moral obligations, do the right things not only for themselves and treat their fellow co-workers in a consistent way (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). In addition, emotional stability might be a beneficial character trait for person to cope with their own emotions more effectively during their work (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011).

2.6.1.2 Personality and leader effectiveness

According to Armit, Loewenthal, Eckert, West and Lee (2015, p. 7), the first major stream of research reflects a long-standing fascination with the personality traits of those who become leaders. From this broader leadership research evidence, they have identified core personality traits associated with leadership effectiveness, including (Yukl, 2013 as cited in Armit, *et al*, 2015, p. 7):

High energy level and stress tolerance; they have high levels of stamina and can work effectively over long periods. They are also less affected by conflicts, crisis events and pressure, maintaining equilibrium more than others. They can think relatively calmly in crisis situations and communicate that calmness and confidence to others. *Self-confidence*; they believe they can be effective in difficult situations and give those they lead a sense of confidence and efficacy. They tend to be optimistic and confident in the face of difficulties. They are more likely to deal with difficult situations rather than deny or avoid them. However, excessive self-confidence or self-esteem can make leaders prone to making risky or wrong decisions. *Internal locus of control*; they believe what happens around them is more under their control than the control of external forces and are motivated to act to influence and control events. This is associated with a tendency to be proactive rather than passive. They also believe they can influence, persuade and motivate others and win their allegiance to courses of action. *Emotional maturity*; they have emotional maturity and intelligence in the sense that they are less prone to moodiness, irritability and angry outbursts. They are positive and optimistic, communicating their positivity to others. They are aware of their own strengths, weaknesses and typical reactions to situations. *Personal integrity*; consistency between espoused values and behaviour is characteristic of those with high levels of personal integrity, along with honesty, transparency and trustworthiness. Such leaders also keep promises to staff and other stakeholder groups and tend not to use their leadership primarily out of self-interest. *Socialized power motivation*; they seek power, but primarily to achieve organisational objectives and to support the growth, development and advancement of those they lead. *Achievement orientation*; high achievement orientation is associated with leadership effectiveness but this is not a linear relationship. Managers with a very high achievement orientation can become insensitive to the effects of their desires on those around them who feel driven by their leader's ambition. *Low needs for affiliation*; this refers to the need to be liked and accepted by others,

which effective leaders do not have. Those who did would be likely to put their need to be liked ahead of making good decisions in difficult situations or ahead of having to manage poor performance among their followers. Neither do they have extremely low affiliation needs, which would mean they were uncaring of others and their opinions.

Another body of research (Boyatzis, 1982, as cited in Armit, Loewenthal, Eckert, West and Lee, (2015) has focused on the competencies related to leadership effectiveness, including motives, skills, knowledge, self-image and some specific behaviours. The research suggests the following competencies are important for leaders: (1) Technical competence wins the respect of followers. It includes knowledge about the organization; Department of Education and schools, its strategy, structure and processes; knowledge about the curriculum; curriculum adjustment, teaching methods and teaching strategies; and knowledge about the organisation's environment. (2) Conceptual skills mean understanding the complex environments of organisations (both internal and external) to be able make sense of situations rather than deem them too complex to be comprehended or managed. The ability to analyse, plan and make decisions is central to organisational functioning, so leaders who have conceptual skills will increase the confidence of followers within the organisation. (3) Interpersonal skills are vital: understanding the needs and feelings of followers; educators, monitoring the effects of own behaviours and being aware of emotional reactions to others are essential. To lead effectively, a leader should be ethical and moral. To lead you need to have a 'feel' for people, you need to have empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority Khoza, 2012, p. xix).

2.6.1.3 Trait versus Process

Statements such as "She is a born leader" and "He was born to lead" imply a perspective toward leadership that is trait based. Yukl (2006, p. 13) states that the trait approach "emphasizes leaders' attributes such as personality, motives, values, and skills. Underlying this approach was the assumption that some people are natural leaders, endowed with certain traits not possessed by other people". This perspective is also supported by Kendra Kelly as she outlines eight leadership theories, she puts forward a "Great man" theory of leadership. For Kelly assumes that the capacity for leadership is inherent that great leaders are born, not made (Kelly, 2011, p. 1). The assumption here is that people inherit certain qualities and traits that make them better suited to leadership. This is very different from describing leadership as a process.

The trait viewpoint suggests that leadership is inherent in a few select people and that leadership is restricted to only those few who have special talents with which they are born (Yukl, 2006). Mangena (2011) argues that this position is untenable because it is not always the case that the leader is judged by his or her individual capacity but sometimes by environmental circumstances. Thus, good environments create good leaders. Mangena believes that a child who grows in an environment characterized by violence, intolerance and corruption, even if he or she were to have those innate abilities to lead will be corrupted to the extent that the potential to become a good leader will die. Mangena concludes that “great leaders are made, not born” (Mangena, 2011, p. 102). I therefore believe that both perspectives whether leader build or made contribute to be a good leader, but my point is that it is much easier to for a moral person to be groomed to become a great leader than the one who were born and bred in the corruption environment without principles and values. In addition, being a good leader requires a lot of hard work and effort and the environment plays an important role in nurturing leaders of good standing.

To sum up, according to De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), personal characteristics are related to ethical leadership, such as the leader’s personality and upbringing. Personal traits fall into five groups of leader social responsibility; moral legal standard of conduct, internal obligation, concern for others, concern about consequences, and self-judgment. De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) have expected that individual attributes of the leader social responsibility, which are categorized as moral legal standard of conduct, internal obligation, concern for others, concern about consequences, and self-judgment would be positively related to ethical leadership behaviour (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011, p. 299). Armit, *et al*, (2015, p. 8) posit that only a few studies have rigorously tested the assumption that personality traits and competencies have a causal impact on leader effectiveness or emergence as a leader. For at least some personality traits and competencies, it is not clear which comes first, being in a leadership position or possessing the trait or competency.

2.6.2 Moral manager dimension

Besides the moral person, Trevino, *et al*. (2000) labelled the other part of ethical leadership as moral manager. Moral persons possess personal traits and characteristics such as honesty, integrity and trustworthiness. Beyond these personality attributes and traits, ethical leadership can be distinguished from more traditional leadership styles through the moral manager

dimension. The moral manager dimension of ethical leadership captures the proactive behaviours by which the ethical leader influences the followers' actions and beliefs about ethics. These proactive efforts include communicating high performance expectations, role-modelling behaviours that are normatively appropriate and good for the collective, using reinforcement systems to hold people responsible for appropriate conduct, and treating people fairly and with respect (Toor & Ofori, 2009; Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Brown & Trevino, 2006; Eisenbeiss, 2012; Naidoo, 2012 and Piccolo, *et al.*, (2012) further posit that a moral manager sets ethics on the agenda and visibly uses and communicates ethics to stimulate followers to make them more accountable for their behaviour. Moral managers really try to set an example for their followers on how to behave ethically by making ethical decisions and by rewarding the desirable outcome (Brown & Trevino, 2005).

A number of authors (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Piccolo, *et al.*, 2010) have identified three key elements of the moral manager dimension of ethical leadership and these are: (1) The leaders' role in modelling through visible action, reinforcement, and communication about ethics and values; (2) is reinforcement of ethical standards through rewards and discipline (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison 2005) and (3) two-way communication about both the positive and the negative aspects of ethics and integrity (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison 2005; De Hoogh & den Hartog 2008). Such communication entails highlighting the ethical dimension of decisions, tasks, and situations, clarifying norms and role expectations, and providing guidance on the appropriate course of action (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Piccolo, *et al.*, 2010). Practice what you preach, that is where credibility comes from. Importantly, the leaders must have an idea that the learning experience of reinforcement lies not just with the person(s) being rewarded or punished, but also occurs vicariously and anticipatory amongst those that observe the reinforcement actions of the leader (Trevino, & Harrison 2005; Cooper 2006; Lamboo, Lasthuizen, & Huberts 2008; Brown, Mayer, *et al.*, 2009). Likewise, Bandura (1977, 1986) states that leaders must be attractive and credible role models. In addition, ethical leaders are only perceived as credible and trustworthy when they act on what they preach, so that followers are likely to copy their behaviours (Brown & Trevino, 2006).

Rewards should thus be made readily visible to other followers as well, not just those involved (Lasthuizen, 2008). Similarly, in dealing with unethical behaviour, leaders should apply a fair and balanced amount of authority in each situation, so as to prevent resentment and cynicism

yet still send a clear message that ethical lapses are not tolerated (Johnson, 2005). In addition, leaders who are high on conscientiousness should easily apply fairness to followers also. For instance, they think carefully before acting, adhere closely to their moral obligations, do the right things not only for themselves but treat their fellow co-workers in a consistent way as well (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011).

Good leadership “must include strong morals and be effective at the same time because a leader’s role is to utilize tension and conflict within people’s value systems and play the role of raising people’s consciousness” (Ciulla, 2004, p. 13). A good leader, in Ciulla’s eyes, will maximize outputs from a follower and achieve the highest results without compromising ethical beliefs. This outcome involves many outside variables; however, to achieve this result a leader must first determine strong personal ethics. Only then can a leader potentially practise *good* leadership (Waggoner, 2010). It is thus essential that ethical leaders are aware of how their decisions and behaviours might be interpreted by followers, make efforts to avoid conduct that could be perceived as inconsistent with moral norms, values, and rules, and explicate the reasoning behind their decisions and behaviours if needed (Weaver, Trevino & Agle 2005).

2.7 Ethical leadership and followers

Yukl (2006) defines leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done to achieve organisational goals and how to do it. The leader should be trustworthy to be able to influence the followers. A trusted individual is the one who behaves consistently in a predictable manner, has integrity and keeps his/her promises. Leaders and followers share objectives of an organization (Yukl, 2011). Even though they share the objectives but the leader is the one who is responsible for directing the group of people towards achieving the organisational goals. Leaders should use their own behaviour to influence and change their followers’ behaviour. This could be done by stimulating their followers’ higher-order needs and encouraging them to go beyond their own self-interest for the benefit of the organisation (Boonzaier, 2008). Therefore, the relationship between the ethical leader and the followers is also important to be reviewed for purpose of this study.

Further, ethical leadership is of great importance in handling moral incidents and fostering employees’ ethical behaviours in organizations given that good leaders are obliged to set a moral example for their followers (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). Studies examining

ethical leadership posit that it is significantly associated to employees' prosocial behaviour, counterproductive behaviour, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Another study by Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Canas (2011) was conducted on the relationship between the leader role modelling and employee behaviour. These researchers found a positive relationship between ethical leaders' role modelling and employees' ethical intentions. More specifically, these authors posit that due to the social learning theory is the most appropriate theoretical perspective to explain this relationship. The research on ethical leadership to date shows that ethical leaders inspires high levels of commitment and trust and foster desirable behaviours among followers (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Den Hartog & De Hoogh 2009; Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011; Piccolo, *et al.* 2010).

The last part of the definition of ethical leadership reflects the fact that ethical leaders consider the ethical consequences of their decisions, and make principled and fair choices that can be observed and emulated by others (Brown, *et al.*, 2005). Consequently, when leaders behave in an ethical manner, they communicate the importance of ethics; and use punishment and reward systems to encourage ethical behaviour; group norms for acceptable behaviour are formed and employees in a work environment will be less likely to engage in unethical behaviour (Mayer, *et al.*, 2012). Ethical behaviour is thus very critical to leaders' credibility and their potential to meaningfully influence followers at all levels in the organization (Piccolo, *et al.*, 2010). Ethical leaders who are highly responsible for their actions can be perceived by their followers as effective (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011). Thus, followers are likely to copy behaviours of the ethical leaders, which again should positively influence organisational effectiveness (Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009). In addition, leaders are encouraged to be open, approachable and willing to listen to their followers (Huberts, Kaptein & Lasthuizen, 2007). To be ethical, leaders need to create an environment where followers feel comfortable and safe to talk to their leaders and peers about ethics-related matters; to discuss the ethical dilemmas they are confronted with and ask for advice; to be honest about the mistakes they have make; and to report any deviant behaviour they encountered—including the ethical failures of their leaders (Kaptein, *et al.*, 2005; Huberts, Kaptein, & Lasthuizen 2007). In conclusion, Piccolo, *et al.*, (2010) suggest that ethical leader behaviour helps followers see their job as more meaningful, which translates into showing increased motivation, effort and productive behaviour. An important way in which ethical leaders affect the self-concept and beliefs of followers is through acting as role models for their followers (Brown, *et al.*, 2005). Moral managers consciously attempt to foster their

followers' moral behaviour by setting clear moral standards and expectations and creating ground rules for moral conduct (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Thus, it is that Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005), characterize a leader who behaves according to a set of normative ethics such as visible role modelling, transparent communication, acknowledging employee behaviour by rewarding ethical behaviour and disciplining unethical conduct and also promote ethics to the leadership agenda as a leader with integrity.

2.8 Integrity

The first part of integrity is the judgment of whether a leader's actions are consistent with his or her words, and the second clause is the judgment whether those actions are consistent with actions deemed by the followers to be ethical and moral. Leader integrity is included in the moral leader's approach most notably discussed by Brown, Trevino & Harrison, (2005) and Brown & Trevino (2009). They describe the moral leader as the one who behaves according to the general concept of ethicality and integrity. According to Brown, *et al.* (2005, p. 120), moral leaders demonstrate normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making. Leaders who keep promises and behave consistently can be trusted or believe because they work or behave as expected (Simons, 2002, as cited in Kalshoven, *at el*, 2011). Similarly, Yukl (2006) describes leaders as being ethical when they keep promises and behave consistently. Thus, ethical leaders keep their promises and act consistently, in a predictable way.

Similarly, Palanski and Yammarino (2007) begin their discussion of integrity with the general but vague definition of integrity as wholeness. Integrity as wholeness refers to something like the integrity of the hull of a ship, suggesting that the hull is watertight, or the integrity of a bridge, where the two ends are anchored and the span supported. For leaders, integrity as wholeness speaks to a general consistency among all elements of a person, such as the person's values, beliefs, words, and actions. Following the same logic, Furrow (2005, p. 136) supports the idea of integrity as wholeness and posits that integrity is the extent to which various leadership commitments form a harmonious, intact whole. This definition suggests that the key for integrity is the alignment of leadership commitments.

Likewise, Palanski and Yammarino (2009) consider integrity as a virtue, which is defined as a discrete component of good character. These authors further classify the various meanings of integrity in the management literature into five main categories and these are: (1) integrity as wholeness; (2) integrity as consistency between words and actions; (3) integrity as consistency in adversity; (4) integrity as being true to oneself; (5) and integrity as morality or ethics (including constructs such as honesty, trustworthiness, justice and compassion). On the other hand, Lasthuizen (2008) views integrity as the sense of acting in accordance with the generally accepted moral values and norms. To conclude, Kannan-Narasimhan and Lawrence (2012) describe behavioural integrity as the perceived pattern of alignment between an actors' words and deeds (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012). Integrity can also be referred to as the consistency of leaders' personal beliefs and values. I can further argue that integrity will assist in ethical leader to promote honesty and mirrors his or her actions with their values and beliefs.

2.9 Ethical decision-making in school leadership

The main aim of studying leadership is about effectiveness in leadership (Boonzaier, 2008; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). Leadership is a relationship between people (Northouse, 2010) and therefore, the ability to ethically influence others is a major determination of effective leadership. In his book, *Ethics and Leadership*, William Hitt (1990, as cited in Waggoner, 2010, p. 4) lists three requirements of leaders that allow them to capitalise on their ability to influence ethical conduct. These three requirements are: "(1) achieve an understanding of ethics which include the key concepts; values, morals, virtues and principles; the school principal must have an idea of how values laid the groundwork for ethical beliefs, a system of values acts as the backbone of a decision-making template. (2) Serve as a role model in making ethical decisions; and (3) develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff." A leader with an *understanding of ethics*, a *history of ethical decision-making* and the ability to *develop and execute plans* of action shows stability, empathy, integrity and resolve. These traits shown in a leader's track record will infuse a greater sense of trust within followers and therefore school principal will be able to sustain *good* leadership and ethical conduct from followers.

School leaders are confronted with several challenges daily. For instance, principals contend with staff issues, school improvement, structural changes, instructional matters, budgetary cuts, and parent concerns (Johnson, 2008; Devos & Bouckenooghe, 2009; Watkins & Moak, 2011).

Furthermore, educational leaders are faced with improving the academic achievement of all students (Hughes & Jones, 2010-2011; Hildebrand, 2012). Ethical leadership is often confronted with intricate circumstances and moral dilemmas where clear-cut solutions are not available due to the complexity of the subject matter (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Moral dilemmas may emerge from the situation whereby the school principal has to decide in the shortage of resources whether they invest to the programme designed to support learners who are struggling in learning or the minimum funds invested in science materials such as school laboratory. School leaders sometimes have to make decisions on which educational stream will be kept between science, commerce or general when they are facing with shortage of resources or decreasing number of learners in the school (enrolment). School leaders also have to decide on strategies for garnering input from parents (parental involvement) and community members, methods for communicating current and desired educational results to all stakeholders (which is everyone from students and parents to taxpayers and employers), and how to develop and implement change to ensure that all children gain functional use of what has been identified as essential skills and knowledge in order to increase equity of opportunity in adulthood (Vogel, 2012, p. 2).

To better understand how to deal with the ethical dilemmas especially in schools both researchers and practitioners have adopted multiple-ethical paradigms (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; 2011). In this approach, several values have been identified as common considerations in moral decision-making. These include values reflected in the ethic of care, profession, justice (i.e. fairness and utilitarianism), critique (Starratt, 2003; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005, 2011), and community (Furman, 2003). It has been argued that school leaders can and should utilise these ethical perspectives simultaneously (Starratt, 2003; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2011).

On the other hand, other author such as Eisenbeiss (2012) assert that conflict resolution through ethical judgment is extremely difficult. The four central orientations of ethical leadership can assist leaders in attaining ethically justifiable judgments. Leaders can apply the central orientations in terms of two dimensions: a horizontal collective dimension and a vertical time dimension in attempting to filter out the important facets of a moral dilemma and to methodically determine the consequences of all possible solutions (Eisenbeiss, 2012). The horizontal collective dimension refers to the identification and inclusion of all the relevant stakeholder groups involved in the dilemma and/or likely to be affected by the decision (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Leaders can use the central orientations to analyse the alternative solutions

and their consequences, not only regarding its stakeholders, but to also consider the interests and needs of more distal and vulnerable stakeholders such as social groups, the community, and the environment (Eisenbeiss, 2012). The vertical time dimension concerns the long-term focus of decision making and involves anticipating and taking future developments into consideration. Consequently, leaders can use the four central orientations to determine the consequences of a possible course of action, immediately and in the future. I agree with the idea put forward by Eisenbeiss (2012) that leaders can apply the central orientations in decision-making. However, it will be a great idea to infuse the multiple-ethical paradigms within the central orientation.

Waggoner (2010) proposes an idea of Template for Ethical Decision-Making and posits that decision-making requires three general steps: description, reflection and prescription. He further believes that designing and carrying out a template for decision-making will cover these steps and produce successful, ethical results. A template for decision-making is necessary due to the number of problems and decisions a leader is faced with every day. As today's society advances, it becomes more interlaced and complex. This constant change in civilization requires more effective actions from leaders when faced with an increasing number of multifaceted issues. I am strongly persuaded by Waggoner (2010) on the three general steps required in decision making because it allows the leader to collect and generate the most information. Moreover, the utilisation of the three steps the leader will be able to analyse the consequences and manage to identify possible solution.

Waggoner (2010) further posits that there are five steps contained in a process that leads to the best decision under given circumstances. In her book, *The Responsible Administrator*, Terry Cooper (1998), as cited in Waggoner (2010), initially designed the following model for public service roles however, it can and should be adopted by all leaders. The overall course of action is the same; however, certain details have been extended to be appropriate and attainable for any leader. The first step is referred to as the descriptive task. This refers to when a problem surfaces to a leader's attention. Whether the leader comes across the problem on his or her own or someone else brings it to his or her attention it is important to gather more information about the issue. When obtaining information, it is important to stay neutral. If included parties are labelled good or bad before completing the decision-making process it defeats the purpose of following a template. If sides of an issue are labelled in the first phase of decision-making it is hard to develop an accurate analysis of the issue because these initial labels act as blinders

during the next steps. Gathering the most information that time permits allows the succeeding steps to be more accurate and complete (Waggoner, 2010).

The second step is to define the ethical issue, which can be the most difficult step (Waggoner, 2010). *Realizing* there is an “ethically problematic situation” is not challenging, however “*articulating the specific values and principles at stake* is extremely challenging” (Cooper, 1998, p. 22, as cited in Waggoner (2010). Not analysing the specific ethical issues at stake results in purely practical decisions that disregard values and principles. Decisions based solely on previous acts cause ethics to be swept under the carpet. At this stage, analysing the specific ethical issues, the ethic of critique put forward by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), must be taken into consideration. The ethic of critique is about the barriers to previous acts. So, by reviewing the consequences of decision taken based on the previous act will assist the leader in articulating *the specific values and principles* at stake. This step may also consider the “moral person” as part of the ethical leader and the importance of why the understanding of ethic is important for the leader, especially in taking decisions. Without ethical consideration for specific situations, problems are generalized and solutions become unethical and ineffective. In order to clarify this dimension, Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2005) theory is discussed further as part of the theoretical framework for this study in the ensuing chapter.

The third step of the decision-making model is identifying alternative courses of action. According to Waggoner (2010), this is a time-consuming *process*. One must be careful at this stage of decision-making because it is easy to develop the “either-or view,” which is the most common trap in the ethical process” (Ciulla, 1998, p. 23, as cited in Waggoner (2010). When brainstorming, people tend to stop once they have two or three possible solutions, however, rarely does an issue have so few possible solutions. “Either-or thinking” limits the number of possible solutions because *either* you have to do this *or* that. Removing either-or thinking allows more acknowledged alternatives and an increased likelihood of finding the best solution. School leaders need to analyse, solve problems and come up with the devise strategic interventions, so to rely on either-or thinking will hinder their creativity in working on possible solution. Therefore, I agree with the notion that criticise “Either-or thinking” strategy.

Projecting probable consequences is the fourth step. Once the list of alternative solutions is large enough, the positive and negative consequences of each possible decision need to be calculated. Projecting possible consequences requires the skill of *moral imagination*. This is

the ability to produce a “movie in our minds with realistic characters, a believable script and clear imagery” (Cooper, 1998, p. 24, as cited in Waggoner (2010)). Creating these “movies” turns projecting probable consequences from a “traditional informal process to a more formal, conscious and systematic procedure” (Cooper, 1998, p. 24, as cited in Waggoner (2010)). The more imagination used to project probable consequences of solutions, the more ethical decision-making is enhanced. A vivid imagination leads to greater understanding of probable outcomes and attached emotions. Projecting probable consequences with moral imagination connects the sensible and emotional dimensions of ethical decision-making. According to Maxwell (2014, p. 11), “Leaders are paid to be dreamers. The higher you go in leadership, the more your work is about the future.” Great leaders are both highly visionary and highly practical. Their vision helps them see beyond the immediate. They can envision what’s coming and what must be done.

To be highly visionary and highly practical for the leader alone are not enough. The leader also needs the “buy-in” of the follower so that the vision is implemented. This will depend on the leadership (1) personal level where leadership is determined by an individual’s trustworthiness. This dependent on leadership character (Who the leader as a person, the integrity shown by the individual when living according to his/her system) and leadership competence (What the individual is able to do, the ability and skills to perform and to motivate people to follow him/her when directing the organisation). (2) Interpersonal level Leadership at this level is determined by an individual’s ability to build mutual trust and cooperation, interpret the meaning of events and obtain necessary resources and support. (3) Managerial level; at managerial level, there are several determinants of effective leadership. These determinants entail the ability to: develop and empower people, build task commitment and optimism and organise and coordinate activities and (4) organisational level; Effective leadership is most widely illustrated at an organisational level, where the individual has to portray the ability to: create alignment of objectives and strategies, strengthen collective identity, encourage and facilitate collective learning and promote social justice and morality. Promote social justice and morality.

Members’ satisfaction and commitment are increased with a climate of fairness, compassion and social responsibility. To maintain such climate requires active efforts to protect individual rights, encourage social responsibility and oppose unethical practices. Effective leaders set an example of moral behaviour and they take necessary actions to promote social justice (Hough,

Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble, 2007). In addition, for the leaders to acquire the “buy-in” of their followers so that the vision is implemented, they must be able to motivate active involvement by members in solving problems, making decisions and implementing changes. Open communication between members and leadership is essential.

Finding a fit is the last step of ethical decision-making. The key to finding the best solution is to find a balance between *duty oriented and consequence oriented obligations*. The balance must be between primary obligations to ethical principles and the consequences with the chosen course of action. It is not possible to separate the two because you cannot follow your duty to principles if the consequences do not respect the principles. Finding the most ethical and effective alternative is possible by using this template for decision-making (Waggoner, 2010). This is an effective model because it allows for balance between theory and consequences and guarantees personal satisfaction with decisions. It also allows a leader to develop ethical autonomy by combining prudent reason with emotional connection. According to Aristotle, (2005), as cited in, Riggio, Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010, p. 237), prudence is the wisdom that manages or dictates a proper balance between two extremes in a world of shifting contexts and priorities. Because prudence is critical, a leader cannot be ethical unless he or she is prudent. It is unrealistic to expect a leader to use this template with every problem, but “when used for more significant problems a leader will develop intuition for ethical decision-making when time does not permit all the steps” (Cooper, 1998, p. 28, as cited in Waggoner, 2010). With practice and hands on experience, this decision-making template provides more awareness of values and keeps leaders from wandering down unethical decision-making paths. The decision-making template provides steps that allow the best solution for each circumstance, but there are also different levels and seriousness of ethical reflection for each issue (Waggoner, 2010).

“Doing the right thing” is not good enough because without reflection a person does not understand why the right decision was made and he or she is less likely to make correct decisions in the future. Without reflection, good ethics are just a habit, but with reflection, good ethics are from reason and choice, not ‘just because’ (Holland & Skinner, 1961, as cited in Waggoner, 2010). The level of moral rules does not necessarily make decisions consistent but involves limited logical and methodical reflection. The most practical decisions made by school principals are usually based on the pressure and the demands by the Department of Education

in a short period and these force school principals to become problem-solvers and can prevent sufficient ethical reflection. The pressure forces them not to rely on the ethic of justice and other important ethics such as ethic of care, critique and profession omitted in the process of decision making. When leaders are unable to reach a decision using moral rules, they are forced to enter the third level, ethical analysis. Because this level is usually entered when there are conflicts or when things don't feel right, an examination of morals is sometimes necessary. Although this level is not typical for a routine problem, "sometimes an issue is so unique, so complex, or so profound in the consequences of its resolution that we have no choice but to re-examine the ethical principles that are implicit in our routine norms of conduct" (Cooper, 1998, p. 12, as cited in Waggoner, 2010). This reassessment of morals, values and principles provides clarification and contemplation of all involved aspects. These aspects range from leaders' personal integrity to leaders' obligation to the public (Cooper, 1998, p. 14, as cited in Waggoner, 2010). A specific review of the values and principles involved becomes useful by setting conditions and qualifications for action. Due to the intense speed and demands of today's leaders, reflection is forgotten because of lack of time (Waggoner, 2010).

In addition, ethical issues are multifaceted, meaning that each stage in decision-making is fluid, dynamic, and multidimensional (Waggoner, 2010). The author further posits that problem-identification is aided or stagnated by moral sensitivity. Furthermore, Nevarez and Wood (2010, as cited in Woods & Hilton, 2012, p. 198) state that ethical decision-making models have four primary steps in common: identification of a problem, gathering data, conceptualising and evaluating alternative courses of action, and implementing a course of action. Therefore, in response to the foregoing, it is imperative in this study to elucidate the four ethical paradigms (ethic of justice, ethic of critique, ethic of care and ethic of the profession) at the level of definition and contextual discussion in the next chapter. According to Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), ethical paradigms aid ethical decision-making in several ways. Paradigms support leaders in examining the frames or ways of thinking that they are most inclined to use, contemplating actions outside their normative behaviors and approaches, considering more holistic steps to issue resolution, and engaging in reflexive practice. The practice of ethical decision-making requires leaders to view issues that they encounter through multiple ethical lenses before making decisions. This will allow leaders to take more thoughtful actions that are less influenced by personal bias (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Caldwell, *et al.*, 2007; Woods & Hilton, 2012, p. 210).

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature on ethical leadership. In this chapter, I began with a discussion of the leadership and the differences between a just and an ethical leader. Good leadership is ethical, effective, and demonstrates normative and appropriate conduct by visible role modelling and transparent communication. It acknowledges good employee behaviour by rewarding ethical conduct while disciplining unethical conduct. I proceeded to discuss the dimensions of ethical leadership and policy landscapes that promote ethical leadership in South Africa. Furthermore, issues around the profiled stature and praxis of a moral person, a moral manager and integrity were discussed. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion on ethical decision-making in school leadership. The subsequent chapter presents and discusses the theories utilised in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and reviewed literature pertinent to the study. In this chapter, I begin by highlighting the concept “theory” and explain why is relevant for this study. I thereafter present the background and the origin of ethical leadership. I further highlight the relationships between the important concepts such as morals and values. Before I embark on the two theories employed for this study, I initially give a brief discussion on the three meta-theories of deontology, teleology and axiology within which my main theory, Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2005) Model of Ethical Leadership falls. In addition, I present and discuss the secondary theory which is Khoza’s (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism – Ubuntu) and its relevance to the study. I thereafter conclude by presenting the summary of the whole chapter.

3.2 What is Theory?

According to Rutherford (2000), the word “theory” has several distinct meanings in different fields of disciplines or knowledge domains, depending on the methodologies utilised and the context of observation. The concept originates from Greek “theoria” which means “contemplation” or “speculation”. In this sense, a theory is a systematic and formalised expression of all previous observations, and is predictive, logical and testable (Rutherford, 2000). In principle, scientific theories are always tentative, and subject to corrections or inclusion in a yet wider theory (Fox & Meyer, 1995). These authors further describe a theory as an explanation of reality to be able to make a prediction. Simply speaking, theory refers to a kind of explanation. For instance, Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 4) state that “...a theory is an organised body of concepts and principles intended to explain a particular phenomenon”. Thus, theories explain *how* and *why* something functions the way it does. As pointed out by Boss, Doherty, LaRossa, Schumm and Steinmetz (1993, p.20), “...theorising is the process of systematically formulating and organising ideas to understand a particular phenomenon. Thus, a theory is the set of interconnected ideas that emerge from this process”. Following McMillan and Schumacher’s (2000) assertion, a theory can develop scientific knowledge congruent with the following criteria: first, provide simple explanation about the observed relations regarding

their relation to a phenomenon; second, be consistent with an already founded body of knowledge and the observed relations; third, provide a device for verification and revision; and fourth, stimulate further research in areas in need of investigation. So, in principle, for a system of concepts and claims to be called a theory, the system should be (1) *stable*, i.e. unchanged over a longer cycle of time, (2) *coherent*, i.e. the components of the system should be linked in a comprehensive and non-contradictory way, and (3) *consistent* in the sense that it should not be possible to arrive at contradictory claims by means of the types of derivation permitted in the theory (McMillan & Schumacher, 2000).

Likewise, Garrison (2000) posits that "...a theory is a coherent and systematic ordering of ideas, concepts and models, with a purpose of constructing meaning to explain, to interpret, to shape practice". Based on the definitions presented above, one can conclude that the theory offers a point of focus for tackling the unknown in a specific area and can be created to explain, predict and master phenomena. In short, the problem can be identified and data generated but without a specific and clearly presented theory this work will be not taken as a research. Therefore, for this piece of work to be regarded as a research, I borrowed two well-structured theories which I believe were appropriate for this study, i.e., Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical Leadership which is the main theory of the study. To supplement whatever shortcomings this theory might have especially from the African perspective of ethical leadership, I also used Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism – Ubuntu).

3.3 Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical Leadership

The term "*ethical*" originates from the term "*ethics*" (Greek *technē ethikē*) which is the scientific study of morality or the field of philosophical research that has morality as its object of study (Capurro, 2009). The definition of ethics dates to Plato and Aristotle (Wood & Halton, 2012). Ethics comes from *ethos*, a Greek word meaning character, conduct, and/or customs (Northouse, 2010, p. 378) and from the related Greek word *ethikos* which has been translated as "theory of living" (Ethos, 2007, para. 1). Toffler (1986, p. 10, as cited in Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010, p. 237) who define *ethics* as "rules or standards" that "govern behaviours" and *moral* as "relating to principles of right and wrong". It is about what morals and values are found appropriate by members of society and individuals themselves. According to Vogel (2012), moral principles express a sense of duty and obligation to others and are shared by a

group of people. Beliefs and values of what is right and what is wrong therefore provide the basis of discussion and agreement within a group as to what is considered moral by that group. These agreements on moral principles then provide a foundation for an ethical framework, which “provides a system of rules or principles that guide us in making decisions in a particular situation,” (Northouse, 2010, p. 378). By *morality* it is meant the habitually practised customs, that is, the behavioural rules and values in each society regarding what is considered as good or bad for oneself, for others and for the society in its various facets (Assmann, 2000). With respect to leadership, ethics is about who leaders are, their character and what they do and behaviours.

As suggested above, ethical theories fall into two broad categories: those theories related to a leader’s behaviour and those related to a leader’s character. For those theories related to conduct, there are two types: those that relate to a leader’s conduct and their consequences and those that relate to the rules or duty and prescribe the leader’s conduct (Ciulla, 1998). Similarly, those theories related to consequences are called *teleological theories* (*telos* being a Greek word for purposes or ends). These theories emphasize whether a leader’s actions, behaviour, and/or conduct have positive outcomes. This means that the outcomes related to a person’s behaviour establish whether the behaviour was ethical or unethical. Those theories related to duty or rules are called *deontological theories* (*deos* being a Greek word for duty). These theories focus on the actions that lead to consequences and whether the actions are good or bad. Those theories related to character are described as virtue-based approaches (Ciulla, 1998). The primary ethical leadership theory utilised in this study is the model by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) which falls within the three ethical metatheories: deontology, teleology and axiology. In short, deontological-based theories focus on mechanisms by which decisions are made, and teleological-driven theories centre on the outcomes of decision making. In a different conception, axiological theories are concerned with virtues that guide decision-making processes (Beckner, 2004, as cited in Woods & Hilton, 2012, p. 199).

School leadership is no longer conceptualised in terms of technical efficiency but as a predominantly moral and ethical activity (Starratt, 2004; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Certainly, there are a variety of compelling reasons that justify the need for ethical leaders in today’s schools. The first reason stems from the notion that education is a moral endeavour. As Zubay and Soltis (2005) state, education has a moral nature because it is concerned with the development of human beings in all their dimensions. The moral character of education requires school leaders to promote learning as a moral activity, to see themselves as moral

agents, and to act ethically with the aim of making a difference in the lives of learners (Fullan, 2008; Kaser and Halbert, 2009). In addition, the best interests of learners must remain central to leader's preparation and inquiry (Stefkovich, 2006).

Cranston, Erich and Kimber (2006, p. 106) posit that ethical dilemmas are so common in schools nowadays that they have become the "bread and butter" of educational leaders' lives. Similarly, Begley and Stefikovich (2004, p. 134) affirm that value conflicts have always been present in school administration to some extent, "however, value conflicts now seem to have become a defining characteristic of the school leadership role". School principals faced with dilemmas and challenged to make complex decisions, justified those decisions as made in the best interests of the learners (Shapiro & Stefikovich, 2005; Shapiro, 2006; Stefikovich & Begley, 2007). I elect here to apply *Theoretical Perspectives to Complex Dilemmas*, written by Shapiro and Stefikovich (2005), which is widely acclaimed for providing a comprehensive guide for effectively addressing the complexities and challenges of ethical decision-making. This text is based on the earlier work by Starratt (1994) who suggest the importance of the three ethics of justice, critique and care in his approach to educational leadership. An ethical framework is a basic assumption about beliefs, values and principles used to guide choices (Starratt, 2004). As contemporary scholars began to write about justice, critique and care, Starratt (1994) combined justice, critique and care into the most recognized ethical framework in education, the tri-partite framework. Furman (2004) understood that the three-ethics complemented on another and thus became the foundation for an ethical school. To these three ethics principles, Shapiro and Stefikovich (2005) have added a fourth lens or perspective, the ethic of the profession.

School principals have ethical responsibilities which means they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Starratt, 2005; Shapiro & Stefikovich, 2005; Begley & Stefikovich, 2007). School principals should use an ethical reasoning framework when making decisions. In this regard, Rebore (2001, p. 31) states that, "the use of frameworks for ethical reasoning in decision-making is an untapped resource and a relatively recent phenomenon in education". Likewise, Shapiro and Stefikovich, (2005) posit that educational administrators of the 21st century schools will need to have developed their own personal and professional codes of ethics to be prepared to lead schools that are not only accountable, but are also tolerant of a demographically diverse community. Shapiro and Stefikovich (2005, p. 25) further suggest that decisions made in the best interests of the learners

are those “incorporating individual rights, accepting and teaching learners to accept responsibility for their actions, respecting learners, and also taking into account what they refer to as the three “R”s of rights, responsibilities and respect. In this regard, responsible leadership is the art of building and sustaining good relationships to all relevant stakeholders (Maak & Pless, 2006, p. 40). A responsible leader’s core task is to weave a web of inclusion where the leader engages himself/herself among equals. Plato (1971) already saw this quite clearly in his “Statesman” where he noted that people are not sheep and leaders are not shepherds; instead he/she regarded the leader as a weaver, whose main task was to weave together different kinds of people into the fabric of society (Plato, 1971 as cited in Ciulla, 2004, p. 322).

In addition, according to Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), dilemmas in schools are complicated and naturally lead to the use of multiple lens of two or more paradigms to solve problems. Using a multiple ethical paradigms approach is highly significant in helping principals confront their multitude of challenges and professional commitments, while addressing the needs and demands of a diverse learner population and other stakeholders in the school (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). The school principal may face the challenge of distributing scarce resources; some of the stakeholders may expect the school principal to invest more in the Science stream while others may expect more investment in the programme supporting needy learners. School principals are expected to adopt a moral position and create an ethical school climate in the face of complex problems in an ever-changing, uncertain environment. In this context, the desire to deconstruct the ethical dilemmas of school leadership has led scholars, among them Starratt (2003) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), to suggest a multiple ethical paradigms approach. This approach assumes that principals can simultaneously examine and utilise different ethical perspectives in their decision-making. These ethical perspectives include the ethic of justice (i.e. fairness and utilitarianism), the ethic of critique, the ethic of care, and the ethic of profession which will be discussed further below. Finally, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) maintain that the ethic of profession encompasses all the ethical perspectives.

3.3.1 The ethic of justice

According to Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, p. 13), the ethic of justice is an ethical frame that conceptualizes issues, holds confidence in, and enacts decisions based upon “the rule of law and the more abstract concepts of fairness, equity, and justice”. Justice has a long-debated meaning and history. Justice serves as the foundation for legal principles and ideals, rights and

laws, fairness and equity in individual freedom (Starratt, 1994; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In public schools, every decision taken must be based on the school policies that were guided by the principles of the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, especially the principle of just administrative action which stipulates that everyone has a right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair (See Clause 33, Chapter Two: Bill of Rights in the SA Constitution). Similarly, according to Starratt (1994), the idea of fairness and equal treatment became the core values of the ethic of justice. In addition, the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, p.108 (Chapter Ten) demands that the Public Service be delivering services “of a high standard of professional ethics that must be promoted and maintained.” Schools are not excluded in this constitutional requirement either. Educators are expected to treat learners equal and fairly and accommodate their individual needs. Starratt (1994) confirms that the ethic of justice requires treating others to a standard of justice applied in all relationships. Starratt (1994) posits that fairness, defined as the equitable distribution of resources and the application of rules and equal treatment, is concerned with justice in the social order. Shapiro and Gross (2008) affirm that the ethic of justice continually raises questions about the just and fairness of laws and policies. They suggest that when viewing ethical dilemmas from the vantage point of justice, queries regarding the interpretation of the rule of law and concepts of fairness and responsibility come into play. In addition, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), affirm that the ethic of justice protects the civil and human rights of all individuals. Further to emphasize the ethic of justice, Strike, Haller and Soltis (1998) also support the influence of justice in educational decision-making based on maximum benefits in respect to individual needs. Shapiro and Gross (2008) substantiate Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2005) earlier proposal that school principals who considered each member of the community before making an ethical decision utilise the ethic of justice as they strive to be fair and equitable. The ethic of justice requires an examination of the issues in terms of the rights and laws of learners, parents, and school personnel.

The ethic of justice focuses on rights, law, and policies. It is concerned with concepts that include fairness, equality and individual freedoms and leads to questions, such as: Is there a law, right or policy that would be appropriate for resolving an ethical dilemma? Why does this law, right, or policy strike me as the the correct one for this case? How should the law, right, or policy be implemented? (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005, p. 13).

From this perspective, leaders' decisions are guided through extant laws, rules, policies, codes, and procedures. Beckner (2004) has referred to this "rule-based" decision-making as a morally objective, deontological, no consequentialist manner of contextualising ethical dilemmas. This approach is morally objective in that pre-established principles, rules and laws guide leaders' conceptions of dilemmas. Thus, this paradigm may be perceived as an objective way to resolve dilemmas, because it is devoid of personal or cultural inclinations (Wood & Hilton, 2012).

Likewise, according to Gardiner and Tenuto (2015), justice and specifically justice principles and practices shaping education, are ethics that address human freedoms and making choices equal to all individuals. The ethic of justice, particularly in education, stems from the idea that individuals relinquish some of their own rights for the public interest to serve others and eventually benefit society. As a school principal, it is important to think about this ethic when judging human behaviour and interactions (Vogel, 2012). Justice also calls for the ethic of *social justice* (Santamaria, 2013). Beyond simplistic views of rights, justice and a common legal framework, social justice in ethical leadership decision-making means "identifying and undoing oppressive and unjust practices and replacing them with more equitable, culturally appropriate ones" (Santamaria, 2013, p. 194). In the SA schools 'context, parents, learners, educators and school leaders should have an equal opportunity to influence decisions that affect the school and so should have oversight of a range of policy related functions. Thus, it is not enough for stakeholders to be included in the decision-making process; one needs also to be able to influence both the process and the decision. Participation by various stakeholders is, furthermore, a potentially important factor in bringing about change in school practice and sustaining improvements in schools. It is not just its normative cogency that compels participatory structures, but also the long-term benefits of having local participants, who are empowered to make decisions, taking the responsibility to see these decisions through (SASA, 1996). Including all parties in decision making ensure that previously marginalised constituencies have a greater voice. While the intention of SASA is clearly to open channels for wider participation at school level, the point of departure is to find out whether school principals have successfully shifted the locus of school decision-making from the School Management Team (SMT) to all relevant stakeholders. Other social justice issues that this study is trying to tackle amongst other things, supporting disadvantaged learners in classrooms, addressing their personal and psychological difficulties, narrowing the gap in educational achievements or in life chances between learners from more and less advantaged backgrounds. It remains the case that learners from poor backgrounds tend to lag their peers before they enter

school (Hansen & Joshi, 2007), that they tend to do badly while they are in school (Cassen & Kingdon, 2007), and that, far from their life chances being transformed by schooling, social mobility is, if anything declining (Blanden, Gregg & Machin, 2005). Many school leaders are uninterested in what happens beyond the school gates, and even those that are have only limited means at their disposal of intervening in prevailing social and economic conditions (Ainscow, Crow, Dyson, Goldrick, Kerr, Lennie, Miles, Muijs & Skyrme, 2007; Ainscow, Dyson & Kerr, 2008; Cummings & Dyson, 2008). As Dantley and Tillman (2010) state, the leadership needed to attain social justice is an active leadership which comprehensively addresses and resolves societal inequities.

In addition, according to Starratt (1994) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), the ethic of justice is divided into two sub-categories. The first, is the ethic of fairness which is also referred to as the ethics of equity. This ethic is grounded in social contract and focuses on individual rights and equal treatment. The second is utilitarianism, which emphasises the maximisation of the good (Strike, 2005). Disparate the ethic of fairness, utilitarianism is a perspective that focuses on the total benefit for most learners despite any harm to specific individuals (McCray & Beachum, 2006). On the other hand, Rawls's (1997) perspective on justice is grounded in two primary principles: (a) that every person engaged in or affected by an action should be given treatment equal to that of others engaged in or affected by the action, and (b) all individuals should have reasonably equal access to advantage and decision-making authority; otherwise, injustice and inequity have occurred (Rawls, 1997 as cited in Wood & Hilton, 2012, p.200). Key to Rawls's (1997) conception of justice is that individual liberties should not be substituted for the good of the community (Sucher, 2008). This notion contrasts Aristotelian, Rousseauian, and Deweyian philosophical views in which societal good is emphasised over individual good (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005).

Starratt (1994) as cited in Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), point out that there are two schools of thought on ethical justice. The first puts the individual's needs above the general populace, thus relying on 'human reason' to justify the passing up of personal rights for social justice. The second thought places the state before the individual in which it is the responsibility of the state to 'teach' or train individuals how to behave in a community. While strong arguments can be made for either case, Kohlberg (1981) and Sergiovanni (1992) speak of justice not as a rule, but rather as a moral principle. This morality extends well beyond the borders of schools and influences the families and greater communities. Accepting this notion, Sergiovanni (1992) as

cited in Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), states that every parent, educator, learner, administrator, and other members of the school community must be treated with the same equality, dignity, and fair play. Ethical leadership is often confronted with intricate circumstances and moral dilemma where clear-cut solutions are not available due to complexity of the subject matter. The ethic of justice is key among frameworks that aim to guide the school principals in addressing this complexity. There is an argument between putting the individual's needs above the general populace, and emphasizing the societal good over individual good. Based on this argument; I therefore agree with the notion of putting the societal good over the individual. One needs to understand that, in rural communities, individual interests are often surrendered to community interests and possibilities. From an *Ubuntu* perspective, there is less emphasis on separate individuals. In this study, the focus is on ethical leadership in rural schools; therefore, the issue of Ubuntu is considered.

It is important to consider that justice exists in several primary forms. According to Wood and Hilton (2012) Aristotle talks about two distinct types of justice; *general justice* that deals mostly with following laws and *particular justice* which deals with fairness. Aristotle concentrates on particular justice and describes an unjust action as one that is motivated by unjust. On the one hand Riggio, Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010) posit that if leaders behave in a way that seeks to benefit themselves at the expense of others, these acts are unjust. On the other hand, Chryssides and Kaler (1996), as cited in Wood and Hilton (2012), have identified five primary types of justice: procedural, substantive, retributive, remedial and distributive. Procedural justice is the treatment of individuals in applying the law in an impartial, unbiased, and fair manner. Although procedural justice examines the fairness of the application of law, substantive justice focuses on the fairness of laws themselves. Substantive justice critically examines whether laws serve to uphold parity or produce inequities. Retributive justice centres on receiving “retribution” for wrongs through the enactment of punishments for those who violate existing laws and codes. Remedial justice also focuses on addressing wrongs, but through remediation or reparations to address and counterbalance injustices that have occurred. Finally, distributive justice centres on the advantages and disadvantages of laws, resources, and power. Distributive justice is concerned with whether advantages and disadvantages are equally distributed. As discussed by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, p. 13), when operating from an ethic of justice “ethical issues such as due process and privacy rights are often balanced against the need for civility and the good of the majority”. Thus, although the ethic of justice addresses the five forms of justice, there is a focus on procedural justice and distributive justice.

To conclude this section, the ethic of justice is deontological in that leaders have a duty, obligation and responsibility to adhere to the rules governing their profession (Maxcy, 2002 as cited in Wood & Hilton, 2012). Therefore, the intent of their action in adhering to these rules is paramount (Stedham, Yamamura & Beekun, 2007). Because intent rather than outcome (or means as opposed to ends) is of cardinal importance, the ethic of justice is non-consequentialist (Beckner, 2004). As a non-consequentialist approach, leaders should not consider the consequences, or ends, of their actions (Northouse, 2007). Instead, they should make objective decisions based upon predetermined rules and principles.

Justice principles and practices shaping education, it is also an ethic that addresses human freedom and making choices equal to all individuals. As a school principal, it is important to think about this ethic when “judging human behaviour and interactions” (Vogel, 2012). Justice also calls for the ethic of *social* justice (Santamaria, 2013, p. 194). Beyond the simplistic views of rights, justice, and a common legal framework, social justice in ethical leadership decision-making means “identifying and undoing oppressive and unjust practices and replacing them with more equitable, culturally appropriate ones”. Furman (2012) defines leadership praxis to mean connecting theory and practice with the leader’s own principles and ethics through reflection on action. In other words, to lead ethically using a justice perspective means integrating practice with theory and engaging in intentional reflection (Duignan, 2012).

3.3.2 The ethic of critique

Giroux (1991) as cited in Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), provides “a discourse for expanding basic human rights” and may serve as a vehicle in the struggle against inequality. In this vein, critical theorists are often concerned with making known the voices of those who are silenced, particularly learners. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) further state that critical theorists may help educators rectify wrongs while identifying key morals and values. This approach to ethical dilemmas then asks educators to “go beyond questioning and critical analysis to examine and grapple with those possibilities that could enable all children, whatever their social class, race, or gender, to have opportunities to grow, learn, and achieve” (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2005, p. 16). The ethic of critique sensitises educators to inequities of social class, race, gender, and other areas of difference, including disability, as they occur in society and especially in schools.

Accordingly, Shapiro and Gross (2008) define the ethic of critique as a critical consequentialist perspective that identifies laws, policies and structures that disadvantage certain groups and the promotion of action to address identified inequities. Consequentialism is the notion that consequences of actions are prioritised in decision-making wherein more simply, the ends justify the means (Beckner, 2004). As such, the ethic of critique develops from a teleological tradition which affirms that the guiding motive of decision making is the intended outcome.

The ethic of critique is critical theory and, in asking the difficult questions and raising the inequities within society, this ethic aims to challenge societal practices, thoughts and direction. In asking, “Who makes the laws? Who benefits from the law, rule, or policy? Who has the power? Who are the silenced voices?” The ethic of critique forces us to look for possible alternatives to the status quo. For educators, whether tracking or streaming of learners, social, gender or race inequities, the difficult questions must be asked. The ethic of critique gives voice to the suppressed (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). The ethic of critique is a morally based paradigm. Often, this paradigm is employed by individuals who strive to create parity for others who have been disadvantaged by society such as learners with disabilities and those who live in poverty stricken community (Starratt, 2004). As I mentioned above, within the school settings parents, learners, educators and school managers should have an equal opportunity to influence decisions that affect the school and so should have oversight of a range of policy-related functions. The intention of SASA is clearly to open up channels for wider participation at school level, and school must create opportunities for school community’s voices to be heard. They need to have taught them on how to participate in a discussion.

Just as the ethic of justice is about fairness, the focus of the ethic of critique is about the barriers to fairness (Starratt, 1994; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Shapiro & Gross, 2008). School principals are forced to confront moral issues through the ethic of critique; when schools disproportionately benefit some groups in society and fail others; through the equitable distribution of resources and application of rules (Starratt, 1994; Furman, 2004). The ethic of critique challenges the status quo by involving social discourse, which allows the marginalized a voice and expose inequities (Starratt, 1994). The ethic of critique also focuses on school principals’ awareness of inequities in society as it pursues appropriate measures to correct laws, policies, and regulations not consistent with sound educational practices (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Shapiro & Gross, 2008). Authors confirm that the ethic of critique forces school principals to rethink, to redefine, and reframe concepts such as privilege, power, culture

and social injustice. In our schools, all learners may require to go through final examination to progress to the next grade, all learners are treated the same which is fair according to the principles of justice. Principals, according to the *ethic of critique*, are expected to critique and analyse the policy before implementing it. This should help the school principal to ratify wrongs while identifying key morals and values (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Once the school principal fails to critique the policy, he/she will also fail to identify the “barrier of fairness”, in allowing all learners to go through the same written examination process to progress to the next grade. The learners who cannot read and write will be unfair for them to go through the same process with the learners who does not have any kind of barrier in learning. The ethic of critique is juxtaposed to the ethic of justice in that it critiques moral problems caused by the ethic of justice (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). The ethic of justice recognises that laws and codes may be imperfect but that leaders are to maintain these laws until changed for the better. In contrast, the ethic of critique views laws as providing an advantage to certain groups over others. In this light, law is a support of social hierarchies based upon race, class, and gender (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Caldwell, Shapiro & Gross, 2007).

Leaders considering dilemmas from an ethic of critique standpoint should investigate how rules have served to disaffect and disadvantage people such as low-income communities, the disabled, and older learners and learners with barriers in learning (Schulte & Cochrane, 1995). Thus, the ethic of critique enables leaders and decision-makers to become more attuned to the needs of multiple groups and constituencies (Wood & Halton, 2012). School principals engaged in decision-making from an ethic of critique should consider several questions: Does one group have certain advantages over others? If so, how are these advantages sustained? What are the consequences of these advantages? Does one (or more) group(s) lack access and voice in the decision-making process? What assumptions are at play? What are the known and unknown values within these assumptions? (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In addition, the following questions considers in this study: In our schools, are our school principals capable of interrogating “how rules have served to disaffect and disadvantage people such as, low income communities, the disabled, and older learners and learners with barriers in learning?” What do they do about it? In addition, are our school leaders capable of identifying if “one group has certain advantages over others? If so, how are these advantages sustained? What are the consequences of these advantages? Does one (or more) group(s) lack access and voice in the decision-making process?”

3.3.3 The ethic of care

According to the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001), schools must be centres of care and support. The school principal and educators are expected to take good care of learners' needs. It may be a psycho-educational need or additional educational need. In other words, every decision taken at school must be at the best interest of the learner. Accordingly, Noddings (1992, p. xiv) creates a new educational hierarchy placing "care" at the top when she writes, "The first job of the schools is to care for our children". She further posits that "caring is the very bedrock of all successful education and contemporary schooling can be revitalised in its light" (Noddings, 1992, p.27). In this context, the ethic of care requires leaders to consider "multiple voices" in the decision-making process (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2005, p. 18). As the ethic of care is often associated with the feminist movement, it has evolved into a strategy to capture, retain, and reinforce the values and morals of society. For Noddings (1992), 'caring' should surpass 'achievement' as the fundamental goal of our education system to lessen the competitive nature of our current system. Noddings further believes that the inclusion of reason and emotion within our curriculum would serve to strengthen the leadership qualities of our youth. With regards to disadvantaged youth, the care model is broken into three components; attention and support, discipline and "staying on them" (Shapiro, Sewell, DuCette, Myrick, 1997, as cited in Shapiro & Stefkovich 2005). Learners in these circumstances have viewed this form of caring as an indication that someone was interested in their success. I agree with the above notion that the school must be the centre of care and support. Through my observation, I have noticed that learners perform better when the school is concerned about their wellness and providing continuously care and support to them.

The ethic of care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Wood & Hilton, 2012). Further, as per Noddings (2003), when embraced by the decision-maker, the ethic of care reflects the principals' intentions to respond to individuals' distress and to empower them. Like the ethic of critique, the ethic of care is also juxtaposed to the ethic of justice (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005) and is also consequentialist in nature (Caldwell et. al., 2007). Furthermore, critiquing the ethic of justice, Noddings (2003) also notes that the ethic of care values people as opposed to principles. As conceptualized by Gilligan (1982) cited in Wood and Hilton, (2012), the ethic of care is compassion-oriented and is concerned with how decisions, issues and circumstances serve to hurt others. As such, an ethic of care is

characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust (Shapiro & Gross, 2008). School principals employing an ethic of care are encouraged to foster understanding of multiple sociocultural realities (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005), with the purpose of improving the standpoint of others. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) state that the ethic of care has its origin in feminist literature, which is highly critical of the ethic of justice. These scholars suggest that the ethic of justice is a masculinist frame that decentres care and concern for others, valuing instead, objective rules that may cause harm to the disadvantaged (Wood & Hilton, 2012). I do not agree with the notion that justice is a masculinist frame that decentres care and concern for others. There is a need to have a concept of justice that is not universally fixed but that considers situations and consequences. Justice need to be taken as a process rather than fixed rules. A process involving an ethics of care in a situation takes into consideration the interest and values of people involved. In the process power is distributed to all people involved in present situation. Justice does not need to stand alone in addressing ethical dilemma, care needs to be intertwined with the universal principles such as honesty, justice and respect. I can argue that for the justice ethic to be view as emerging from a masculinist frame depends on the individual that is applying the principles of justice in the ethical dilemma. The leader's moral/ personal traits and cognitive capacity will play a crucial role for justice principles to be perceived as masculinist frame. In this tone, scholarship on ethical frames has illustrated that women are more likely to employ an ethic of care than men. This is not to suggest that all women operate from an ethic of care, or that all men do not; rather, it connotes the importance for leaders to be aware of what frames they tend to employ (Noddings, 2003; Pratt & Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In this regard, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) also note that an ethic of care reinforces the importance of learners and their development, focusing particularly on aiding learners in achieving their educational and career goals.

Williams (2002), as cited in Wood and Hilton (2012), states that leaders who infuse an ethic of care allow for the development of social ties that cause learners to feel valued. Developing an environment that fosters care and affirms the value of learners is crucial, as it can lead to enhanced learners' success (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Furthermore, an ethic of care requires school leaders to attend to issues of learners' success (Rosenthal, 2006), thereby placing the focus of otherness on the best interests of learners (Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). With this idea, school principals who employ an ethic of care should consider several questions: How will an issue or potential resolution affect all members of the institution? What are the implications of this issue for community and interconnectivity among institutional affiliates? Will a decision

cause harm to one group or entity? In what way (if any) does this issue or potential resolution impact organizational morale? How will (or does) this issue affect the individual's personal goals and development? What level of reciprocity should be given or received from others (Caldwell, *et al.*, 2007; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005)? School principals must also take into consideration that the ethics of care involves different moral precepts: responsibilities and relationships rather than rules and rights. Secondly, it is bound to concrete situations rather than being formal and abstract. And thirdly, the ethics of care can be described as a moral activity, the 'activity of caring', rather than as a set of principles which can simply be followed. If the central question in the ethics of care, which provides guidance on how to deal with dependency and responsibility, differs radically from that of rights ethics: what are the highest normative principles and rights in situations of moral conflict? (Sevenhuijsen, 1998, p. 107). Paying attention to the above-mentioned questions assists the school principals to take decisions based in the best educational interest of the learners at the school not because they are the easy option or because they are the popular option.

3.3.4 Ethic of the profession

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggest that the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care need expanding. Based on what they noticed in their classrooms and readings, Shapiro and Stefkovich assert that the moral aspect of the profession is to serve the best interests of the learner as the focus of ethical decisions. In the same vein, Stefkovich and Begley (2002) posit that school leaders use the rationale "the best interests of the learner" when making a difficult decision, but continue to state that when they explore the term best interests of the learner, they found neither a firm definition nor consistency in its use. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) called for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession, as they created a dynamic model that placed the best interests of the learner at the heart of the ethics of the educational profession (Stefkovich & Begley, 2002). In the South African context, the South African Council for Educators (SACE) Act came into being in 1997 following a collective agreement within the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) about the need for a semi-autonomous body to take care of the functions described in section 12(5) (a) (xiv) of the Education Labour Relations Act of 1993 (and included in the subsequent Educators' Employment Act of 1994), namely:

The registration of professional educators, and the keeping of a register or roll of such educators for regulating qualifications, standards and professional discipline of educators, and their admission to the education profession.

The Educators' Code of Professional Ethics postulates that developing the ethics of the profession means making the Code a part of every educator's professional life. To achieve this, the Code must be more than just a piece of paper but must influence the way educators act in their relations with other people (SACE, 2000). It is within this context that the SACE Code of Conduct for Educators stipulates how educators ought to behave in their working lives as professional educators. *Ought to* indicate that the Code of Conduct for Educators is providing moral prescriptions. It is instructing them what to do as educators in their relations with other people – from an ethical perspective.

The Code of Conduct for Educators also tells educators that *they ought to*: (1) act in a proper and becoming way such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute; (2) acknowledge, uphold and promote basic human rights, as embodied in the constitution of South Africa; (3) exercise authority with compassion. Shapiro and Stefkovich noted that the ethic of the profession often meant codes, rules, and principles, all of which aligned with the traditional concepts of justice, but maintained that their interpretation of the ethic of the profession considered other paradigms such as professional judgment and professional decision-making. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) maintain that the ethic of the profession should be central to complete the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care. According to Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, p. 9), the ethic of the profession considers "those moral aspects unique to the profession and the questions that arise as educational leaders become more aware of their own personal and professional codes of ethics". The ethic of the profession is deontological and axiological in nature, in that the predetermined codes and values guiding the profession serve as a marker for ethical conduct (Wood and Hilton. 2012).

The ethic of the profession places the learner at the centre of the decision-making process. It considers not only the standards of the profession, but the ethics of the community (Furman, 2004), the personal and professional codes of an educational leader, and the professional codes of several educational organizations (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005). The ethic of the profession acknowledges that there are guiding values (e.g., principles, codes, assumptions, mores, and expected behaviours) within each profession. Thus, adhering to these values is an

obligatory duty to a leader's craft. Professional codes of ethics are paramount to honouring the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Accordingly, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) define the ethic of the profession as encapsulated by professional codes and mores underpinning a profession. In addition, school principals are expected to adhere to all school policies and regulations that affect the operation of the school. Through my readings and observations, it is not easy being an educator in South Africa. Daily, many educators face enormous challenges with few resources, struggle to differentiate curriculum and struggle to make a difference to the lives of their learners (SIAS, 2014). All these challenges may tempt educators and school principals to be unethical. In performing their duties, educators are required to act professionally and, specifically, to act ethically (SACE, 2000). The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has responded to these challenges by developing the Code of Professional Ethics (Code).

With this code in mind, school principals who employ an ethic of the profession should consider the following questions: How do school principals and educators act in a proper and becoming way? How do they decide which actions promote well-being of the learners? How do they avoid causing harm? To answer these questions, they should go back to the idea of making distinctions. One way of making distinctions is for the principals to provide a list of core values (and their opposites) that they can use as a basis for making ethical distinctions. Some of the common core values put forward by SACE (2000) include: (1) Fairness- (Unfairness), (2) Honesty- (Dishonesty), (3) Responsibility - (Irresponsibility) and (4) Justice (Injustice). The key values promoted by SACE are to do well and avoid harm.

In making decisions from this perspective, school principals should ask the following questions: "What would the profession expect me to do? What does the community expect me to do? And what should I do base on the best interests of the learners, who may be diverse in their composition and needs" (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005, p. 26). Utilising the lens of professional ethics allows school leaders to act as critical pragmatists (Lashley, 1994). These are the leaders who ask critical questions about practical outcomes and about the effects of their decisions. The preamble of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics lays the foundation for this moral aspect by advocating a strong ethical approach to the education profession: The educators who are registered with SACE: (1) acknowledge the noble calling of their profession to educate and train the learners of our country; (2) acknowledge that the attitude, dedication,

self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in this country; (3) acknowledge, uphold and promote basic human rights, as embodied in the Constitution of South Africa; (4) commit themselves to do all within their power, in the exercising of their professional duties, to act in accordance with the ideals of their profession as expressed in this code; and (5) act in a proper and becoming way such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute. The questions posed by each perspective in the ethical framework posed by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) are important to school leaders as they work to address issues related to social justice, to the education diverse learners, and to performance and resource inequities in schools. Findings from the literature on ethical leadership shows that school principals and educators are still behaving unethical. Therefore, employing the ethic of the profession may assist school principals and educators to act in a proper way and take decisions based on the educational interest of the learners.

Using the lens of the ethic of the profession to resolve or solve an ethical dilemma raises questions such as these: What is in the best interests of the learner? What are the personal and professional codes of an educational leader? What professional organizations' codes of ethics should be considered? What does the local community think about this issue? And what is the appropriate way for a professional to act in this situation, based on the standards of the profession (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005, p. 26)? In respect of the ethics of one's profession; these perspectives pose different questions for school leadership and management to consider as they make decisions that hold them accountable to stakeholders and responsible for the children they serve.

To conclude this section, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggest that school principals need a clear understanding of the best interests of the learner when making ethical decisions. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) further propose that school administrators respond to dilemmas through use of multiple lenses. I can now say that the ethical approach that underlies the SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators has both a legal and moral status. It is an approach that has strong links to our African heritage with its emphasis on our relationships to others and their well-being. As I mentioned earlier, SACE's specific reference to human rights embodies some of the strengths of the other approaches. There is a strong resonance with the utilitarian emphasis on consequences. Human rights aim at avoiding consequences that violate and inflict

harm on a person and promote consequences that improve social and personal well-being. A human rights approach also shares characteristics with rule-based approaches.

However, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) argue that Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) stopped short of proposing an actual sequence for applying the use of multiple lenses to dilemmas for resolution. Instead, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) posit that the research of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggest that administrators vary in their ethical postures and sequence of applying ethical frameworks. In order to address the element of variability, Begley (2006) calls for a specific sequence for application of ethical frameworks, beginning with the ethic of critique, then the ethic of care, and ending with the ethic of justice. According to Begley, the ethic of critique allows for an understanding of the situation, including the perspectives of those without a voice or equal representation. Begley suggests logically following on the ethic of care, which equally assessed the situation in a humane way. Finally, Begley holds that the ethic of justice maximised the benefits for all and respected the rights of the individual. I believe that, there is no need to take a specific sequence when applying an ethical framework, especially in schools. The important issue is for the leader to make sure that the best interest of the learner is conceded when making any decision.

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) maintain that school administrators who use professional judgment utilised the ethic of the profession when considering the best interest of the learners during ethical decisions. Shapiro and Gross (2008) agree that the ethic of the profession places the learners at the centre of the decision-making process. However, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) further acknowledge that leaders should know their own values and ethical predispositions, as well as become more sensitive to the values orientation of others. In addition, Begley and Stefkovich (2007) suggest that values related to leadership practices should guide action in resolving ethical dilemmas. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, leadership is a process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it. In order for the school principals to be able to influence the followers they must understand and be sensitive to their values. The next section presents and discusses the second theoretical framework of this study: Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism).

3.4 Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism – Ubuntu)

As mentioned earlier in my introduction of this chapter, to critically explore ethical leadership in the four researched schools, I also decided to supplement the above theoretical lens of Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of Ethical leadership with Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model (African Humanism - Ubuntu). Ubuntu is an African philosophy of humanness which provides a compass for direction of ethical leadership. So, ethical leadership from an African perspective is mostly related with self-actualisation, moral relationship, moral perception and unbiased dealing (Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, ethical leadership is based on personal characteristics and qualities of the leader which are perceived by their employees as normatively appropriate like honesty and fairness. African humanism or Ubuntu evokes both reason and empathy as the basis for ethical leadership.

In the African culture and in the spirit of Ubuntu, even though you do not know the person who comes to your home in need for assistance, because they are human like you, kindness and generosity will be extended to him/her. Influenced by this spirit of humanity, Africans act out of compassion, based on an understanding of common human condition, recognising morality and dependence on one another. This implies respect for the other, helpfulness, sharing, caring, unselfishness, a sense of community (commonwealth) and respect. This is what encapsulates Khoza's (2011) model of African Humanism-Ubuntu. To illustrate Ubuntu further, in the interview between the late former President Nelson Mandela and Mr Tim Modise, Mr Mandela as cited in Khoza (2011) illuminates this philosophy (of Ubuntu) when he says:

In the old days when we were young, a traveller would stop at a village and once he stopped he did not have to ask for food or water, once he stopped the people gave him food at the table. That is one aspect of Ubuntu, but it will have various aspects; respect, helpfulness, caring, community sharing, trust and usefulness.

African genius lies in caring for people which is one of the aspect of Ubuntu. According to Khoza (2011), Ubuntu is a concept that brings to the force images of supportiveness, cooperation, and solidarity. It is the basis of a social contract that stems from, but surpasses the narrow confines of the nuclear family to be extended attraction network to the community. Similarly, the late former President, Mr Nelson Mandela, describes Ubuntu as a philosophy constituting a universal truth, a way of life, which underpins an open and caring society (Mandela, 2006). In Africa, the *Ubuntu* philosophy is an ethical code that glues society

together, lubricates tolerance and respect for human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership. Khoza (2011) posits that Ubuntu is articulated in the Zulu proverb “*Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu*” which means that a person is regarded as a person because of other people. In essence, this means in the absence of other human beings, a person was likely to behave like an animal. In the next section below, I therefore discuss various aspects of Khoza’s (2011) Attuned Leadership Model in relation to my study. These are: Being, Humanness, Individualism, Compassion, Moral necessity and Commonwealth (Khoza, 2011).

3.4.1 Being

According to Khoza (2011), my being and your being are the creation of our collective being, the being of humanity itself. This leads to the proposition that we are necessarily moral beings because each of us owes our existence to all others. This is not because others are useful to us but because we are bound by reason and feelings to acknowledge the personhood of others as we seek to be acknowledge for our own (Khoza, 2011). In metaphysical terms, Ubuntu is first and foremost a statement of being- the ‘I am’ in all of us. It declares that each one of us, in our separate lives, draws existence from the collective and we are only person through other persons. It does not stop here. The divine and everlasting spirit of the Almighty unites us, while our ancestors who leave us for the world beyond the grave are ever-present to remind us of our spiritual bonds and duties towards community. We all exist in the light of a great spirit. These metaphysical statements make fundamental assertions about the nature of our existence that are not reducible to anything else. When it comes to the Great spirit we enter the realm of faith. The reach of this metaphysics is enormous. Its repercussions flow through all subsequent statements about who and what we are; *ontologically*, how we should see the world; *epistemologically*, what our knowledge amounts to. Ubuntu recognises that knowledge accumulates from generation to generation. It is our collective knowledge, built on traditions that are culturally handed down, and derived from the study of the known world as well as introspection of ourselves; *logically*, what is reasonable; *ethically*, how we should act for the good of all. Ubuntu assumes that we are by nature moral, because it would not be possible for humans to exist collectively, or even individually, without an innate ethical sense; *aesthetically*, how beauty can be collectively perceived; and *politically*, how decisions should be made (Khoza, 2011).

One cannot exist as a human being in isolation. Interconnectedness is both a precondition of social living and the basis of individual and group morality. It affirms one's humanity by recognising the humanity of other, and hence respecting them, the philosophy is inherently moral (Khoza, 2011). According to Vogel (2012), moral principles express a sense of duty and obligation to others and are shared by a group of people. Beliefs and values of what is right and what is wrong therefore provide the basis of discussion and agreement within a group as to what is considered moral by that group. These agreements on moral principles then provide a foundation for an ethical framework, which "provides a system of rules or principles that guide us in making decisions in a particular situation" (Northouse, 2010, p. 378).

3.4.2 Humanness

The second aspect of Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model is humanness. According to Khoza (2011), welcoming a stranger depicts the spirit of Ubuntu as deeply humane. The term 'humanness' is used to describe compassion. Based on the Zulu meaning of the word Ubuntu, from the proverb "Umuntu Ngumuntu ngabantu", humanness is the quality of being human, considering the whole of humankind as a group. Humanness implies that we are all in some sense bound to each other because we draw our being from the collective. In addition, to be humane is a feature of human nature and a quality of an individual or society system. To be human is to show kindness to other living beings. When we come to speak of humanness, however, we go to the deepest level, implying that one human being can emphasise with another because they take "their being" from each other, and each draw on the collective spirit of humanity Khoza (2011, p. 88). In addition, to be human is to show kindness to other living beings. One should promote happiness and spare suffering wherever possible. In this sense, we can talk of humanity as a caring species or use the term to refer to the quality of humanity (compassion). When we approach humanity from a Christian theological perspective, following the Book of Genesis from the Bible, we possess the knowledge of good and evil and, because we have been granted the free will, we are capable of both good and evil and every kind of good-natured or devilish behaviour in between. In most other theologies, the 'human in us' also knows good from evil (Khoza, 2011).

3.4.3 Compassion

The third aspect of Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model is compassion. According to Khoza (2011), 'Ethical Leadership' and 'compassion' are not words we commonly link together. Most leaders are conditioned to put business before kindness, to lead with their heads, not their hearts. The popular perception of a powerful leader is someone who's tough, strong and results-driven. The reality is that powerful leaders, amongst their other traits, have the conviction, confidence and courage to cultivate connectivity and compassion. Rationality, human reason is one aspect of being human; the other is compassion human kindness. To feel is an individual experience; but to share feeling is to experience, intuitively, the pains and joys of others (Khoza, 2011).

Empathy is the foundation of compassion. The world 'compassion' is often taken to mean pity, or sympathy for suffering, but more broadly it means loving understanding applied to others. Where sympathy is a one-way expression of personal feeling applied to others, compassion rests on the empathy we feel when we have knowledge of the inner state of others. It calls forth a heartfelt response that is an expression of our humanness (Khoza, 2011). In other words, the crux of compassion is heartfelt connection in situations where others are suffering and acting when possible, to help relieve it. Through how they are and what they do, compassionate leaders craft emotionally healthy and positively energised workplaces. They genuinely care for others' well-being and are watchful to their needs, which they put before their own. They are aware of the impact their feelings have on others. They connect through empathy to keep them in touch and in tune with what other people think and feel. And they use positive emotions to inspire and dissipate toxic emotions that are discouraging.

The principle upon which we derive our sense of being is one of empathy leading to compassion. It is the reason, it is intuition; it is not singular but is reciprocal. It is not directed from the self to other, it encompasses all of us. Leadership require intuition and understanding, no leader can get along and be effective without a leap of understanding into the hearts and minds of the followers. The strength of African moral philosophy is that it will influence a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision (Khoza, 2011). He further argues that compassion rests on the empathy we feel when we have knowledge of the "inner state of others". Leadership without a compassion is "hollow". To lead effectively, a leader should be ethical and moral. To lead you need to have a 'feel' for people, you need to have empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority (Khoza, 2011, p. 81). As per

Maxwell's keen observation, "leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand" (2014, p. 11), which suggests that, for leaders to be effective, they need to connect with the people. Going a little further, Maxwell (2014) states that, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care about them." To lead, you need to conceptually understand the problems, situations and decisions your peers and employees are facing. People around you want to know that you get to understand their challenges. You know the facts. Without a solid cognitive understanding of what's going on, followers will be able to connect with you around their projects and problems.

Ethical leaders care about connecting with the people they lead. They see connectivity as the conduit for almost everything else they do and compassion is the key. Compassionate leaders inspire people with purpose, hope, optimism and energy because they resonate, empathise and connect. They should ensure clear and transparent communication with the employees and clients. They should set an example for others. They should ensure expression of their emotions both precisely and candidly. Compassion and connectivity are not only telling social and emotional factors in creating vibrant work relationships. Research reveals they are also key to maintain emotional balance, build up reserves of resilience, insulate yourself from the harmful effects of toxic emotions, relieve leadership stress and re-energise and renew yourself (Cropper, 2009).

It is worth noting that, apart from being compassionate towards others, we will need their compassion and forgiveness at points in our lives. We need the love and understanding of others, and when given it becomes a mutually reinforcing we can bridge the differences between us and learn to love each other as follower being. Compassion is the other side of what followers of Kant see as the rational duty to treat others as we ourselves deserve to be treated (Khoza, 2011). Being compassionate can encourage healthy relationships as well as can ensure a more empathetic work environment. Compassionate leaders always put others needs before their own. They create a tuning in with other thoughts and feelings. This is what Robert Greenleaf calls "servant leadership". John Maxwell put it this way: Servant-leaders never pursue a mission at the expense of their people. Rather, servant-leaders earn the loyalty and best efforts of their people by serving the interests and investing in the development of those they lead. A servant-leader leads to see others succeed (Maxwell, 2010).

To be without compassion is to cut oneself off the very source of one's being. On the other hand, leadership without compassion is paralysed. It cannot reach into the community and

resonate with the expectations and desires of the followership (Khoza, 2011). When you are in a leadership position, vision, integrity & compassion are infinitely more important than the words you say. These three traits are very important to be an effective an ethical leader. John Maxwell (2010) got it right when he said, integrity is all-inclusive. It is not something you demonstrate at home or church and set on a shelf at work. People of integrity do not live bifurcated lives; their morals, ethics, treatment of others and overall character are the same wherever they are, whatever they are doing. In a similar context, Mkhize (2008) refers to Ubuntu as the process of becoming a human being and calls for a mode of being in the world, which requires each person to maintain social justice, to be empathetic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience. Ubuntu is further described by Bekker (2008) as the capacity for compassion, reciprocity, and dignity. The Ubuntu philosophy believes in group solidarity, which is central to the survival of African communities (Mbigi & Maree 2005). Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2011). The first part of integrity is the judgment of whether a leader's actions are consistent with his or her words, and the second clause is the judgment whether those actions are consistent with actions deemed by the followers to be ethical and moral. Leader integrity is included in the moral leader's approach most notably discussed by Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005) and Brown and Trevino (2009). They describe the moral leader as the one who behaves as per the general concept of ethicality and integrity. Similarly, Yukl (2006) describes leaders as being ethical when they keep promises and behave consistently. Thus, ethical leaders keep their promises and act consistently, in a predictable way. Furthermore, Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015) state that a principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by acting with integrity, with fairness and in an ethical manner. They further state that principals should demonstrate integrity, dedication, humility, openness, creativity, honesty, forward- thinking competence, inspiration, intelligence fairness and assertiveness. At school, a school principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). Apparently, there is no true leadership without service to the community and there is no interest greater than the "common interest-certainly not narrow self-interest" (Khoza,2011, p. 17).

For Africans, we are more inclined to regard empathy, rather than logical necessity, as a driving force of collective duty to treat others fairly and with decency. On the other hand, Westerners

accustomed regarding reason rather than empathy as the basis of moral duty. Reasoning is not enough. It does not explain or substantiate our emotional, empathetic connection with each other, which derive from a source other than reason. The people you lead also want to know that you *feel* what they feel. That you understand them on an emotional level (Khoza, 2011).

According to Frost (2004), all leaders create pain; it goes with the territory. In addition to sometimes providing inspiration and excitement, leadership is about pushing limits, setting new directions, and taking decisions that are not necessarily popular with one's followers and they often feel angry, disillusioned, frustrated or afraid. He further argues that good leaders understand these dynamics and take steps to mitigate, minimize or mop up the pain they create (Frost, 2004). The same situation that is happening to some schools, most of the time school principals get busier and more stressed, they begin to lose 'groundedness'. They become unfriendly and lose their sense of connection that's essential for compassion. They focus even more on themselves and on how tired they are, which disconnects them from other staff members. Prolonged periods of discord like this promote toxic emotions and behaviour that easily spread to infect the people they lead. The whole situation creates unnecessary pain and suffering in the work environment. Therefore, an ethical leader who is guided by Ubuntu and who is compassionate would be sensible enough. For example, he/she would be conscious about his own feelings, about impact of his words on the followers and he would be focussed on others needs and feelings. He would be very much responsive and would show empathy to others. Compassionate leaders are in fair situation of dealing with crisis, encourage followers to better actions and are effective and efficient communicators (Frost, 2004 & Khoza, 2011). These leaders have what Daniel Goleman calls emotional intelligence: the ability to have self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills.

While African, East and West have differences in how we understand compassion, there's commonality on some of its essential components. For example; Respect and Caring toward others, which is resonated by The Dalai Lama, who defines it as "*a mental attitude, associated with a sense of commitment, responsibility and respect*". Selfless and Unconditional: to put others' needs before yours and not 'favour-trade', expect something in return or give or withhold compassion depending on whether we see someone as friend or enemy. *Compassion means giving selflessly*". And; Empathy: compassion is a deep understanding of the emotional state of another. It leads us to feel empathy, where empathy is what enables us to connect with others, which can lead us to feel compassionate. The dimension compassion is the value that

illustrates the quality of understanding of the other one's problems and the urge for helping him. When Africans grow up, we learn that we are all interconnected and only by sharing and giving we can eventually receive (Khoza, 2011)

3.4.4 Individualism

The fourth aspect of Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model is individualism. According to Khoza (2011), "I am because of you; I am because we are; and since we are, therefore, I am" say all about individual in terms of his/her relationship with others. This also includes *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, which could also be translated as "a person is a person through other persons". In addition, these views illustrate that I—as a subject—depend on you, and we on all of us, to exist at all. Thus, my subjectivity is not driving force but a dependability outcome (Khoza, 2011). This notion also strengthens by Dalai Lama when He says: "*If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion*" (Dalai Lama). These, roughly, are the teachings the descriptions and prescriptions of Ubuntu (Mkhize 2008; Khoza, 2011). As I presented above an ethic of compassion, so it was noted that, Ubuntu takes plurality seriously. It is intended to ensure that all voices are heard. One would expect such an ethic to be inclusive rather than exclusive, that is, that it would include, not exclude; accommodate, not separate.

As such, the notion of agreeing to disagree emphasises Ubuntu's respect for individuality. However, be it perceived, within the context of the Ubuntu ethic, personal identity does not primarily reside in individualistic properties, but in relationships. Ubuntu defines the individual in terms of his/her relationship with others. Individuals exist in their relationships with other people, we don't form relationships, relationships form us. This is not to say that one's identity is being dictated by others. Rather, as Forster (2007, p.273) points out, in the context of the community that is Ubuntu, personal identity resides in reciprocal interconnection: although the community enriches, builds up, maintains and develops the individual, it is also the individual who enriches, builds up, maintains and develops the community. The individual is the locus of community consciousness. We are gifted with our power and capacities precisely to contribute to the growth and wellbeing of society, and others have a right to expect that we will give and not merely take. Ubuntu excludes an oppressive communalism. Ubuntu, suggests that an individual grows more fully human, more true in his/her identity, through engagement with other persons (Forster 2007; Mkhize, 2008; Khoza, 2011). As an individual, I need to think

philosophically about what I am doing and why. As humans, we need to take responsibility for ourselves and our actions. Learning and practising compassion will help us feel more content and at peace with ourselves and more concerned for others because “I am because of you; I am because we are; and since we are, therefore, I am” (Khoza, 2011).

3.4.5 Moral necessity

The fifth aspect of Khoza’s (2011) Attuned Leadership Model is moral necessity. According to Khoza (2011), we are special because we are moral creatures. Ethically, Ubuntu assumes that we are by nature moral, again because it would not be possible for humans to exist collectively, or even individually, without an innate ethical sense (Khoza, 2011). Ethical centeredness does not ensure that we necessarily always act morally. It does mean that virtue has authority over our entire being. It has noted that virtue seems largely absent in public life and justice seems rigid and impoverished. Among the reasons is the over-emphasis on thought and under-emphasis on feelings. Moral behaviour is a necessary part of the ‘being’ of being human. Because we are all human, the individual’s moral sense is an acknowledgement of the authority of virtue over human interactions. Whether virtue is present or not in our relationships is up to us as moral beings. We ignore the authority of virtue at the cost of our consciences. Moral necessity has strong implications for the philosophy of ethical leadership. It makes sense to talk of a “leadership imperative” that is necessarily focused on the common good. If all leaders are in essence moral beings, then leadership must all times strive to do good and avoid moral wickedness. Virtue is leadership’s beacon (Khoza, 2011, p. 102).

Ubuntu joins the broad category of philosophies that affirm the dignity and worth of all people, based on the ability to determine right and wrong by appealing to universal human qualities, including prudence and emotional intelligent (Khoza, 2011) Therefore, it makes sense when Riggio, Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010, p. 237) state that prudence is the wisdom that manages or dictates a proper balance between two extremes in a world of shifting contexts and priorities. Because prudence is critical, a leader cannot be ethical unless he or she is prudent. Hence, leadership is about sense and sensing, about thought and feeling, about insight into and harmony with the followership; so, as I mentioned before: no leader can get along and be effective without a leap of understanding into the hearts and minds of the followers. In Africa, we say a person is a person because of other people. This also fits in the relationship between a leader and followers. Mutual dependence is the ethic of African humanism, or Ubuntu

(Khoza, 2011). So, leaders need to be trained to exercise both mental and emotional intelligence. Therefore, reasoning is necessary because it cements society and affirms the values by which we are guided. Certainly, humans, must use reason to solve problems not just technical problems, but existential problems about how to live and get along with others (Khoza, 2011).

Furthermore, Malunga (2009) posits that as a role model, the leader legitimizes his or her relationship by a commitment to such African values as honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, compassion, empathy, dignity and respect for others. Ubuntu is thus treated as the ethical benchmark of African societies and provides a guide to the Africans in whatever settings they are in (Mangena, 2007). In short, to be ethical is a “universal duty”. African humanism makes up for a deficiency in Western individualist rationalism by insisting that morality is an expression of the collective spirit and not merely an individual duty. Ethical leadership is an extension of this duty and spirit (Khoza, 2011, p. 33).

Moved by Ubuntu, the community genuinely extends its welcome to the stranger because ‘he is one of us’, a follower human. Not that we have calculated that it will gain an advantage for us. This behaviour is conditional, it is concerned with consequences. It should be empathically not about advantage but about giving for the sake of giving because the stranger is human. Ubuntu predicates an absolute standard of moral behaviour not related to pleasure or practical benefit because we are moral creature.

3.4.6 Commonwealth

The sixth and the last aspect of Khoza’s (2011) Attuned Leadership Model is commonwealth. According to Khoza (2011), we know that we owe our existence to the commonwealth of others and we search for the meaning of being in our relationships with others. Because, modern brain science shows that we are equipped to open our heart and minds to the realities faced by others. This is where the moral certainties of reason break down and we enter more complex and difficult areas where compassion may provide the answers. Commonwealth emphasises the link between common action and common benefits. It is about collectives and communitarian values. So, Ubuntu is a living force that bridges differences between people and makes shared vision and action possible (Khoza, 2011).

In stark contrast, Western individualism is not satisfactorily rooted in the nature, of human beings or in their relationships with each other. It lacks the essential dimension of common humanity based on both reason and, for lack of any single term, emotional intelligence, social awareness, compassion and spirituality (Khoza, 2011). However, the meaning that Africans give to the word 'personhood, recognising that our person is more than individual personality but is our social being in the eyes of others. Moving to leadership, I feel that, a school principal with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others and does not feel threatened that others are able and good. Ubuntu is the crux of being human. Khoza (2011) stresses that a good leader is a leader that appreciates that the success of others does not diminish his own success, but adds to the good of the commonwealth. A leader generates trust because what glues the relationship between leader and followers is, simply, trust. A leader practices introspection and self-renewal. This suggests the fact that man cannot live in isolation. Ubuntu means that each individual expression is ideally expressed in relationship with others. Ubuntu is a concrete manifestation of the interconnectedness of human beings. Respect entails listening to the other person and it also involves humility, honesty and treating others as you want them to treat you (Khoza, 2011). Furthermore, good leadership strives to fulfil the common good. Leadership is efficacious when the followership embraces the vision and strives for transformation too. A leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts (Khoza, 2011).

The tremendous power of Ubuntu resides in its very simple formulation that every person's being is dependent on every other. In Africa smiling and laughing is a very basic behaviour, especially within the Ubuntu lifestyle. Empathy is not only related to the dimension compassion, but also belongs to the dimension of respect. In Africa, the idea of humanism has been identified variously as Ubuntu. Based on African Humanness, once people have a true understanding of themselves, they can gain a better understanding of others and so create more effective business and personal relationships. Ubuntu is about reviving the aspects of being human in leadership. These aspects include respect for the other, helpfulness, sharing, caring, unselfishness, and a sense of community. It is an all-embracing intellectual, emotional, spiritual and psychological acknowledgement of commonality. General speaking, Ubuntu provides a compass for the direction of ethical leadership. In this study, I aim to see how my research participants use or do not use the above aspects as they enact their teaching and learning in their schools.

3.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I commenced by explaining the origins of theory. I proceeded to present and analyse the primary theory employed by this study which is Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) Model of ethical leadership. This model falls within three metatheories which are: deontology, teleology, and axiology. Four ethical approaches for school leadership were presented in this theory: the ethics of justice, care, critique and the profession. An ethic of justice focuses on rights, law and policies, and concepts such as fairness, equality, and individual freedom. An ethic of care is described as relational and aligns with ideas of respect, love, and regard for others, an ethic of critique is rooted in critical theory and aligns with principles of social justice and human dignity and ethic of the profession is about serving the best interests of the learner as the main focus of ethical decision. I further discussed the secondary theory used in my study, which is Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model. Briefly, this model encompasses the following: Being, Humanness, Individualism, Compassion, Moral necessity and Commonwealth. As these theories complement each other, I will utilise them to effectively analyse and understand the phenomenon of ethical leadership in the four researched rural schools. The next chapter presents the research design and methodology utilised throughout this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the theoretical underpinnings of the study. This chapter presents the research design and methodological aspects of the study. I commence the chapter by discussing the research paradigm and philosophical assumptions underpinning the study; thereafter I discuss the multiple case study research design. Furthermore, I present the different research participants and the methods used to generate data which include individual interviews, questionnaires and documents review. In addition, I present the different levels of analyses. Finally, I conclude with issues of trustworthiness, ethics in research and limitations of the study.

4.2 Paradigmatic disposition

After researchers have made a choice about philosophical assumptions, they then further shape their research by bringing to the inquiry paradigms or worldviews (Maxwell, 2005 & Creswell, 2007). The term “paradigm” originates from the Greek word “*paradeigma*” which means pattern and was first used by Thomas Kuhn (1962) to denote a conceptual framework shared by a community of scientists which provided them with a convenient model for examining problems and finding solutions. A paradigm or worldview is "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17; as cited by Creswell, 2007, p. 19). A paradigm can be further defined as the “basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). These beliefs have been called paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mertens, 1998); philosophical assumptions, epistemologies, and ontologies (Crotty, 1998); broadly conceived research methodologies (Neumann, 2000) and alternative knowledge claims (Creswell, 2003). According to Taylor, Kermode and Roberts (2007), a paradigm is “a broad view or perspective of something” (Kermode & Roberts, 2007, p. 5). In addition, Weaver and Olson’s (2006) definition of paradigm reveals how research could be affected and guided by a certain paradigm by stating that “paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices that regulate inquiry within a discipline by providing lenses, frames and processes through which investigation is accomplished” (Weaver & Olson, 2006, p. 460). Similarly, Lee and Lings

(2008, p. 372) describe a paradigm as “a set of practices or methods used”, for example questions asked, phenomena examined and interpretation of results of a discipline or research.

There are three generally accepted research paradigms: “positivism, critical theory and interpretivism” (Willis 2007, p. 6). However, according to Creswell (2003), he posits that there are four worldviews/paradigms that inform qualitative research and these are: post-positivism, constructivism, and advocacy/participatory and pragmatism. The differences of opinion as to how many paradigms there are out there has led to other researchers calling these “paradigm wars” (Creswell, 2007). Paradigms used by qualitative researchers vary with the set of beliefs they bring to research, and the types have continually evolved over time (Creswell, 2007). Individuals may also use multiple paradigms in their qualitative research that are compatible, such as constructionist and participatory worldviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research methods are used more frequently within the constructivist paradigm as they are presumed to be “better suited to investigate the truth” (Donaldson, Christie & Mark 2009, p. 25).

Based on the design of this qualitative study, I purposely adopt the social constructivism/interpretivism as a research paradigm (Creswell, 2007). This study was generally rolled out in a natural environment where reality is socially constructed (Goldkuhl, 2012). The focus of this study is thus subjective in nature. The goal is to uncover perceptions of reality about ethical leadership as understood by study participants in their natural settings. The goal of this research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation prevailing in their schools. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically (Creswell, 2007).

4.2.1 Social constructivism/ interpretivism

Trauth (2001, p.7) states that “interpretivism is the lens most frequently influencing the choice of qualitative methods”. The goal of research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction 'with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives. Rather than starting with a theory (as in postpositivism), inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning (Creswell, 2007). Thus, constructivist researchers often address the "processes" of interaction

among individuals (Creswell, 2007, p. 53). They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants. Researchers recognise that their own background shapes their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Maxwell, 2005 & Creswell, 2007). Thus, the researchers make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation shaped by their own experiences and background. The researcher's intent, then, is to interpret the meanings others have about the world (Klein & Myers, 1999) and therefore qualitative research is often called "interpretive" research (Creswell, 2007). There are, however, some reservations to make against such views (Myers & Avison, 2002, p. 5) who write that "It should be clear from above that the word 'qualitative' is not a synonym for 'interpretive'. Qualitative research may or not be interpretive, depending on the underlying philosophical assumptions of the researcher."

Likewise, according to Goldkuhl (2012), the core idea of interpretivism is to work with these subjective meanings already there in the social world; i.e. to acknowledge their existence, to reconstruct them, to understand them, to avoid distorting them, to use them as building blocks in theorizing. "The aim of all interpretive research is to understand how members of a social group, through their participation in social processes, enact their particular realities and endow them with meaning, and to show how these meanings, beliefs and intentions of the members help to constitute their actions" (Goldkuhl, 2012, p.5).

To conclude this section, in this study, research questions were broader and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, I could be able to listen carefully to what participants say or do about the ethical leadership in schools.

4.3 Philosophical Assumptions

In the choice of qualitative research, inquirers make certain assumptions. These philosophical assumptions consist of a stance towards the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what she or he knows (epistemology), the role of values in the research (axiology), the language of research (rhetoric), and the methods used in the process (methodology) (Creswell, 2003, Creswell, 2007). I realise, however, that the basic philosophical assumptions relate to ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetoric, and methodology as central features of all qualitative studies. Therefore, it is also important for me to consider different research

paradigms and matters of ontology, epistemology and axiology. Since these parameters describe perceptions, beliefs, assumptions and the nature of reality and truth (or knowledge of that reality), as well as the individuals values (Creswell, 2007), they can influence the way in which the research is undertaken, from design through to conclusions, and it is therefore important to understand and discuss these aspects in order that approaches congruent to the nature and aims of the particular inquiry are adopted, and to ensure that researcher biases are understood, exposed, and minimised.

4.3.1 Ontology

Goldhuhl (2012) describes ontology as the researcher's view on the nature of reality, and specifically, as s/he asks himself whether this is an objective reality that really exists or only a subjective reality created in our minds. Further, Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) both use an everyday example, and a social science example to illustrate the point. For the everyday example, they use the example of a workplace report – asking one to question whether it describes what is really going on, or only what the author thinks is going on. They further highlight the complexity that is introduced when considering phenomena such as culture, power or control, and whether they really exist or are simply an illusion, further extending the discussion as to how individuals (and groups) determine these realities – does the reality exist only through experience of it (subjectivism), or does it exist independently of those who live it (objectivism).

In general, qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality (Hatch & Cunliffe (2006). Rather, there are multiple realities/truths constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest from many different perspectives. According to Creswell (2001), people impose order on the world perceived in an effort to construct meaning which lies in cognition not in elements external to us; information impinging on our cognitive systems is screened, translated, altered, perhaps rejected by the knowledge that already exists in that system; the resulting knowledge is idiosyncratic and is purposeful.

The ontological issue relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics. When researchers conduct qualitative research, they are embracing the idea of multiple realities (Creswell, 2007). Different researchers embrace different realities, as do also the individuals being studied and the readers of a qualitative study. When studying individuals, qualitative researchers conduct

a study with the intent of reporting these multiple realities (Creswell, 2007). In this study, I made use of multiple realities of the various study participants to explore ethical leadership in schools which shall include the use of multiple quotations based on the actual words of different individuals (educators and school principals) and presenting different perspectives from individuals when analysing data. To compile a phenomenology, I reported how individuals participating in the study view their experiences from their different ontological stances.

4.3.2 Epistemology

The term epistemology comes from the Greek word “episteme”, which means knowledge. In simple terms, epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge or how we come to know (Trochim, 2000, as cited in Krauss, 2005, p. 758). Epistemology is intimately related to ontology and methodology; as ontology involves the philosophy of reality, epistemology addresses how we come to know that reality while methodology identifies the practices used to attain knowledge of it. Epistemology poses the following questions: What is the relationship between the knower and what is known? How do we know what we know? What counts as knowledge? In the naturalist or constructivist view, that knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the phenomena studied; researchers interact with the participants of study to obtain data; inquiry changes both researcher and study participants; and knowledge is context and time- dependent (Coll & Chapman, 2000; Cousins, 2002).

Within an epistemological assumption, conducting a qualitative study means that researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied. In practice, qualitative researchers conduct their studies in the "field," where the participants live and work as these are important contexts for understanding what the participants are saying (Creswell, 2007, p. 18). In this study, I spent much time in the "field" to get to know and understand the participants and the phenomenon I was exploring which was ethical leadership in schools utilising multiple case study design. A good case study requires prolonged stay at the research site (Barbie & Mouton, 2009). In short, as a researcher in this study, I attempted to minimise the "distance" or "objective separateness" (Guba & Lincoln, 1988, p. 94) between myself and those being researched by collaborating with the participants and spending time in schools with participants generating data.

4.3.3 Axiology

According to Heron (1996), axiology is a branch of philosophy that studies judgments about value. The role that your own values play in all stages of the research process is of great importance if you wish your research results to be credible. Heron (1996) argues that our values are the guiding reason of all human action. He further posits that researchers demonstrate axiological skill by being able to articulate their values as a basis for making judgements about what research they are conducting and how they go about doing it. For example, in this study I placed great importance in data that was generated through interviews. This in itself suggests that I place personal much value on the interaction with my participants more than their anonymous views.

All researchers bring value to a study, but qualitative researchers like to make explicit those values (Creswell, 2007). As researcher, I consciously bring my own values to bear on this study. This impacts on (1) my choice of research area, (2) what my research questions are, (3) choice of method, (4) research design and data generation methods, and (5) the analysis and presentation of the data. To deal with these issues, we should 'recognise and acknowledge that research cannot be value free' (Bryman, 2008, p.25). So, I should forewarn my readers of the limitations of the study so that they can judge for themselves. In this chapter, issues of limitations were discussed. Further, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the generation of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes (Creswell, 2007, p. 39). This is the axiological assumption that characterises qualitative research. In this research project, to ensure that the study brings value, I used multiple sources of evidence such as the multiple quotations based on the actual words of different individuals (educators and school principals) to address a broader range of historical and behavioural issues (Yin, 2014) which in this study is the question as to how school leaders enact ethical leadership in the four research schools. The converging line was developed in this study (Yin, 2014) to strengthen the value of this study. Thus, any case study finding is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources (Yin, 2014, p. 120). In addition, the final written report or presentation included the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem and it extends the literature or signals a call for action.

To conclude this section, in considering research philosophy and approach, it is important to consider how the individual values of the researcher may play out in each stage of the research process. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2007) cite Heron (1996), who posits that our values are the guiding reason for our action.

4.3.4 Rhetorical assumptions

Researchers are notorious for providing labels and names for aspects of qualitative methods (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer, 2005). There is a peculiar rhetoric for the discourse of qualitative research that has evolved over time. Qualitative researchers tend to embrace the rhetorical assumption that writing needs to be personal and literary in form. In this study, terms; such as "credibility," "transferability," "dependability," and "confirmability" (Barbie & Mouton, 2009), or "validation" (Angen, 2000), as well as naturalistic generalisations (Stake, 1995) were employed instead of validity and reliability. For example, researchers use metaphors and refer to themselves using the first-person pronoun, "I," and they tell stories with a beginning, middle, and end, sometimes crafted chronologically, as in narrative research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Words such as "understanding," and "discover," form the glossary of emerging qualitative terms (Schwandt, 2001) and are taken as important rhetorical markers in writing purpose statements and research questions that are explored this study. In contrast, the section on "definition of key concepts" is included in the introduction chapter of this study and are not extensive. Terms defined in this study such as ethical leadership, leadership and ethical are of primary importance.

4.3.5 Methodological assumptions

The procedures of qualitative research, or its methodology, are characterised as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in generating and analysing the data. The logic that the qualitative researcher follows is inductive, from the ground up, rather than handed down entirely from a theory or from the perspectives of the inquirer (Creswell, 2007). The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent. This means that the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to generate data. For example, the questions may change, the forms of data generation may shift, and the individuals studied and the sites visited

may be modified. The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and to address the research to obtain that information (Creswell, 2007, p. 39). In this study, the research questions are subject to change in the middle of the study to reflect better the types of questions that may be needed to understand the research problem better. In response, the data generation strategy, planned before the study, may need to be modified to accompany the new questions. In this qualitative study, I typically gathered multiple forms of data, through interviews and documents reviews, rather than relying on a single data source. Then I reviewed all the data and make sense of it, organising it into categories or themes that cut across all the data sources.

In this study, the attempt was to find out the understandings, the perceptions and experiences of educators and school principals about the ethical leadership in schools. One of the methods that I used to generate data was the individual interviews with participants. The questions were broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically was forged in discussions or interactions with other persons. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. Thus, constructivist researchers often address the "processes" of interaction among individuals. Notably, the study was also focused on the specific contexts in which people live and work to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants in this study, I kept two sets of notes: one describing the environment in which my study takes place and the other containing theoretical memorandum, such as observations which contradict or enhance your original theoretical ideas. These Extensive notes are another important aspect of enhancing trustworthiness of research done within the interpretive paradigm (Babbie & Mouton, 2011 p. 275). The researcher's intent in this study is to make sense (or interpret) the meanings others have about ethical leadership practices in schools

4.4 Research design

According to Yin (2009), every type of empirical research study has an implicit, if not explicit, research design. In the most elementary sense, the design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions. Similarly, Creswell (2013, p.5) views qualitative research design as a 'rubber bands'. They can stretch and bend to some extent, but they exert a definite tension on different parts of the design, and beyond a point or under certain stresses they will break. This 'rubber band' metaphor

portrays a qualitative design as something with considerable flexibility, but in which there are constraints imposed by the different parts on one another. Constraints which are violated, make the design ineffective (Creswell, 2013, p. 5). To be sure, this qualitative research study utilises a multiple case study approach. A multiple case study approach was deemed appropriate for this study because: (a) the focus of the study was to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) the behaviour of the participants cannot be manipulated; (c) the study covers contextual conditions believe to be relevant to the phenomenon under study; and (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2003). Furthermore, a case study design provides a systematic way of looking at events, generating data, analysing information and reporting the results (Yin, 2009). Case study research is a well-known field in the social sciences and it has enjoyed great popularity among researchers over the past few decades (Yin, 2009). Colloquially, a research design is “a logical plan” for getting from here to there, where may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions about these questions (Yin, 2014, p. 28). Between here and there may be found several major steps, including the generation and analysis of relevant data.

Yin (2014, p.29) emphasises that the main purpose of the design is to help to “avoid the situation in which the evidence does not address the initial research questions”. Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2011) further state that a research design is the planning of scientific inquiry or designing a strategy for finding out something. There are two major aspects of research design. Firstly, you must specify as clearly as possible what you want to find out. Secondly, you must determine the best way to do it (Babbie & Mouton, 2011, p. 72).

A case study design is the most suitable qualitative inquiry design that identifies and describes practices, beliefs, attitudes, and “... perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge” (Patton, 2002, p. 4) that underpin the ethical leadership practices of educators and principals in the four researched schools. In fact, employing a case study methodology enabled the educators and principals to gain meaning of their reality, and it helped me as a researcher to acquire an in-depth understanding of those experiences being studied (Patton, 2008; Yin, 2009, 2011). According to Yin (2009), qualitative case study designs: (a) enable participants to be the centre of the study; (b) maximise what can be learned about a phenomenon; (c) provide for multi-perspective analysis; (d) explain a situation; (e) provide a basis to apply solutions to situations; and (f) explore differences within and between cases. It is anticipated that each case would yield findings that are unique to each school and participants, yet similar across the breadth of participants due to socio-demographic similarities (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) further states that

the case study has been a common research methodology in psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, social work, business, education, nursing and community planning” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Yin (2009, p.18) also defines the case study approach as: “An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when-the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear”.

As indicated in Chapter One the problems of unethical practices in South African schools are complex and deeply entrenched in the school environment. Therefore, this study aims to present the subjective conceptualisations, experiences and practices of these different participants (school educators and principals) in the context in which they live. This also forms one of the core assumptions which underline the case study approach and therefore make it the most appropriate research strategy for the current study. As de Vaus (2001, p.250), points out:

...case studies are particularly suited to research problems when the phenomena in which we are interested either cannot be distinguished from its context or must be seen within its context. Many social scientists believe that adequate causal explanations need to take account of the meaning that participants in a social situation attribute to their behaviour. They argue that the meaning of behaviour helps us ‘make sense’ of why one event produces outcomes. Therefore, when conducting case studies, it is very useful to collect information about the subjective meaning of behaviour for participants and build this subjective data into our analysis of the case.

Likewise, Baxter and Jack (2008, p.544) further define qualitative case studies as:

... an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, I utilised a multiple-case study approach (Merriam, 2009) to explore ethical leadership in schools. This approach was regarded useful as it allowed for an in-depth understanding of the school principals and educators’ experiences and practices in ethical leadership in schools. Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2009) and Yin (2012) state that the multiple case study as an approach to qualitative research involves a specific and detailed

study of cases which results in invaluable and deep understanding, hopefully resulting in new learning about real-world behaviour and its meaning.

Yin (2009) further states that for cases to be exemplary, they should be significant and relevant to the research focus, as well as reflecting a real-life context. Furthermore, cases should provide a complete representation of the context, and consider different perspectives. Literature exists of unethical practice in many business sectors, municipalities and government departments including schools. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to explore the understandings, perceptions, experiences and practices of educators and school principals about ethical leadership approaches and practices in four rural schools at Zululand District in KwaZulu-Natal. This multiple case study approach was not only significant and relevant to the research aims of this study, but also provided the opportunity to explore problem sets in the real-life context of the experiences of school principals and educators. Although a complete representation of any context is never entirely possible (Creswell, 2007), this multiple case study approach offers the opportunity to systematically analyse a large part of the school context, while also enabling the comparison of different perspectives as represented by the different participants.

Therefore, in this study, the research design was based on a set of four case studies of rural schools from Nongoma Circuit in the Zululand District. Two of these schools were secondary schools, while the other two were primary schools. Qualitative data for each case was obtained through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and documents review with educators and school principals.

4.4.1 Background information to the case study schools

Nongoma Circuit is situated in the north-east of the KwaZulu-Natal province. It is the most populated municipality in the Zululand Education District and the second-largest in terms of its geographical area and populations after Abaqulusi District. It is one of the five local municipalities of the Zululand District Municipality and has three tribal authorities, namely Mandlakazi, Usuthu and Matheni. It encompasses 363 settlements, Nongoma being the only one of which has some urban characteristics. 98.34% of the population lives in rural areas. The level of education is low. Only 33% of the population has a primary education; only 5.3% have an education above Grade 7 but not higher than Grade 12 (www.localgovernment.co.za, accessed on 26 June 2015). Only 12% of the community have access to electricity. The

remaining 88% meet their energy needs using hydrocarbon (coal, gas and paraffin) and/or biomass (wood, cow-dung, and crop waste), (www.localgovernment.co.za, accessed on 26 June 2015).

Figure 1: The map of KZN province, the red part shows Nongoma
(www.localgovernment.co.za, accessed on 26 June 2015).



The two schools in the study were recognised as Quintile 1 schools, one school was recognised as Quintile 2, and one primary school was recognised as quintile 4. Out of these four schools, three of these schools provided learners one meal a day by means of government-subsidised feeding programmes. For issues related to confidentiality as well as sensitivity of the research, the four schools that were used in this study were all given fictitious names which are *Ikusasaletu Secondary School*; *Khethimfundo Secondary School*; *Impumelelo Primary School* and *Qhakazangemfundo Primary School* (Department of education-Nongoma circuit office; school profile documents, 2014)

Ikusasaletu Secondary School is geographically located at Nongoma local Municipality, Kwa-Minyamanzi in Mahlombe ward under Zululand District. The school is at an impoverished poverty-stricken community within limited resources. The school was founded

in 1982 as a Higher Primary school to serve the surrounding communities; Kwa-Ziphethe, Mangamhlophe, and Kwa-Mpunzana. When it was started, there was no existing structure belonging to the school; however, the Seventh Day Adventist church building was used as classrooms. Ikusasaletu secondary school has a complement of ten (10) government paid educators and two (2) support staff. The support staffs comprise of the security personnel and the school caretaker who is SGB paid. The school has an enrolment of just above 300 learners. The school vision is to produce of great integrity and service to its community, respectful, resilient, self-reliant and innovative.

Khethimfundo Secondary School is near R718 at the Mahhashini area, Nongoma, Zululand district in KwaZulu-Natal. The school was established in 1998. In 2003, the first Grade 12 was produced and the pass rate was 66%. The school now has 11 classrooms, one administration block, library, computer laboratory, physical science laboratory, Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD) classroom and electrical technology workshop. There is a kitchen for nutrition and toilets for educators and learners. The most challenge reported by the school in the last 12 months is overcrowding. The enrolment in school is 784, in 10b there are 102 learners in the same class and in 11a there are 102 learners in the same class. In all classrooms learners are packed and it causes frustrations for the educators and school management team.

Impumelelo Primary School is situated at the foot of Isigwegwe Hill, just a distance away from Unjinwayo River which leads to Ivuna River. This school was established in 1980, by the Local Community after a deep-seated realization and the identification of the need of education for the local children. The School is situated in Kwa-Holinyoka area under Matheni Tribal Reserve, about twenty-five minutes from the Town of Nongoma along the Nongoma – Ulundi R76 – Main-Road. The School has grown both horizontally and vertically. The number of class-rooms has increased from 4 to 10. The School had established a New Administration block, with the Principal’s office, the Deputy Principal’s office and Head of Departments’ offices, including a Mini library and computer laboratory. The school also has well sanitized toilets and is very sensitive towards hygiene. As of today, the school boasts of good security and an elegant garden, as well as well-looked after premises with a beautiful flower garden and a clean yard. The school has groundsmen who tender the school yard and keep it clean. In pursuit of academic excellence, the school has gone to the extent of moving beyond colour and cultural lines, on a non-xenophobic note. The school has educators from as far as Ghana. The school vision is to “be an exemplary school in Zululand district and beyond by championing the course of Batho Pele principles in their quest to offer quality education to learners, a

resource centre for the community, cohesion among staff, SGB and all stakeholders through efficient management”.

Qhakazangemfundo Primary School was established in 1917 as a dual-medium school in the old town hall with 12 learners. In 1923 a hostel was built and in 1924 the new school buildings were opened where it is still in used today. In 2007 a construction team appointed by the Department of Education built additional structure with 11 classrooms, an office block and a library including toilets, a parking area, upgrading the sewerage and electricity as well as a new fence. Since 1991 to 2007 the learner enrolment had a steep incline from 14 learners to 720. Qhakazangemfundo Primary school is an English medium school with three classes of each grade R up to grade 3 and two from grade 4 up to grade 7. The Department of Education is currently paying for 17 out of 29 educators and 2 out of 10 support staff members (clerks and cleaners). The rest of the staff is paid by School Governing Body (SGB).

The aim of the school is to create a positive evolution of a rural school, by gradually transforming children of the society through; 1) providing teaching and learning of quality; 2) encouraging the holistic development of the child; 3) encouraging community involvement; 4) developing positive qualities for success; and 5) promoting responsibility. Their dream is to one day be able to teach with technology by having at least one computer per class to enable visual education.

Table 1: Other relevant school information (Department of education-Nongoma circuit office; school profile documents, 2014)

	<i>Ikusasa lethu Secondary School</i>	<i>Khethimfundo Secondary School</i>	<i>Impumelelo Primary School</i>	<i>Qhakazangemfundo Primary School</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Rural</i>
<i>Enrolment (Learners Number)</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>784</i>	<i>1227</i>	<i>914</i>
<i>Number of Educators</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>School Fees</i>	<i>No fee school</i>	<i>No fee school</i>	<i>R170/child p.a</i>	<i>R2000/child p.a</i>
<i>Quintile</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Dept. allocation</i>	<i>R192. 910</i>	<i>R722. 000</i>	<i>R525. 000</i>	<i>R455.000</i>

4.5 Research Methodology

The primary goal of studies using qualitative method is defined as “describing and understanding” rather than explaining human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2011, p. 270). Qualitative research is one credible methodology in constructing meaning from the perspectives of the participants (Huberman & Miles, 2002; Flick, 2009). Ascribing primacy to human actions of the participants, Marshall and Rossman (2006, p.53) explain that “Human actions are significantly influenced by the setting in which they occur”. Qualitative researchers attempt to always study humans’ actions from the perspectives of the social participants themselves. The perspectives on events and actions held by the people involved in them are not simply their accounts of these events and actions, to be assessed in terms of truth or falsity; but they are part of the reality that researchers are trying to understand, and a major influence on their behaviour (Maxwell, 2004). Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and

understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). In addition, this focus on meaning is central to what is known as the interpretive approach to social science (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, Creswell, 2007 and Goldkuhl, 2012,). As I mentioned earlier, “interpretivism” is the lens that most frequently influences the choice of qualitative methods (Trauth, 2001, p. 07) and is used in this study. A major strength of qualitative studies is their ability to get at the processes that lead to outcomes, processes that experimental and survey research are often poor at identifying (Maxwell, 2004). It is for these reasons that I have chosen to embed my own study within a qualitative methodology.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) posit that qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It entails of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). On the other hand, Creswell (2007) outlines qualitative research as research that begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a 'complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action (Creswell, 2007). Whereas Denzin and Lincoln (2005) are concerned with the *impact* of qualitative research and how it transforms the world, the author further emphasises on the *process* of research as flowing from' philosophical assumptions, to worldviews and through a theoretical lens, and on to the procedures involved in studying social or human problems.

Understanding the meaning, for participants in the study, of the events, situations, and actions they are involved with, and of the accounts that they give of their lives and experiences is important for my study (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In a qualitative study, researchers are interested not only in the physical events of sexual intimacy between educators and learners and corrupt behaviour of principals taking place. There is also an interest in how the

participants make sense of these and how their understandings influence their behaviour. In addition, the social world of people is however full of meaning. It is built upon subjective and shared meanings (Goldkuhl, 2012). Therefore, the core idea of interpretivism which is mobilized by qualitative researchers serves to work with these subjective meanings already there in the social world, i.e., to acknowledge their existence, to reconstruct them, to understand them, to avoid distorting them, to use them as building blocks in theorizing (Creswell, 2007 & Goldkuhl, 2012).

4.6 Sampling

A sample is a small proportion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis (Best & Kahn, 2006). Sampling in qualitative research usually relies on small numbers with the aim of studying the phenomenon in depth and detail (Miles & Huberman 1994; Patton 1990). The goal of qualitative research can be stated as “*in-depth understanding*.” Participants were conveniently selected to ensure the quality of data collected (Creswell, 2006). All qualitative research uses the design strategies of emergent design flexibility and purposeful sampling, and most use naturalistic inquiry. These design strategies indicate that the research is a work in progress that may change as the data are generated and samples are selected for their usefulness rather than for randomness. The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. Decisions need to be made about who or what should be sampled, what form the sampling will take, and how many people or sites need to be sampled (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). The qualitative research initially has some ideas about the design but is open to change as the data are collected and analysed (Best & Kahn, 2006, p. 251).

Best and Kahn (2006, p. 19) further state that purposeful sampling is often used in qualitative research studies. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select those participants who will provide the “richest information”, those who are the most interesting, and those who manifest the characteristics of the greatest interest to the researcher. The research is thus aimed at explaining a phenomenon rather than making a generalization (Best & Kahn, 2006). According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), sampling can change during a study and researchers need to be flexible, but despite this, plan as much as possible for their sampling strategy.

This study consisted of two different sets of participants that were purposeful and conveniently selected, namely, educators and the school principals. The first set of participants consisted of four school principals from four schools and the second set were consisted of twelve educators from the four participating schools (three educators per school, preferably one educator from the SMT and two Post Level 1[PL1] educators). Qualitative researchers focus on how individuals and groups view and understand the world and construct meaning out of their experiences. To make their interpretations, the researchers must gain access to the multiple perspectives of the participants. Qualitative researchers generally focus on in-depth, long-term interactions with relevant people (Maxwell, 2005; Best & Kahn, 2006; Creswell, 2007). A small sample that has been systematically selected for typicality and relative homogeneity provides far more confidence that the conclusions adequately represent the average members of the population than does a sample of the same size that incorporates substantial random or accidental variation. Qualitative researchers often study only a single setting or a small number of individuals or sites, using theoretical or purposeful rather than probability sampling, and rarely make explicit claims about the generalizability of their accounts. Indeed, the value of a qualitative study may depend on its *lack* of generalizability in the sense of being representative of a larger population; it may provide an account of a setting or population that is illuminating as an extreme case or “ideal type” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 245).

The participants were guaranteed anonymity by withholding their real names from all parts of this study. Instead pseudonyms were utilised. Furthermore, consent letters were signed by participants indicating their understanding that they were interviewed and audiotaped. The contents of the interviews, audiotapes, and field notes were used for data collection purposes only. All participants were also notified of their rights to withdraw from this study at any time and for any reason, without incurring any penalty.

4.7 Data generation techniques

Creswell (2007) suggests that for qualitative researchers to study a human problem, the generation of data occurs in a natural setting where the participants experience the issue or problem under study; the researcher becomes sensitive to the people and places under study. In addition, the qualitative researchers become key research instruments generating data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviour and interviewing participants. Further, according to Creswell (2007), they do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or

instruments developed by other researchers. Likewise, qualitative researchers use multiple sources of data such as interviews, observations and documents, rather than rely on a single data source.

In this research, I employed semi-structured individual interviews which are the primary method of data generation with school principals and educators. In addition, structured questionnaires and the documents review were a secondary method of data generation technique. These served to supplement primary data generation technique.

4.7.1 Semi-structured individual interview

Hagan (2000) and Schurink (2001) define semi-structured individual interviews as a social interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee with the aim of understanding the interviewees' life experiences or situations as expressed in their own words. In addition to this, semi-structured interviews also provide an opportunity to conduct the interviews freely through "flexible wording, freedom in the sequence of questions as well as the amount of time the interviewer gives to each question" (Robson, 1993, p. 227). Interview data can be easily become biased and misleading if the person being interviewed is aware of the "perspective of the interviewer". Too often interviewees provide information based on what they think the interviewer wants to hear (Best & Kahn, 2006, p. 266). While we regard flexibility and adaptability as great advantage of a personal interview, its high cost as far as their preparation applications are concerned, are regarded as its greatest drawback (Welman & Kruga, 2001, p. 161). The interview process is very challenging in multiple ways, for example; (1) concentration will be thwarted by unanticipated behaviours of participants and distractions in interview settings; (2) Interviewee appears only willing to give monosyllabic answers;(3) Interviewees repeatedly provide long answers which digress from the focus of the interview;(4) Interviewee starts to become the interviewer; (5)The interviewee may not answer at all.(6) The answer may be incomplete, or unclear.(7) when I suspected that the interviewee was not telling the truth, either because various parts of the answer contradict each other or because the interviewee knows the 'desirable' answer and gives it to please the interviewer. To overcome the challenges mentioned above, I tried to create a rapport and suggest that interviewee may ask questions at the end. In case where I suspected that the interviewee was not telling the truth, I summarised the contradicting statements, and present these to the interviewee or rephrase the question later in the interview and see if I get the same response/s.

Interviews were audio-recorded digitally and transcribed for analysis (Best & Kahn, 2006). In-depth interviews gave the participants the opportunity to tell their stories in a way that conveyed meaning of their own experiences. In-depth interviews helped elicit the views, events, experiences and observations of these participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interviews were conducted in English and IsiZulu, depending on the preference/s of the participants, and then IsiZulu were translated into English. This was done by Researcher with the Language approval authority by University Language Centre.

Table 2: Diagrammatical representation of interview participants per school

	Ikusasaletu Secondary School	Khethimfundo Secondary School	Impumelelo Primary School	Qhakazangemfundo Primary School	Total
School Principal	1	1	1	1	4
SMT member	1	1	1	1	4
PL1 Educators	2	2	2	2	8
Total	4	4	4	4	16

4.7.2 Documents review

According to Stake (2000), documents analysis permits the researcher to have access to records of activities and data that the researcher normally could not observe directly. The author further states that documents can complement the work of the researcher and other data sources. Documents review took many forms, for example: history of the school, memoranda, agendas, minutes of meetings, and administrative documents (Yin, 2011). These documentary records provided a descriptive and historical context of the school, the cultural values the insiders attached to distinct social occasions and internal activities, and the overall social realities that

existed in the school. Documents that were reviewed for data generation in this study were school policies, code of conduct for educators, log book, Batho Pele and other relevant reports such as minutes of the meetings. In this study, I checked the school policies on how do they addresses the issue of ethical behaviour in school for both educators and school principals. In this study, more focus was on the educators and the school principals as the subject of discussion. Other important aspects that were taken in to consideration while reviewing the documents are: to look at the availability of documents; trying to find out whether the educators and school principals are contextualised with the relevant information on the school policies and other relevant documents such as Batho Pele documents.

The Department of Public Service and Administration introduced the concept of Batho Pele, "people first" in 1997. This notion was expanded in the White Paper on transforming the public service, also known as the Batho Pele White Paper, which provides a policy framework to ensure that Batho Pele is woven into the very fabric of government. The success of the Batho Pele principles of consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money will depend to the principal leadership style. The eight principles of Batho Pele, as listed above, have more to do with human values and dignity than operational processes. Batho Pele is a way of conducting oneself in the presence of others. It is a preparedness to acknowledge their rights and needs and a willingness to help them add value to their lives. Batho Pele is a commitment to other people that echoes through the ages of human compassion. Batho Pele encourages the institution to provide services efficiently, without asking for favours in return for the services (Public Service and Administration (PSA), 1997). That was why I felt is important in this study to check with educators and school principals on how they infuse the principles of Batho Pele in their daily activities and in the school policies. Reviewing such documents gave me the clue about the participants' views around Batho Pele principles that are in line with ethical leadership in schools. Following the Batho Pele principles will stimulate ethical behaviour to the staff members.

4.8 Data analysis

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Burns & Grove 1998). Patton (2008) further explains the importance of making sense of data by reducing the data into manageable, intelligent pieces of information that communicate the essence of the data. In an earlier work, Patton (1990) remarks

that: “the analysis of the empirical data aims to make sense of the massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal” (p.377). Elucidating the purposeful interpretation of data, Marshall and Rossman (1995, p.111) also posit that data analysis is “a process of bringing order, structure and meaning” to the mass of collected data. This provides ample clarity to understand why Stewart and Shamdani (1990) state that the research question and purpose for which the data is generated determines the nature of data analysis. After data has been generated and formulated, there is a need to analyse it in order to arrive at findings and conclusions. The aim of analysing and interpreting data in qualitative research is thus to gain insight into and understanding of the phenomena under investigation (Schurink, 2001).

The data analysis model that I utilised for this study is that of De Vos (1998) which has stages for analysing qualitative data and include: interviews were transcribed and analysed to understand the underlying meanings according to the study ‘s objectives. These meanings were organised into themes, categories and sub-categories. The findings were then written up according to a coding framework with participant’s quotations from the interview transcriptions to demonstrate the themes, categories and sub-categories. Data generated from document analysis were also used to scrutinise the themes that emerged from data generated through interviews. The subsequent steps include *the generating and recording of data, managing the data, reading and memoing* (writing memos), *describing, classifying and interpreting and lastly representing or visualising* (De Vos 2002, p. 340) were discussed further in this chapter.

4.8.1 Techniques used to interpret and analyse the data

A fundamental technique used in the analysis and interpretation of data in qualitative research is that of discovering the classes of things, persons and events and the properties that characterise them (De Vos, 2001). However, Streubel and Carpenter (1999) caution that during this process, researchers must keep personal biases aside throughout the investigation, especially since interviews is intense and personal in nature. To prevent the development of close relationships between participants and the researcher, these authors suggest the use of a technique called “bracketing”. This technique is defined as the process of putting aside one’s own beliefs, not making judgements about what one has observed or heard and remaining open

to the data as it is revealed (Streubel & Carpenter, 1999). Therefore, in this study I adopted bracketing in order to prevent close relationship with the participants.

Within qualitative data analysis and to prevent the above from happening, I made use of the analysing procedures identified by De Vos (2002) as I mentioned above.

The generating and recording of data refers to the initial planning which includes how the data could be generated and recorded. At this stage, De Vos (2002) cautions that the researcher should plan which instruments are going to be utilised and would be effective for collecting data and also how the researcher “retrieve” the data gathered (De Vos, 2002, p. 340).

Managing data is the second phase in data analysis and interpretation. De Vos, (2002) states that the researcher must be able to organise data by making it easily “retrievable”. Researchers therefore transcribe the data either by using a machine, computer or writing down by hand an entire story or sentence. In this study, I transcribed from the voice recorder the recorded information and wrote it down by hand verbatim (De Vos, 2002).

The reading and writing of the generated data after transferring the data from the tape recorder, I read the transcripts repeatedly to familiarise myself with the gathered information. De Vos (2002) endorses this when he says that the qualitative researcher “continues analysis by getting a feel for the whole database” (De Vos, 2002, p. 343).

Then, the researcher has to *describe, classify* and *interpret* the data gathered (De Vos, 2002). Thereafter, groups or meaning units were categorised into themes followed by sub-themes. This process also known as coding which is used for “attaching conceptual labels to data” (Urquhart, 2013, p. 35). Coding means applying a short hand label to sort synthesize, and conceptualize data. It involves two stages; “initial coding which emphasizes gaining an analytic handle on the data by defining them and focused or selective coding, which entails codes to sort and synthesize data” (Charmaz & Bryant 2010, p. 410). To conclude, coding is a necessary step for describing what is in the data (Friese, 2012).

In conclusion, I presented the data that was found in the text (De Vos, 2002). In this study, I discussed the results of the study and determined whether the data were useful in fulfilling the aims of the study. I then summarised and linked data to the literature reviewed as well as the theoretical framework of the study. In short, the whole process included studying the transcripts from the voice-recordings, consolidating field notes taken during the interviews and extracting

common themes in the data. This process ensured the researcher to gain insight into the experiences of school principals and educators chosen for the study.

The above process was assisted by making use of computer-aided software known as ATLAS.ti. Computer software was also utilised for efficient data storage and retrieval. ATLAS.ti is a code-based theory-builder, ATLAS.ti, is designed to become an extension of the researcher him/herself (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In this study, I utilised ATLAS.ti to prepare and import my texts, code my data, retrieve codes and quotations, write memos and organizing families. According to Friese (2012), software frees you from all those tasks that a machine can do much more effectively, like modifying code words and coded segments, retrieving data based on various criteria, searching for words, integrating material in one place, attaching notes and finding them again, counting the number of coded incidence, offering overviews at various stages of project, and so on. By using ATLAS.ti, it becomes much easier to analyse data systematically and to ask questions that you otherwise would not ask because the manual tasks involved are too time consuming (Friese, 2012).

In addition, a carefully conducted computer-assisted qualitative data analysis also increases the credibility of research results, especially at a conceptual stage of an analysis (Friese, 2012). She further claims that when using manual methods, it is easy to ‘forge’ the raw data behind the concepts as it is quite laborious to get back into the data. In a software-support analysis, the raw data are only a few mouse clicks away and it is much easier to remind yourself about them and to verify or falsify your development theoretical thought (Friese, 2012, p. 02).

4.9 Establishing trustworthiness

A qualitative study cannot be transferable unless it is credible, and not be considered credible unless it is dependable (Babbie & Mouton 2011, p. 275). Clarifying this further, Nieuwenhuis (2010) also states that trustworthiness is of utmost importance in qualitative studies and should always be kept foremost in mind by qualitative researchers. Likewise, Yin (2012) further postulates that it is important for the researcher to check and re-check the consistency of the findings from the different as well as the same sources. In this way, one would be triangulating, i.e., establishing converging lines of evidence which make research findings robust and credible. In addition, Yin (2014) emphasises that by developing convergent evidence, triangulation helps to strengthen the reliability of the findings of the case study research (Yin, 2014, p. 121). According to Babbie and Mouton (2011) trustworthiness is the process through

which qualitative researchers meet the criteria of (a) credibility - the assurance that there is a fit between the participants' and the researchers' views; (b) transferability - the ability to generalise information from the case studied to other similar cases; (c) confirmability - the objective presentation of information in clear, discernible ways; and (d) dependability How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including him or herself) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to or worth taking account of? In looking at the dependability, an inquiry must also provide its audience with evidence that if it were to be repeated with the same or similar respondents in the same or similar context, its findings would be similar.

Babbie and Mouton (2009) also posit that, credibility is the compatibility between the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the participants and those that are attributed to them. Credibility is achieved through the following “procedures”: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, referential adequacy, and peer debriefing and member checks. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents. The qualitative researcher, therefore, does not claim that knowledge gained from one context will necessarily have relevance for other contexts or for the same context in another time frame. In a qualitative study, the obligation for demonstrating transferability rests on those who wish to apply it to the receiving context (Babbie & Mouton 2011, p. 277). To ensure the trustworthiness of findings in this study, I employed the multiple-case site approach and used various participants to generate, validate and cross-check data and the soundness to provide confidence in my findings (Yin, 2012). During data generation, I spent prolonged time at the research sites and engaged widely with my research participants until I believe there were no new ideas (data saturation) they are bringing to the study (Creswell, 2007) at some point. Patton (2002) suggests establishing an audit trail to verify the rigour of the fieldwork and conformability of the data generated to minimise bias, maximise accuracy, and to secure impartiality.

4.9.1 Triangulation

Triangulation refers to the use of multiple research methods within the same research design to provide greater confidence that what was being targeted was accurately captured (Yin, 2014). Thus, the concept of triangulation is sometimes used to designate a conscious combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology (De Vos, 2005, p.261). The benefits

of triangulation include “increasing confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem” (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254). Babbie and Mouton (2011) further state that triangulation is generally considered to be the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). According to (Patton, 2002 as cited by Yin 2014), four kinds of triangulation contribute to verification and validation of qualitative analysis: (1) checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods, that is, methods triangulation; (2) examining the consistency of different data sources within the same method, that is, triangulation of sources; (3) using multiple analysts to review findings, that is, analyst triangulation; and (4) using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data, that is, theory/perspective triangulation (Patton, 2002 as cited by Yin 2014, p. 120). By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources, researchers can make substantial strides in overcoming the scepticism that greets singular methods, lone analysts, and single-perspective theories or models (Patton, 2002).

Therefore, this study used data triangulation; this type of triangulation involves triangulating data sources to increase the trustworthiness of a study (De Vos, 2005). This means comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods. It means (1) comparing observational data with interview data; (2) comparing what participants say in the individual interview and in the focus group; (3) checking for the consistency of what people say about the same thing over time; and (4) It means validating information obtained through interviews by checking program documents and other written evidence that can corroborate what interview respondents report. The use of multiple sources of evidence in a case study research allows a researcher to address a broader range of historical and behavioural issues. However, the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry. By developing convergent evidence, data triangulation helps to strengthen the construct validity of this case study research. Thus, any case study finding was likely to be more convincing and accurate if it was based on several different sources (Yin, 2014, p. 120).

The use of the above methodological procedures ensured that the present study met the trustworthiness criteria (i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability) (Guba & Lincoln, 1984) in Babbie & Mouton 2011, p. 277) and the rigorous standards set forth by the field of qualitative research (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). In this study, however, a common use of triangulation could not demonstrate that different data sources or inquiry approaches yielded

essentially the same result. But the point was really to test for consistency because different kinds of data may yield somewhat different results.

4.10 Ethical issues

To protect participants from harm, Resnik (2011) posits several reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in research. First, norms *promote the aims of research*, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. For example, prohibitions against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting research data promote the truth and avoid error. Secondly, since research often involves a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions, ethical standards promote the *values that are essential to collaborative work*, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness. For example, many ethical norms in research, such as guidelines for authorship, copyright and patenting policies, data sharing policies, and confidentiality rules in peer review, are designed to protect intellectual property interests while encouraging collaboration. Most researchers want to receive credit for their contributions and do not want to have their ideas disclosed prematurely. Third, many of the ethical norms help to ensure that researchers can be held *accountable to the public*. For instance, federal policies on research misconduct, conflicts of interest, the human subject's protections, and animal care and use are necessary to make sure that researchers who are funded by public money can be held accountable to the public. Fourth, ethical norms in research also help to build *public support* for research. People more likely to fund research project if they can trust the quality and integrity of research. Finally, many of the norms of research promote a variety of other important *moral and social values*, such as social responsibility, human rights, and animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety. Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects, students, and the public (Resnik, 2011). In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2011) also state that voluntary participation, no harm to the participants, anonymity and confidentiality, deceiving of participants, analysing and reporting, respect and justice are important in addressing ethical issues.

Researchers have the right to generate data through interviewing people but not at the expense of the interviewee's right of privacy (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Ethics is typically associated with morality as both deal with matters of right and wrong. This study was also guided by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Policy and Procedures on Research Ethics and its Policy and

procedures on managing the conduct of research by all conducting research (i.e. academics and students).

In line with the University policy on conducting research, I applied for the Ethical Clearance certificate from the University before the study commenced. I also read the Codes of Professional Conduct set out by The American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologist and Code of Conduct (2010), and I understand and subscribe to their contents. This includes the five general principles of beneficence and non-maleficence, fidelity and responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect for people's rights and dignity, as well as the specific ethical standards.

In the first instance, it is important to note that the research questions are not viewed as sensitive by nature such as asking participants to reveal deviant behaviour, attitudes they feel are unpopular, or demeaning personal characteristics, such as low income. Revealing such information usually makes participants feel uncomfortable, at the very least (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). The data that were generated in this study did not place the participants at risk, and none of the participant groups consisted of 'vulnerable' populations (Creswell, 2003). Given the non-invasive nature of the topic and that all participants will be consenting adults, no special data generation precautions or preparations were needed.

In addition, I requested permission to conduct the research from KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Education. The Researcher met participants in the selected schools in suitable places that were recommended by them to discuss the purpose of the research, the expected time commitments and the procedure for the research activities. In contrast, every participant was advised to be free to opt out at any stage of the research. Social research often represents an intrusion into people's lives. The interviewer's knock on the door and may require a significant portion of his or her time and energy. A social researcher, moreover, often requires people to reveal personal information about them, information that may be unknown to their friends and associates. The researcher must know that no one should be forced to participate (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Therefore, all participants were given a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity in reporting the information provided for the study. Further, they were assured that pseudonyms could be used in all documents and transcripts. Each transcript was edited and made anonymous by changing all names of people and school and removing any details which might enable respondents to be identified. In this way, the anonymity of participants was protected (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In addition, the master identification file should be

created that links numbers to names to permit the later correction of missing or contradictory information, but this file should not be available except for “legitimate purposes” (Babbie & Mouton, 2011 p. 524). Thus, knowing participants’ identities may be vital to quality control in data generation. To conclude, even though codes, policies, and principles are very important and useful, like any set of rules, they do not cover every situation. They often conflict, and they require considerable interpretation. It was therefore important for me to learn how to interpret, assess, and apply various research rules and how to make decisions and to act in various situations. The massive majority of decisions involve the straightforward application of ethical rules.

4.11 Limitations of the study

Limitations of a study are conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations (Best & Kahn, 2006, p. 39). In relation to this, Maree and Westhuizen (2009) further state that the researcher should indicate limitations that could be affect the research as well as how he/she intends to deal with them. In this study, there are several limitations that are anticipated such as; the interview approach and the researcher’s bias.

First, like any self-report method, the interview approach relied upon participants being able and willing to give accurate and complete answers to questions. To overcome the challenge mentioned above, I tried to create a rapport and suggested that the interviewee may ask questions at the end. In cases where I suspected that the interviewee was not telling the truth, I summarised the contradicting statements, and presented these to the interviewee or rephrased the question later in the interview and see if I get the same response/s.

Secondly, there is the researcher’s bias. Since the researcher is working in the same district in which the study was conducted and herself a former victim of the unethical behaviour of educators during her school years, her own personal experiences would have influenced and shaped the way this research was organised, written, generated and interpreted. During the data generation, I used open-ended questions such as; “In your opinion, why do some of the principals and educators, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, continue to be unethical”? That allowed the participants to voice their views about ethical leadership in schools freely without necessarily referring to their schools. Caution was taken to avoid

adversely influencing the course of this study (Creswell, 2007), with procedures implemented to curtail personal biases and assumptions by avoiding leading questions because it may bring my own personal thinking of ethics in schools. Additionally, field notes were annotated in the journal to facilitate critical reflections when comparing the findings to the theoretical framework. According to Patton (2002), field notes and reflexivity enhance the integrity of the research process by making the researcher accountable for decisions derived from the data generation phase of the study.

4.12 Chapter summary

This is a qualitative study using a multiple case study design. In this chapter, I began with a discussion of the broad methodological approach used in the study, including conceptual issues related to the methodology that guide this research project. I proceeded to discuss the research paradigms used in the study; detailed the sampling procedure; outlined the research methods which are individual interview and document review, and the reasons for the choices made as well as described the methods of data analysis. Furthermore, issues of quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research were discussed. The importance of triangulation was also highlighted. I then further briefly discussed delimitations and limitations of the study. This chapter concludes by presenting delimitations and ethical issues of the study. In the subsequent chapter, I will present the findings of the study from the data generated and a discussion thereof.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' PERSPECTIVES ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research design and methodology that underpins this study. Due to the voluminous nature of the data generated from the field, data presentation is subdivided into three chapters, namely chapter Five, Six and Seven. This chapter presents the first set of data generated from school principals. Chapter Six presents data generated from SMT members, while Chapter Seven concludes the data presentation by presenting the data generated from PL1 educators. As indicated in the previous chapter, semi-structured interviews were used as the main method to generate data. In addition, structured questionnaires, documents review and observations were also used. The chapter begins with a general view of the majority of the participants leading to the narrative which unfolds through robust quotations and paraphrasing of the conversations with the participants, revealing major themes that explored the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of school principals regarding ethical leadership in rural schools in the Zululand District, KwaZulu-Natal province. The narratives are structured around questions and themes which lead to the identified and summarised key findings. A critique of the findings is then facilitated through the infusion of research questions, literature review and theoretical frameworks which were explored at great lengths in Chapters Two and Three respectively.

In order to create cohesion, maintain focus and to remind the reader of the broad critical questions which were presented in the introductory chapter, the critical questions are re-presented here:

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

- What are the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of school principals, the SMT members and educators regarding ethical leadership in rural schools?
- Why do school principals and educators, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, continue to engage in unethical behaviour?
- What are the views of participants regarding the effectiveness of education on ethics the educators and school principals acquired while training to become educators (if any)

or do they believe they were receiving adequate in-service training in ethics in education system?

- What and how do the participants suggest should be done to arrest the tide of unethical behaviour among school principals, SMTs and educators at schools?

Further, in presenting the data, I wanted to ensure that the voices of the participants were not lost. To this end, *verbatim* quotations are used throughout in the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The classifying of convergence and divergence in analysing data facilitated the use of inductive analysis that enabled the emergence of themes. Relevant findings are then analysed through content analysis as discussed in the previous chapter on research design and methodology.

5.2 Discussion of findings

The following responses were from the four school principals of the researched schools:

5.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership

Throughout the data generation process, I noticed that school principals were overwhelmed by the concepts of ‘ethics’ and ‘ethical leadership’ and they believe that these concepts were very relevant and interesting topics when one observes what they were currently experiencing, especially in schools and education. In general, some principals felt that the issue of ethics was too broad and asserted that ethics was a set of beliefs accepted by a community and adopted as norm. Further, the principals’ conceptualisations of ethics and ethical leadership were as follows: a set of principles; morality, caring; integrity; creativity; vision; judgment; communication; knowledge; honesty and passion. Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School said:

Ethics are what would be general set of beliefs that are accepted among the people in community or society where such beliefs have been adopted as a norm.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

His statement was supported by Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School who said:

Ethics, according to my understanding are a set of principles people use to decide on what is right and wrong - that is morality.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

All the school principals believe that ethics is about moral behaviour, how a person conducts himself/herself within the school and in the community. Participants also emphasised this point by referring to olden days where teaching posts were mainly occupied by the ministers of religion because these members of the community were known to be ethical. They further described an ethical person as someone who would avoid and stay away from temptations of sexual relationship with educators to avoid biasness in line with the ethical code of conduct for educators as this will negatively affect the working relationships and the ethos of the school. In addition, ethics involved the moral behaviour of all involved in the in the institution. In this regard, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

I think ethics deals with moral behaviour of a person. It is about how a person conducts himself/herself in the school and also in the community. It refers to how an educator conducts himself/herself within the school and even out of the school. Long ago, not everyone could be an educator. Only ministers of religion could be educators, and ministers lived by the Bible.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

I think it is a good thing based on teaching that is happening in our institution. It is also about the behaviour as well – how the people in the institution behave and also the roles that they play in that institution. All in all, I know that it is a good thing that people can do or offer to an institution.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, one of the themes that kept cropping up was the notion of caring as a trait of an ethical leader. All the participants believe that an ethical leader should care about other people. Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School put it clear and said:

Caring stems from understanding the environment. It is important for me as a leader to listen to one's condition(s) that change with the times. Understanding times and seasons that are ever-changing is essential.

(Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

In addition, Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School further elaborated on this point and said:

As the leader, I have to understand the numerous ailments plaguing the workforce this time, a leader has to get into the shoes of a member whose health relatively deteriorates towards underperformance. I have to understand when to reduce the workload, who to distribute to, taking into account we work under very strict post-provisioning norms; I have to understand issues of incapacity among staff members; so caring stems from understanding of our health relationships, economic, moral challenges. Have a hearing ear.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Miss Nondaba—Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School believe that to be an ethical leader you have to show empathy and understand other people. On the other hand, Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School acknowledged that caring and understanding was his weakness. He indicated that it was ethical to care and have an understanding about other situations or conditions under which educators lived and taught; but leaders have to be careful not to lose sight of the institutional goals the team had set. He said:

My weakness would be not allowing the expected understanding to compromise goals that are set before us as a team. No understanding intended for underperformance – no.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Still on the point of understanding/empathising, the principal made it clear that while aspiring to be an understanding leader, one needs not to lose focus. He said,

I need, however not to lose sight of what goal the team had set for themselves concerning their learners. The united force towards achieving them should not be underfed (it would result in an irreparable damage in their lives). My trustworthiness should stem from my attempt to strike a balance between two opposing ends (i.e. the educators 'conditions vs institutional goals).

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, participants believe that they were good ethical leaders. A principal made this point quite clearly when he stated:

...when a staff member divulges or disclosed personal and sensitive information that requires confidentiality from my side, the staff member remains assured that everything is in safe hands. It is critically important that such concerns/ anxieties are shown a sympathetic hedge of protection.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

During one of our meetings with (Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School), I observed that the principal was exemplary and cared about her staff members. During one of my visit at school I observed principal reminded her educator about her appointment with Educator Assistance Person (EAP). The principal then narrated to me that her educator lost her family member so she was going through a difficult time and she noticed that she was not coping. She emphasised the importance of giving individual support and the involvement of an EAP. On the other hand, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School indicated that he cared about other people such as staff-members and the learners. He said: “*Ngizwa ubuhlungu uma izingane zibuyela emuva zingasafundi*” (*is very painful when the learners go back home without learning*). The principal then decided not to chase all the learners who come late to school even though the former Minister of Education instructed the school principals to lock the gate and chase learners away. However, he only sent back those who continuously came late.

However, in all the demands pertaining to school leadership, the findings seem to suggest that the school principals were not forgetting that the key business of the school is to take care of and teach the learner. All their attempts indicated that the focus was to benefit the learner. Participants also believe that to be ethical you should put learners’ interest first. Mr Mzobe—Principal of Impumelelo Primary School argued that the interest of the learner needs to be preached time and again. He stipulated this point and said:

I make sure that the learner’s maximum benefits are at the centre no matter the angle from which we as a team approach the problems in their complex nature.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School supported this assertion when she said that in her school she made it a point that teaching and learning was taking place effectively and that learners were assessed as expected. She was doing this by conducting classroom visits. She said:

I conduct classroom visits in order to assist educators, making sure that the correct curriculum (CAPS) is being implemented.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The findings showed that the majority of the principals who participated in this study made sure that quality standards were being adhered to in their schools. One of the principals, said:

I always set a standard that in all our deliberations and intentions, we should not aim at achieving below expectation. Excellent results/outcomes will never come from average effort. All of us should openly agree whether we are making it or not.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

All the principals made a point that ethical leadership, in a school, is to lead in such a way that it primarily benefits the learners. The principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary extended this and said:

“Ethical leadership is the leader who manages the school in such a way that it benefits the learners”

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

My observations during the data generation stage seemed to suggest that some learners were deprived from their right of education. During the observations that I conducted at the schools, I noticed that one of the Grade 12 learners in one of secondary schools was sitting outside behind the classroom while others were busy in class. The learner was chased away from class by a Physical Science educator because the learner was delaying from another class/lesson.

The minutes of a Parents Meeting dated 19 January 2015 also seemed to corroborate findings from the semi-structured interviews on principal caring about other people. The minutes were written in isiZulu and read thus “*Ngacela amaphoyisa ukuba alekelele emgwagqeni uma izingane ziza esikoleni, sikhathazekile bazali sicela nilamule abantwana benu ingaqhubeki lempi yalezingane*” (we asked that the police assist when the children are on their way to school, we are concerned and parents are asked to help stop this conflict among the learners), (Parents minutes, 19 January 2015).

The discussion so far has shown that the majority of the school principals had an idea of what ethics are. They revealed that ethics is about moral behaviour, how a person conducts

himself/herself and to stay away from temptations. The findings from the school principals seem to be supported by Mitchell (2012). He views Ethics as the moral principles that govern an individual's way of thinking and acting. Ethics can also be defined as that branch of philosophy dealing with values that relate to human conduct, especially with respect to the rightness or wrongness of specific actions and to the goodness or badness of the motives for and ends of, such actions (Gebler, 2010). However, this study also found that principals' view an ethical leader as someone who cares about other people, someone who has a good character, who took good care of the learners, who is principled and consistency in decision making. Similarly, Brown (2014) seems to corroborate views of principals about thorough investigation when solving any problem. Problem solving begins with gathering the necessary information and identifying problem areas. Alternatives are then generated, along forecasts of possible results. An alternative is chosen, and a detailed plan of action is formulated. The decision is implemented, and alternative is chosen, and finally an evaluation of the decision is made (Brown, 2014). School principals have ethical responsibilities which means they must be knowledgeable and can use or make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). School principals should use an ethical reasoning framework when making decisions. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, p. 25) further suggest that decisions made in the best interests of the learners are those incorporating individual rights, accepting and teaching learners to accept responsibility for their actions, respecting other learners, and considering what they refer to as the three "R" s of rights, responsibilities and respect.

The findings were also in line with the Attuned Leadership framework propounded by Khoza (2011). He posits that the leader should demonstrate competence along with caring so that respect is truly won. He further argues that no leader can get along and be effective without a leap of understanding into the hearts and minds of the followers. The strength of African moral philosophy is that it will influence a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision (Khoza, 2011). He further argues that compassion rests on the empathy we feel when we have knowledge of the "inner state of others" Leadership without a compassion is "hollow". To lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral. To lead you need to have a 'feel' for people, you need to have empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority (Khoza, 2011, p. 81). Furthermore, according to Maxwell (2014, p. 11), "leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand" which suggests, for leaders to be effective, they need to connect with the people. Maxwell (2014) further states that "People don't care how much you know

until they know how much you care about them. Also, views of principals about caring resonated with the ethic of care putted forward by (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). They argue that ethic of care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Wood & Hilton, 2012). In addition, an ethic of care is characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust (Shapiro & Gross, 2008). School principals employing an ethic of care are encouraged to foster an understanding of multiple sociocultural realities (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005), with the purpose of improving the standpoint of others. Likewise, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) also note that an ethic of care reinforces the importance of learners and their development, focusing particularly on aiding learners in achieving their educational and career goals. Developing an environment that fosters care and affirms the value of learners is crucial, as it can lead to enhanced learners' success (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Furthermore, an ethic of care requires school leaders to attend to issues of learners' success (Rosenthal, 2006), thereby placing the focus of otherness on the best interests of learners (Begley & Stefkovich, 2007).

Ethics is a set of beliefs accepted by a community and adopted as norm, is about moral behaviour, how a person conducts himself/herself within the school and in the community. Principals believe that teaching profession is ethical in nature. They even referred to the olden days where teaching posts were mainly occupied by the ministers of religion because these members of the community were known to be ethical. However, all the participants believe that an ethical leader should care about other people. They emphasised that caring stems from understanding the environment. Further, principals were aware that the key business of the school is the teaching of the learner.

The other finding was that, some principals viewed an ethical leader as someone who is exemplary to a certain group of people, someone whom people look up to, someone who also encourages other people to do likewise and ensuring that ethical standards were kept or maintained. Being a principal means that you are a role model not only to educators and learners but also to the whole community. Therefore, you have to model good behaviour, demonstrate a good character and be a good example. In this regard, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said: *“As an educator in the community, I am a role model so the way I conduct myself is important”*. He further neatly related ethical leadership and character and said:

As a principal, you need to conduct yourself in a good and ethical manner in the community. You need not be tempted. There can be instances that can come and tempt you so if you know the ethical code, you cannot be tempted because you know that this is going to negatively affect your work environment, even the morale of the staff because now there would be no secrets so it is important for a leader to live by the ethical code.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Likewise, Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School also believe that an ethical leader should demonstrate a good character. Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School stated this clear when he said:

I strongly believe in good character, so to me character is the number one value. If my character is not ethical or moral, it can be possible that I can use the school's funds to pay for my needs. It is easy to talk to the SGB - some are poor and corrupt I can talk and sign the bank cheque but because I know that God is my judge and He is looking at me, I don't have any money but I would not steal the school funds.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The above findings collaborated by the following finding extracted from the questionnaire, one of the principal argued and said Ethical leadership would be:

...exemplary to a certain group of people someone whom people look to, someone who also encourages those followers to do likewise ensuring those believes are kept and maintained.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School also believe that trust is important in ethical leadership, he said:

I try to earn the trust of educators by speedily processing their appointments and being able to keep their secrets and problems.

(Mr Mathe--Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr Mzobe, thePrincipal of Impumelelo Primary School said:

One tries by all means when a staff member divulges or disclosed personal or sensitive information that requires confidentiality from my side, the member remains assured that everything is in safe hands. It is critically important that such concerns/ anxieties are shown a sympathetic hedge of protection.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School said)

Furthermore, Miss Nondaba, the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

By being transparent to the staff as well as being trustworthy. By being knowledgeable. Communication skills are also important.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Echoing the same view, Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School insisted:

...Communicate with all stakeholders and treating them equally and respect them. Doing all my expected duties as a principal by observing policies and apply them accordingly.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The majority of the principals believe that religious upbringing has a positive influence on being a good leader. They also argued that a leader who is grounded by religion manages to maintain being morally upright, despite the possibility that the SGB may be ignorant of some basic financial management skills and therefore may be easily deceived. One of the principals revealed that:

It is easy to talk to the SGB - some are poor and corrupt I can talk and sign the bank cheque but because I know that God is my judge and He is looking at me, I don't have any money but I would not steal the school funds.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mzobe the Principal of Impumelelo Primary School proudly believe that, as a principal, he is a good and an ethical leader. In this regard, he said:

As a devout believer, I am scripturally bound to express ethical values like love, humility, joy, being at peace, self-control (to mention a few). Against them there is no law - Gal 5: 22-23 these are my "constitution"

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

Long ago, not everyone could be an educator. Only ministers of religion could be educators, and ministers live by the Bible.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

All the principals in this study believe that ethics and ethical leadership were necessary in schools as the educator is the role model learners look up to. School principals believe that educators could do their jobs well if they were ethical and, if they are un-ethical, they were convinced they would fail to serve their institutions well. Ethics also helped school principals to engage with staff members. One of the principals said:

As dealing with different characters there are challenges you learn how to deal with those personalities in the school.

(Miss Nondaba--Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Principals stated that schools were businesses so the time factor and good conduct have to be maintained in order to produce a good product. In their case, the product was the learners' results. Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

School is business so business needs ethics we have to honour our clients which are learners. What we are doing here is business so I think if it is a business it about the product and our product is school results.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

One of the school principals emphasised the importance of ethics in school. He said:

...ethics and ethical leaders are needed because they set the good standard which many can follow because in these rural communities, few people are known by these learners. The educator is the only senior person these learners see every day so if the educator is seen living a life which is immoral, this would tarnish the image of the teaching profession hence learners will end up copying the bad behaviour. Since an educator is a role model to learners, it is important that these educators behave morally.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

All the principals believe that ethics should be central to school leadership as it involves honesty and everything evolves around being ethical. Ethics also demand that leaders be moral and not only to rely on policies. Principals felt that policies alone might not address real issues in schools.

Policies are rigid sometimes, but to act ethically you also have to empathy e.g. the policy outlines that if you find an educator sleeping on the job it becomes a case, but if you used ethics you would ask what is the problem and might find that he/she was sick.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Mr Mathe, the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School also believe that for ethics to be central to school leadership is not sufficient. He argued that ethics should be distributed evenly firstly to school management, educators and the community. In this regard, he said:

Ethics should not only be central to school leadership. It should be distributed evenly. The management should hold ethical behaviour. The educators and the parents themselves should also be agents of ethical behaviour because after school, the learners are with parents. It is not a school management issue only but a societal issue.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The discussion so far found that trust is important in ethical leadership. To be an ethical leader is manifested by being transparent to the staff as well as being trustworthy. Moreover, the study found that communicating with all stakeholders and treating them equally and respect them built trust. Furthermore, this study found that ethics and ethical leadership were necessary in schools as the educator is the role model learners look up to, especially in rural communities, because few people are known by the learners.

The findings seem to suggest that to be ethical means doing the right things. According to principals, open communication with staff members was beneficial to them and the school as it built trust and helped staff members to disclose personal and sensitive information which, ordinarily, they would not do if the element of trust did not exist. Open communication also indicates that the principal respects and is concerned with the staff members' well-being. These findings also suggest that religious upbringing has a positive influence on fashioning a good leader. A leader who is grounded with religion found it easy to avoid temptations and manage

to express ethical values such as humility and caring. The view of participants about the importance of trust in leadership corroborated by Waggoner (2010). She posits that trust is considered the glue of leadership and promotes long-term success. Trust is usually gained in two ways. First, followers look up at a leader's history and also observe them in the present. A trustworthy past and present is realistic with good ethics (Waggoner, 2010). Secondly, according to Maxwell (2014, p. 12), "People buy into the leader, then the vision". The people find the leader and then the dream. That's how the Law of Buy-In works. People don't at first follow worthy causes. They follow worthy leaders who promote worthy causes they can believe in. People buy into the leader first, then the leader's vision (Maxwell, 2014).

Also, view of principals that an ethical leader is expected to be an example and demonstrated good character is corroborated by the study conducted by Cezmi and Toprak (2014). The study found that a school leader needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). This is also in line with Brown & Trevino, 2006; Eisenbeiss, 2012; Naidoo, 2012 and Piccolo, *et al.*, 2012) who posit that, moral manager set ethics on the agenda and visibly use and communicate ethics to stimulate their followers to make them more accountable for their behaviour. Moral managers really try to set an example for their followers on how to behave ethically by making ethical decisions and by rewarding the desirable outcome (Brown & Trevino, 2005). Furthermore, effective leaders set an example of moral behaviour and they take necessary actions to promote social justice (Hough, Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble, 2007). At school, a school principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). Furthermore, these findings are also corroborated by Shapiro & Stefkovich (2005), when they posit that care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Shapiro & Gross (2008) further states that an ethic of care is characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) suggest that the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care need expanding. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) called for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession. Therefore, it is within this context that the SACE Code of Conduct for Educators stipulates how educators ought to behave in their working lives as professional educators. School leaders ought *to*

indicate that the Code of Conduct for Educators is providing moral prescriptions. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) further propose that school principals respond to dilemmas through use of multiple lenses.

Furthermore, these findings are in line with the view of Khoza (2011) when he claims that to be human is to show kindness to other living beings. Therefore, Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2011). He further states that, my being and your being are the creation of our collective being, the being of humanity itself. This leads to the proposition that we are necessarily moral beings because each of us owes our existence to all others. This is not because others are useful to us but because we are bound by reason and feelings to acknowledge the personhood of others as we seek to be acknowledged for our own (Khoza, 2011).

To conclude, open communication with all stakeholders, treating them equally and respectfully are the pillars of trust. To be an ethical leader, principals believe that one should act consistently with good behaviour and set a good standard which many can follow. However, principals believe that all stakeholders should be agents of ethical behaviour because education is not exclusively a school management issue but a societal issue.

5.2.2 Experiences of principals about Ethics and Ethical leadership

Talking to all the school principals in the study schools, my data seemed to suggest that there was a myriad of unethical practices that were occurring at schools. Findings posit that not so long ago the teaching profession was regarded as a noble profession. Principals and educators were trusted by communities but now the majority of the participants claimed that principals in schools are abusing school funds by way of making the SGBs to sign blank cheques. They are taking advantage of the fact that some parents, especially in rural and township schools, are financially illiterate. Finances in most schools seem to be a problem as the principals are accounting persons as they are not abiding by the ethical behaviour by stealing from the school. One of the school principals clearly stated:

Some of unethical practices by principals involve school finances. The principal is the accounting officer so if he/she is not living by the moral code, he can end up embezzling school funds and in the end, can go to jail.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, Miss Nondaba-Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School supported this when she said:

Many principals are not trustworthy as they have companies and use the funds for the Norms and Standards for gambling, they have companies and run feeding schemes and hire their companies to work in their schools. Other principals are not teaching and are not checking educators' work as they rely on HOD's to do their work, while they are paid to do their duties but not doing them.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Some school principals do not only embezzle school funds but they go further by not making sure that the curriculum is followed correctly. Miss Nondaba-Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

Some of the principals are mostly not at schools, they don't visit classes and they don't check the books of the learners on how they are doing in class; they say my HOD is doing that and my clerk is doing the school finances; if the principal does not go to school, he/she ends up not knowing what is going on in his own school.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Participants stated that some school principals were not doing justice in their schools. Miss Nondaba-Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

As a leader, you need to set up a good example, you must be early and be there all the time and if there is a meeting get someone to act in your place. This will assist to enforce discipline.

(Miss Nondaba-Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

One other finding perceived as unethical demonstrated by principals, was the practice of forgetting about the needs of the school and to only line their pockets. Some of them, in cahoots with educator union officials, made applicants to pay bribes while applying for the vacant positions at schools. In relation to this, Mr Mathe, thePrincipal of Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

Schools do not have appointing powers, it is vested with the province, but the school is required to recommend an appointment. Therein lies the problem, teaching posts are being sold, some managers sleep with the applicants to confirm them, though some of these things are allegations which have not been proven. Normally these issues come out when the person had not obtained the post and has either paid money or slept with the manager to get the position.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Some of the educators are not doing their work. They are indolent. There are no lesson plans resulting in poor performance among learners. Educators put their rights first over those of the learners and they perceive themselves above everybody else as they are affiliated to the educator unions. They lack dedication and are lazy to work. Participants also felt that part-time studying through institutions such as UNISA is a factor as educators lack a practical component in their training that is mostly done part-time. Some of the educators buy their teaching qualifications and feel like things should just be served to them without working hard for them. Principal, Miss Nondaba—a Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School bemoaned this state of affairs:

People are not doing their jobs like they are supposed to. Most of the time people are lazy. They are lazy even to plan for the lessons. That is why you see that learners are not performing well. Sometimes people put their rights first, forgetting that rights go together with responsibilities. Also, since most educators are affiliated to educator unions, they tend to see themselves as bigger than the government they are serving. There is also a lack of dedication amongst our educators in schools.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further said:

Some educators are lazy even when they are at the school and are busy with their cell phones, and What'sApp instead of utilizing that time fruitfully with learners. They are chatting with friends compromising teaching and learning. They complain about duty load, and do not want to do the ground duty/ supervision; they do not want to do marking and no planning time even at home they have no time

for preparation due to many other side issues such as spending time on What's App.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Some educators were not honest and lacked humanity as they absented themselves from work for no good reason; dedication was also no longer there; they did not have that spirit of being a committed educator. Principals were worried about the absenteeism. They viewed it as a problem; so, for them as school leaders, they find it difficult to control it. The only thing they do is make an appeal to educators to make sure that if they take any leave, it is a proper leave.

... if any person is absent there should be attachment such as medical certificate because the Department of Education states that if it is one or two days there should be no attachment but since we know that people take advantage of policies (play around with these things), they have to submit. Even submitting sometimes does not help. We have to motivate educators, appeal to their conscience and talk about morality – doing good things at school (Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

In addition, my documents review and observations also corroborated the findings from interviews on absenteeism. I noted that one educator submitted a 3-month sick leave. The principal was so frustrated he even said that:

this educator does not want to work anymore. She was taking 3 months' sick leave, was supposed to return to work on the 5th April 2016 instead she submitted 3 weeks' sick leave and now another 3 months' sick leave, what is that?! She is kidding I have to call this person. She is not serious (Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Love affairs with learners were a breeding ground for many challenges within the institutions. Love affairs with the staff members were also reported by most of the principals participating in this research. Participants felt that intimate relationships between the principal and a staff member causes problem because the educator or learner involved expects to be treated favourably, and that creates challenges to the principal. Some of these challenges are leaking examination questions to learners who were close to them and educators producing marks in favour of learners that they were in love with. Even when educators are organising a field trip,

they tended to collect money from other learners and leave out the ones the educators were in love with.

Furthermore, Mr Mathe the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School mentioned some of the unacceptable behaviour presented by educators and observed:

If an educator falls in love with a learner in the class, the educator will be called names by the learners, maybe a “sbari” (in-law). This will affect other educators because that class now will be special and becoming noisy and that educator cannot maintain discipline because he now has a girlfriend in that class. It will cause problems for him. What happens is that if that girlfriend belongs to a boy in the same school? It will bring enmity and that educator will end up being harassed by the learners.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

He further argued:

If principal is in love with a staff member there would be problems because the educator expects preferential treatment or demands that treatment from the principal so then the educator will start thinking that she is better than other educators and starts feeling big, like she is the mother of the school and there would be problems for learners and for others because they say, ‘love is blind’ so once they are in love they are blind. Then they start doing things thinking that they are hidden yet people see what is going on.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

In addition, Miss Nondaba—Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School—also supported this notion and said:

The educators are also involving themselves sexually with learners, but also learners wear short skirts flirting with educators. The reasons are many such as child-headed households, laziness to learn, wanting to get question papers and fast life.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The SGB minutes also seemed to corroborate findings from interviews on educators’ intimate relationships with the learners. This is the section of the SGB minutes as written in isiZulu

(Omunye owabizwayo osekungokwesibili evela emkhandlwini, Mr. X othintekayo ekukhuleliseni izingane zesikole. Uthike uzoyondla ingane. Umkhandlu wacela ukuba abazali bengane emithisiwe okuyibona abeze bezommangalela ku thishomkhulu, umkhandlu kanye no Mr. X bahlangane avume kubo ukuthi uzoyondla ingane (SGB minutes, 21 January 2016).

(One of the educators that was called in the principal's office for the second time was Mr X who impregnated one of the pupils. He said he would take care of the child. The SGB asked that the child's parents who came through and reported this matter to the headmaster and the SGB should meet with the parents and formally agree that Mr X would take care of the child), SGB minutes, 21 January 2016.

Some of the educators were promoting *stokvels* (making financial loans) during teaching and learning time. *Stokvels* for money is unethical, which can end up causing fights among educators. One of the principals said:

...when educators are having stokvels among the staff is wrong because they end up using time for teaching and learning busy planning about the stokvels. It is wrong if their fighting affects the school, parents are coming to school to borrow money.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Surprisingly, as middle management at school, HODs had their challenges when it came to unethical practices. These unethical practices were on a higher level when compared to unethical behaviour demonstrated by educators. Principals believe that HODs are leaders and should be exemplary, but some of them tended to befriend educators and compromised monitoring. Furthermore, no proper control was exercised by the HODs and usually this cast other School Management Team (SMT) members as bad to educators. When time comes for Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), favouritism takes place.

One of the school principals said:

The HOD's hate and sabotage educators who are doing very good and support bad educators instead of using that educator to support them, good educators are not given what they deserve.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further argued that:

I will see that good educators are the ones who are oppressed and bad educators are the ones who are getting what they are not supposed to get because they are buddies with HODs.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

HODs were also involving themselves in intimate relationships with the educators. In this, they were not supervising the absence and class attendance by educators and also the preparation files. The principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary briefly outlined this during the interview: “HODs are not doing their job well” (Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

During one on one interview with Mr Mathe, the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School, he mentioned many challenges about romantic relationship issues between HODs and educators when he said:

...an HOD is in love with a particular educator. The educator does not do his/her work. They do not plan, files are not in order and there are no submissions. If other educators do not submit, they are disciplined but nothing happens to the one who is in love with the HOD.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Likewise, principals also believe that relationships between HODs and educators contribute to bunking of classes and absenteeism done by educators. Mr Mathe, the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School further said:

...at times, it is time for an educator to go to class. Because that educator is in love with the HOD, they can decide not to attend classes and nothing happens to them. Sometimes the educator can decide not to come to school and does not fill in leave forms and is also not reported. Both may even go out to enjoy themselves during school time and this tarnishes the school's image.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The SGB minutes also seemed to corroborate the above statements by the school principal. The following extract was from the SGB minutes. The minutes were written in isiZulu and read thus:

“Yekela ukulahleka emini kanti nisemakhothegi niyaphuza yekani nokuthuma izingane zesikole utshwala” (stop disappearing during the day, at the cottages you

drink and stop sending pupils to buy alcohol), SGB member, SGB minutes, 13 November 2014.

Even though unethical practices are noticed in schools in urban areas but principals felt that the situation is worse in the rural areas, too. Rural educators were not that sophisticated and urban ones can come to rural areas with all the tricks of “*stealing*” from the Department (Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School). The latter Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School further argued that people from urban areas were the ones who practiced unethical behaviour in rural schools. During the interview, he made that point clear and said:

...it is because they are more sophisticated than rural people. They know many things that rural people are not aware of and they know how to hide that behaviour, but in rural area we do things openly like we build our fancy houses where by everybody will see that we have money. We are not good in hiding bad things.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Mr Mathe—Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School, argued that people in rural areas were not well informed, thus, unethical practices tended to be more than in urban areas. He said:

... in urban areas, there are TVs where these things are shown. Most people in urban areas have TVs. Most of those people are learned. The information moves slowly in rural areas.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Based on the above discussions, this study found that the most unethical practices by principals were embezzling school funds, selling of teaching posts, illegally operate companies which run feeding schemes in their schools and hire their own companies to work in their schools. School principals also alleged HODs and educators were lazy, drinking alcohol during teaching and learning time, bunking classes and sleeping with learners. These findings suggest that most unethical practices in schools are committed by school principals. Furthermore, findings suggest that the Department of Education is struggling to have school leaders who lead their schools with integrity.

The Report of the Ministerial Task Team appointed by Minister Angie Motshekga to investigate the allegations into the selling of teaching and management posts in schools and in

some Provincial Departments of Education by members of an educator union and departmental officials (Volmink, 2016) corroborates the findings of this study. The world has seen that there are unethical and even toxic leaders, who exploit the loopholes in management systems and seek to fulfil their personal desires at the expense of their organisations and its employees (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007). Given the prominent ethical scandals in virtually every type of organisation, widely publicised cases of ethical abuses have involved large corporations and the abusing of company resources, misrepresentation of financial performance, and illegal marketing practices (Winston, 2005).

Furthermore, the above finding is consistent with Starratt (2004) and Shapiro & Stefkovich (2005) when they posit that school leadership is no longer conceptualised in terms of technical efficiency but as a predominantly moral and ethical activity (Starratt, 2004; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Further, Zubay and Soltis (2005) insist that education has a moral nature because it is concerned with the development of human beings in all their dimensions. The moral character of education requires school leaders to promote learning as a moral activity, to see themselves as moral agents, and to act ethically with the aim of making a difference in the lives of learners (Fullan, 2008; Kaser and Halbert, 2009). The above findings are also in line with the fifth aspect of Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model which is moral necessity. According to Khoza (2011), we are special because we are moral creatures. Ethically, Ubuntu assumes that we are by nature moral, again because it would not be possible for humans to exist collectively, or even individually, without an innate ethical sense (Khoza, 2011). In addition, the best interests of learners must remain central to leader's preparation and inquiry (Stefkovich, 2006). Therefore, the above notions collaborate the suggestion of the findings that school need ethical leaders in order to thrive. Because, school principals have ethical responsibilities which means they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Starratt, 2005; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). Furthermore, these findings corroborated by Khoza (2011), he states that a leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts. "Our humanness overrides our differences" (Khoza, 2011, p. 32).

To conclude this section, participants mentioned a number of unethical behaviours practised by educators. The first one was love affairs between educators and learners; secondly, the issue of examinations where the participants believe that it was unethical for an educator to give the

examination paper to his girlfriend. Thirdly, there were reports that a learner would have failed but because he/she is in a romantic relationship with the educator, the educator would “cook” marks for the learner. Fourthly, when learners pay for the field trips, other learners who are in a love relationship with the said educator, at times, would not pay. To other learners it would be as if that learner has paid.

5.2.3 Causes of unethical behaviour

The majority of the school principals who participated in this study believe that schools and departmental offices are full of ignorant and selfish people. They do not care about the schools and the learners, the only thing that matters the most to them are their big salaries. In this regard, Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

others are there for positions do not care about the role of the principal they just want the money, there are fights over the principal positions just to get money, no dream about the progress of the school they are just selfish

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

She further said:

Principals fight and kill each other because of the positions, which is a bad thing so our intentions are not the same. They have got their own agenda of fulfilling their own goals. Some even say ‘no, I won’t work for the government. If I am still alive I will do my own things to enrich myself.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Similarly, Mr Mathe, the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School supported Miss Nondaba, the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School and said:

“They just do as they like. They do not care because they have no conscience”.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, principals believe that when they choose the SGB members, they must have knowledge about how a school is run— not just a collection of ignorant incumbents. Expressing deep concerns about this, Miss Nondaba, the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

There was a case – I will not mention the school but it is not here. It is around Durban. The SGB chairperson just approached one educator and said, “each time when I sign cheques, I sign blank cheques. Is it allowed?” The educators aid “it was not allowed.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School supported the point when he said:

“it is easy to talk to the SGB, some are bankrupt I can talk and sign the cheque”.

(Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Moreover, Mr Ndaba, the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School blamed both the background and the family pressure when it comes to unethical behaviour and said:

The background where educators come from where there is no commitment in them in terms of family values and responsibilities, self-management.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

He further claimed that:

Family pressure and societal expectations can cause educators to behave unethically in schools they will steal to afford more due to pressure and poor background.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The participants believe that the school finances were the challenge where school principals /educators were not better equipped to handle personal finances. If the person is drowning in debts most of the time that person did not appreciate his salary, he always wants more. As a result, that person end up doing bad things to supplement his salary. Furthermore, principals believe that a person would continue to do wrong things due to poor salaries lower than that earned by people who have just left school, other educators end up being service providers to supplement income. Principals felt that the Department of Education condones unethical behaviour because most of the time there is no follow up when cases are reported and Department of Education officials do not want to be “bad” people. They are too protective. They also claimed that adequate salaries were a need. Miss Nondaba—the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School—concurred with the notion that salaries of educators were

not adequate when she said: “*Maybe their salaries are too light. I think the government must also look at their salaries*” (Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School pursued Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School and he said:

Educators are not well-paid. We have learners that have been learning at schools. They are now in different industrial sectors. The salaries that they get are triple the ones earned by educators so therefore this at some stage can force maybe an educator or a principal to do one or two unethical practices because a person has financial needs and aspirations. People see many things that they need but there is no money so this is tempting. Other educators are now service providers. Why? Because the money they get is not enough. They are trying to supplement this income. If the department can pay educators adequate salaries, there won't be all these things.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Surprisingly principals revealed that there is a sort of a chain concerning unethical practices. Principals claimed that there are even departmental officials involved. They would use that money for their own goods. Department official share the money with the school principal. As a case in point, Miss Nondaba the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School revealed as much when she said:

Share would be given to the principal, to that person who is up there. So, you can see that it is not only the principals who are corrupt. They work together with their seniors

(Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

One other factors that principals claimed to perpetuate unethical practices in schools was the issue of punishment due to be meted out to a person caught involved unethical practices. Mr Ndaba, thePrincipal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School, claims that there was no follow-up when cases were reported. He said: “*lack of follow up if the matter is reported to the Departmental Officials*”. Similarly, Mr Mathe—Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School—asserted this point and said:

One thing that I have noticed is that if there is a case, it maybe reported to the SAPS, it is then that the case gets full attention. Usually circuit officers are too protective. I am not saying they do not do their work, though. It is only a few cases where a person can end up being sentenced, unless if the case is reported to SACE. But the circuit officers usually do not want to be deemed as bad people.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Furthermore, Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

I have not seen educators being punished except for big cases. They tend to pay special attention to those cases like stealing money, raping, sleeping with kids and corporal punishment. They do not tend to look at those things that are causing problems to our education.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Pressure at work and UNIONS also play a crucial role in promoting unethical behaviour among principals and educators at school. All principals believe that Educator UNIONS assist educators to be unethical due to meetings. Miss Nondaba—Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School—lamented the issue of UNIONS when she said:

It becomes very difficult because unions work hand in hand with government. A good example is we did not write ANA. Something that was going to help us see our standard.

(Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further indicated her frustration when she said:

This thing boils down to laziness because if we say ANA must not be written because of admin work, it is laziness. They promote laziness. If the unions are like that then obviously, people will have negative attitudes towards teaching and learning. They do not care about our institutions that much because ANA was a good thing that our learners needed to write so that we see where we stand irrespective of what is going on

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

On the other hand, Mr Ndaba the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School believe that political interference causes havoc in schools. He said, “*political interference causes educators to do thing in a favouritism way*” (Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Some principals, more especially in secondary schools, felt that to be blamed for poor performance leads them to doing things which are unethical. Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School complained about pressure during the interview, he said:

There is pressure in this school educators are doing lot of things. Pressure at work causes principals to behave unethically, especially when the principals are the ones who are blamed for poor performance and this may lead him /her doing things which are unethical.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Surprisingly, even though learners seemed to be the victims when it comes to unethical practices happening in schools, there are instances when some fingers pointed at them. The majority of the principals believe that learners are seducing educators. Mr Ndaba thePrincipal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School said, “*Learners are also not dressing well, short uniforms and they sit in a way that will attract educators to end up sleeping with them.*” The reasons for that may be that some learners come from child-headed households and others were just lazy to learn, wanting to get question papers from educators. A deeply concerned Miss Nondaba thePrincipal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, expressed her opinions with this argument and said:

I understand that they are human beings as educators but we must not point fingers at one person like we say it is educators. Okay, they are wrong because they are older and the learners are just children. In a way, I also blame the way our learners dress, especially girls – the hairstyles they do – it is no longer at the level of being a child. Further, they are the ones who fancy the educators. Maybe the educator was not prepared to be engaged with her but the educator will look at the way the learner acted before him – the way they dress (short skirts) and showing all the body parts

(Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

In addition, Miss Nondaba the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, further argued and said:

We fully understand now that most of the families do not have parents. They look after their families and they need money. They will try to attract male educators so that they get money. Also, our learners are lazy to learn these days. They want to get things easily. 'I will have an affair with an educator so that I will get questions and pass easily' because they are lazy. They want fast things in life. They want things to just come on the table without working for them.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Similarly, Mr Ndaba the Principal of Ikusalethu Secondary School also supported this notion when he said:

I am talking from experience. The way learners are seating in the class also puts educators in a very serious problem learner are very complicated.

(Mr Ndaba--Principal Ikusalethu Secondary School)

In conclusion, the majority of principals believe that people are choosing the profession for wrong reasons. Some choose to be educators because of job opportunities but do not have a “calling”.

“there are no educators some of them enter the profession wrong because they were desperate”

(Mr Ndaba--Principal, Ikusalethu Secondary School)

The discussion above has shown that lot need to be done in order to address the issue of unethical practices at schools. This study found that some principals do not care about anything besides their big salaries. In short, they do not have conscience and Ubuntu. As results educators at schools are behaving exactly like them. Another thing found by this study is that the incompetency of the SGBs also contributed to unethical behaviour demonstrated by school principals at schools, because some principals used to take advantage of the incompetency of SGBs and misuse school money. Further findings are that, family pressure, societal expectations and poor salaries of educators play a huge role in prompting unethical behaviour on the part of principals and educators at schools. Principals and educators believe that their salaries are not adequate. They also claimed that they need more money in order to fulfil their financial and aspirations needs. Therefore, the findings suggest that the Department of Education is struggling to have school leaders who lead their schools with integrity. The

findings also suggest that the Department of Education contributes to unethical practices happening in schools because they fail to do follow up on some of the cases reported.

Van Zyl and Boshoff's (2010) claim corroborate findings from this study, viz., that leadership sets the example as behavioural role models and their philosophies and behaviour resultantly can be seen to affect ethical behaviour of other employees. It could be argued that all approaches to leadership and change should be underpinned by a set of ethical values that influence the actions of leaders and the consequences of change initiatives (Burnes & Jackson, 2011; Burnes & Oswick, 2012). Leaders consequently have a critical role to play to promote ethical behaviour in their institutions, especially in education, as the 21st century educational leader faces the intimidating task of remaining ethical while continuing a voyage that combines the leader's personal and professional beliefs (Cuellar & Giles, 2012). Further, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) assert that the moral aspect of the profession is to serve the best interests of the learner as the focus of ethical decisions. Additional, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) also posit that the ethic of the profession should be central to complete the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care. Besides, the findings of this study are also corroborated by Khoza (2011) when he posits that Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu Khoza (2011).

Some of the principals and educators at schools do not have a "call" but entered the teaching profession because they were desperate for job. Furthermore, some principals do not care about the need of the school. The only thing that matters the most to them are the hefty salaries. In addition, the Department of Education that is supposed to curb the unacceptable behaviour in schools is run by some of the officials that are partners with school principals in embezzling school money and doing other unethical activities. Therefore, unethical practices at schools are still a concern.

5.2.4 The perceptions of principals regarding education on ethics

All the principals who participated in this study indicated that while training to become educators, they heard something mentioned about ethics though it was not emphasised Mr Ndaba of Ikusasaletu Secondary School said, "*There was some information in my training but it was not enough.*". Worse still, Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary

School said that, *“I was never exposed to any training in relation to Ethical education”* (Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

In contrast, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

I do not think during our time there was any course on ethics but in school administration it somehow came there. Some examples were made on ethical behaviour of educators but ethics were just there as a topic.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

He further elaborated on this notion and said:

There was no module called ethics it would just be a topic. Ethics should be taught to assist educators and the building of the nation.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Regarding the In-service training, principals mentioned that none of the training has been conducted in line with ethics. *“There is no training I have attended”* (Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). Principals felt that the Department was not doing enough in this regard. Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School said that, *“...I think they are lacking in that regard, they only focus on teaching and learning”* (Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School). Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School supported this argument when he said: *“There is none that I remember, I do not remember attending one.”*

Even though all principals participated in the study did not undergo any proper training on ethics but they believe that ethics was crucial because as educators they are leading the nation and were role models.

During the interview, Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

It is important that ethics is practised all the time and they should be taught. If as educators we are not ethical, the whole nation will be in chaos

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

In the same vein, Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School extended the argument and said:

...we do not care about anything. I think universities are producing “machines”, we are like robots (robots do not care), we are just teaching. The important thing is subject matter I don’t care about anything as long as learners pass my subject. I can even sleep with the learners- I don’t care (Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Furthermore, Mr Ndaba-Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School extended the argument and said:

I can tell you something very shocking. Some well-known schools around here who produce good results, I can tell you something about the principals of those schools. I am very sorry to say that ethics are lacking, those principals are sleeping with learners and it is very disappointing as one of them is a priest. You find out that their schools are performing very well and you just wonder why there are many problems in schools. The problem is that some school principals do not have ethics. Without ethics, we are just machines (Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Surprisingly, all the principals were aware of SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators but only one of them had attended training on this. Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

I am aware about SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators but there are no workshops except for the CPTD. SACE Code of Professional Ethics should be decentralized, because you find that during the National Teaching awards (NTA) they have a speaker on the SACE Code but it is not enough as not all educators attend these Awards. SACE should agents in every circuit management.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Principals knew that SACE has a Code of Conduct for Educators but they felt it was not enough. Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School—candidly admitted: “No, I have not attended any training on SACE”. In contrast, Mr Mathe the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

The only training, we have attended was when we entered for CPTD but after all there are no trainings. Also, if you attend meetings in National Educators Awards they would have a speaker from SACE but not all educators attend the National

Educators Awards so it is like a drop in the ocean. SACE should have agents everywhere. If a circuit can have one person from SACE then it would be fine.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Most principals viewed SACE as an institution that does not have much impact in guiding behaviour of educators. This a view expressed by Mr Ndaba the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School when he said:

It is written nicely, but it is not enough as educators still inflict corporal punishment on learners, SACE is not close to educators and they only react when there is a case reported. It should be decentralized to districts and visit schools and research from RCL and find out what is it that is wrong in schools. It can curb the problem early and they can identify the workshop needs.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School posited that:

Sometimes if you only read about something, it is not enough. You need someone to develop you. Someone who will tell you everything about ethical conduct written there – not just to get a document and go through it on your own without the assistance of the person who wrote it. I think it is high time SACE came out or roll out the programmes where they will come down to us and workshop us about these ethics so that it is something that is always there in our minds and we know exactly what we need to do. I am a new principal and it becomes very difficult for me.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Based on the above discussion, this study found out that principals did not receive any proper training on ethics during the period when they were undergoing educator training. This study also found out the principals never attended any training on ethics. This suggests that principals do not have any capacity to influence educators to behave ethically.

Leadership is a relationship between people (Northhouse, 2010) and therefore, the ability to ethically influence others is a major determination of effective leadership. Hitt (1990) as cited in Waggoner (2010, p. 4) lists three requirements of leaders that allow them to capitalise on their ability to influence ethical conduct and these requirements are: “(1) achieve an

understanding of ethics which include the key concepts such as values, morals, virtues and principles; the school principal must have an idea of how values lay the groundwork for ethical beliefs and a system of values and how it acts as the backbone of a decision-making template. (2) Serve as a role model in making ethical decisions; and (3) develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff.” A leader with an *understanding of ethics, a history of ethical decision-making* and the ability to *develop and execute plans* of action shows stability, empathy, integrity and resolve. These traits shown in a leader’s track record will infuse a greater sense of trust within followers and, therefore, a school principal will be able to sustain *good* leadership and ethical conduct from followers. This study also in line with Shapiro & Stefkovich (2005) who posit that the ethic of the profession acknowledges that there are guiding values (e.g., principles, codes, assumptions, mores, and expected behaviours) within each profession. Thus, adhering to these values is an obligatory duty to a leader’s craft. Professional codes of ethics are paramount to honouring the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). These findings are also in line with SACE (2000), when SACE indicated that, in performing their duties, educators are required to act professionally and, specifically, to act ethically (SACE, 2000). Therefore, to lead effectively, a leader should be ethical and moral. Also, leaders need to be trained to exercise both mental and emotional intelligence. Certainly, humans, must use reason to solve problems- not just technical problems, but existential problems about how to live and get along with others (Khoza, 2011).

Most of the Higher Institutions that train educators do not pay much attention to ethics and ethical leadership in education. The majority of the school principals were not well trained on how to influence ethical behavior among educators. Even SACE does not do much regarding ethical issues in schools and most school principals viewed it as a drop in an ocean and the Department never bothered to develop principals and educators on ethics. Therefore, the cry of the majority of principals is that SACE and Department of Education must get closer and be visible to them.

5.2.5 Perspective of principals on how to arrest unethical behaviour in schools.

Despite the unethical practises and challenges facing the schools in addressing unethical issues, the majority of the principals still believe that something needed to be done. Some of them suggested that to uproot unethical behaviour among educators and school principals, the

Department of Education needed to put up a good strategy as there was no strong supervision in the Department of Basic Education (DBE); there was no monitoring of systems which they had put in place. There were no workshops to assist educators with changes and to fully develop them; they introduced changes without monitoring what was previously implemented. They suggested that the DBE should have more people to visit schools for support and evaluation should be established. In this regard, Mr Mathe the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

For these ethics to be fully implemented, there should be adequate personnel to deal with ethical conduct and again schools must be regulated to have ethical committees. Meetings should be held by each school to show that this ethical committee does meet

(Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Some of the participants had countless questions about the objectives of SACE and Department of Education in dealing with ethics in schools. SACE and Department of Education were far removed from schools. SACE was not closer to educators; they only reacted when there was a case reported. Principals believe that unethical practices that were observed in schools would have been much less only if SACE had got officials in all school districts. Further to cement this view, Mr Ndaba the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School made his point clear when he said:

I think SACE can be closer to schools and not only be in charge when the cases are in the media, they must be in charge when the problem starts and also, they must have people who are always visiting the schools. They must have a person in each the District Office/ circuit office who will arrange meetings for educators and RCL and ask them everything that is happening in schools; he/she will get the idea about the school, that can make them to be closer with schools. SACE only react not intervene.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School asserted:

Sometimes if you only read about something, it is not enough. You need someone to develop you. Someone who will tell you everything about ethical conduct written there – not just to get a document and go through it on your own without the

assistance of the person who wrote it. I think it is high time SACE came out or roll up the programmes where they will come down to us and workshop us about these ethics so that it is something that is always there in our minds and we know exactly what we need to do. I am a new principal and it becomes very difficult for me.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Certainly, the Department of Education has some good policies but some of the principals view them as “*blunt*” and confusing (Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School). SACE and the Department of Education seem to be lacking in capacitating educators about what to be done or not to be done. Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

... because policies are there but there is no understanding of those policies. If there is no understanding of the policies – not because we are not educated or what – we need to be workshopped on policies.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

She further argued on this point, “*Educators must know advantages and disadvantages of ethics. They need to be trained*” (Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). In addition, Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School claimed that circuit office officials sometimes fail to support them in implementing policies. He said during the interview:

... blunt of the policies not implemented. You find out if you are trying to do certain things in addressing a problem at school, you do not get support especially from the Circuit Office. As a result, the principal ends up being perceived as a bad/ineffective person who is harassing educators. Support is really what is needed but in most cases, we get sabotage.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School).

The truth is, communities are part of schools and to address issues on unethical behaviour of educators, they should be involved. Mr Mathe, the Principal of, Khethimfundo Secondary School, believe that parents were contributing in accelerating unethical behaviour in schools and even claimed that they were “*accomplices*” in this matter. Most of the principals felt that capacitating parents through training workshops would be a great investment in education and

to the whole community in general. Once again, Mr Mathe of Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

... if an educator has fallen in love with a learner, they bribe them by giving them money and the parents are satisfied. That case will not go anywhere because the principal does not know. The parents themselves are accomplices. If maybe parents can be better informed about ways of disciplining educators. I recommend parental empowerment. Parents usually do not attend meetings. If maybe there can be people/officials who can be distributed everywhere to talk to the community. Not only those where learners are learning. Just go to the community gatherings and preach this gospel that if an educator has done this, this is what happens.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Whilst the training of parents and the role they are supposed to play are important, one more thing that needs to be realised is that parents do not have sufficient power over educators. That giveses educator's carte blanche to do as they please over the learners. In this regard, Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School said:

SGB does not have a power over educators, educators are drinking in front of their children and their children are suffering. Parents must be given mandate to intervene up to a certain level (Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School).

In addition, school principals suggested that at universities where educators are trained, there should be modules on Ethics. Many professions including teaching have their own specific code of ethics which all members of those profession are expected to follow. Educators are considered ethical in their practice if they are adhered to the SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators. So, introducing modules on Ethics at the universities will provide educators with a basis for making difficult ethical decisions. Having a grounding in ethics at an early stage of teaching career will help educators' development as an ethical person, a necessary characteristic for an ethical leader.

However, all the struggles in addressing unethical behaviour in schools would be in vain if the issue of individual personality and background is ignored. The Department of Education must find out the way to check the background of educators before they are employed. Criminal records must be conducted to avoid criminals, rapists taking up educator jobs, those who had

served the sentences must have been rehabilitated as well. Some of the principals claimed that acting unethically becomes a habit which becomes a problem because it takes a very “painful struggle” to fight it. Mr Ndaba as Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School was more definite when he prescribed:

in an educator, we need a quality but that quality must include the ethics in that educator, so the quality revolve around the ethics educators must not involve in criminal things and expect to be a good educator.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

He further argued and said:

What is a good educator? One of the educators around this area is in jail as we speak, killing his colleague. ...quality and personality if, this two are not balanced the principal will indeed produce a good result but at the same time learners will be pregnant ‘laughing’ That is the main thing!!!

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Further, Mr Mathe the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School argued that, knowing the background of the individual would also help in controlling absenteeism because most of the time when educators are absent from school, is not because of sickness. Sometimes they faked sickness. Mr Mathe thus mentioned some of these things during the interview:

Mostly people who are absent, it is not for serious reasons but they falsify their absenteeism, but appeal can be made to educators to fill in the form and there should be attachment such as medical certificate. ...but also, know each one of them and their families to understand their background and be able to detect the problem early enough. Others say they are sick while attending party at home. As management forget about the rules and get to know the person personally to understand them well.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Moreover, a drastic shift from focusing on CVs and qualifications when recruiting and employing educators are needed. Qualifications are necessary but are not enough. The Department of Education must find ways to go beyond them during the recruitment process. Most educators are still behaving unethically which suggests that qualifications and the interview scores do not determine the appointment of ethical and quality educators. Something more has to be done. Principals believe that something is missing and suggested that when the

educator is being interviewed the setting questions must include the background of the candidates.

....so, what I am trying to say is that the score for personality in the interview must have a lot of marks in order to balance quality and personality, that is the main thing that I think it can help.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

With equal force, Mr Mzobe of Impumelelo Primary School supported this notion when he briefly said:

Moral virtues must be tested. You may perform very well in teaching but when it comes to leadership is another thing.

(Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Nondaba the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School argued that most of the principals in school do not have goals to build the schools. They do not have dreams about their schools. They just think selfishly about themselves – how they are going to make themselves rich. She was so much worried and frustrated that she said:

They must look at qualities – does this person really deserve to be in that position? Especially with finance because a person with many debts will obviously fail when they are placed in a position of managing school funds.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Another finding of this study was the issue of educator unions. The principals were overwhelmed, angry and frustrated by their actions. Miss Nondaba—Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School—was candid about her stance with regard to unions:

...also, the meetings are held now and again. They do not even stick to the time that is allocated for the meetings. It is causing havoc in schools. Learners are left alone. Most of the time they blame the Department of Education by allowing this thing to happen in schools. It becomes very difficult because educator unions work hand in hand with government. For example: we did not write the Annual National Assessment (ANA). Something that was going to help us see our standard.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The school principals were convinced that the Department of Education was doing nothing and was confused because educator unions, especially the one in question was in an alliance with the governing party. Mr Mzobe-Principal, Impumelelo Primary School expressed his concern:

If an employer does not have definite procedures on how to relate with educator unions, that employer would always defeated by unions. If the employer is defeated by the unions, it will be difficult for us as principals who are serving the Department of Education in the leadership position down there to deal with the issue of unions. there is nothing we can do.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

He further argued:

You see, if there is this grey area, is not clear who is in power between the Employer and the educator unions. Because those who are in power are the one who supposed to come up with definite clear procedures. At times, you hear that there is a workshop called by the Department and educator unions came and turn down the workshop on the sport. In the marking centres unions turn down the procedures of department, yes, the department supposed to do something if not we still have a problem (Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School).

Based on the above discussions, this study found out that, *firstly*, the employer needs to have a clear and definite procedure as to how to deal with unethical behaviour in schools. *Secondly*, schools do not have ethical committees, hence such structures are necessary in curbing unethical practices in schools. *Thirdly*, rural communities are not well empowered and influenced with poverty as a result principals and educators are taking advantage on them. This suggest that rural community are vulnerable principals and educators found easy to take advantage on them. This finding corroborated by study conducted by Chikoko when he found out that rural communities are often characterised by “*a cocktail of social ills*” Chikoko (2008, p. 77). *Fourthly*, the study found out the department of education is pushing schools to focus more on producing the results rather than developing learners holistically as results educators are view them as “*machines*”. *Fifthly*, in hiring principals the focus is more on qualifications then personality, background and the character of the person. *Lastly*, Department of Education

and SACE are not closer and visible to schools when it comes to issue of ethics and ethical behaviour. SACE is taken as something written nicely on paper. SACE only react not intervene.

The above findings suggest that the Department of Education needs to introduce ethical and moral leaders in education particularly at schools. These findings also suggest that unethical practices are now an addition to some of the principals and educators as a result the whole system is sick. The findings also suggest that the system (Department of Education) is either restart or consider rehabilitation.

Researchers such as Ardichvili and Jondle (2009), Hannah, et al., (2011), corroborate the view on introducing moral and ethical leaders in education. Ethical leadership is of great importance to handling moral incidents and fostering employees' ethical behaviours in organisations given that good leaders are obliged to set a moral example for their followers. School principals have ethical responsibilities which means they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). School principals should use an ethical reasoning framework when making decisions.

Similarly, this study found out unethical practices in schools are the result of the lack of good leadership. Therefore, Ncube (2010) corroborates the findings of this study when she argues that most of the problems bedevilling Africa today are a result of lack of good leadership. She therefore, suggests Ubuntu as the solution to Africa's problems. Furthermore, Mangena (2011) posits that most of the challenges facing African leadership today are not only requiring Ubuntu as a general transformative philosophy as stated by Ncube (2010) but as a specific ethical guide that leads to the promotion of the common good of the entire community.

Furthermore, studies conducted on the attributes of perceived ethical leaders (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2008) seem to corroborate suggestions of principals about focusing more on the background and the personality of the individual when hiring the principal. The study recognise integrity as a central characteristic of the individual leader (Brown, *et al.*, 2005; Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2008). Moreover, this is also in line with views of Nelson Mandela, a South African hero who described Ubuntu as a philosophy constituting a universal truth, a way of life, which underpins an open society (Mandela, 2006). In Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glues the society together, lubricate tolerance and respect human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership. In addition, Ubuntu is

essentially transformative since it directs organisations towards an ethics of care (Khoza, 2011). In this context, the ethic of care requires leaders to consider “multiple voices” in the decision-making process (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2005, p. 18). The ethic of care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Wood & Hilton, 2012). As such, an ethic of care is characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust (Shapiro & Gross, 2008).

According to Khoza (2011), qualities that are especially important in leadership where serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu. Furthermore, Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015) state that a principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by acting with integrity, with fairness and in an ethical manner. Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015) further state that principals should demonstrate integrity, dedication, humility, openness, creativity, honesty, forward- thinking competence, inspiration, intelligence fairness and assertiveness. At school, a school principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support (Cezmi & Toprak, 2014).

5.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of various school principals regarding ethics and ethical leadership elicited through the interviews, documents review and observations were presented and discussed in terms of research questions, literature review as well as the theoretical frameworks. In a nutshell, schools face multiple challenges of unethical behaviour on the part of principals and educators. In order to respond proactively to the challenges, they face, some of the school principals tried to instil values to promote ethical behaviour among staff members. Others were doing nothing: they do not have any idea where to start. They only focus on producing good results. In the next chapter, I present and discuss the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of various members of the SMT members.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: THE PERSPECTIVE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the perceptions of principals about ethics and ethical leadership. As indicated in the preceding chapter, due to the voluminous nature of the data generated, this data presentation section was subdivided into three chapters as explained in Chapter Five. Specifically, in this chapter I present the perceptions of the School Management Team about ethics and ethical leadership in the researched schools. A critique of the findings is then facilitated through the research questions, literature review and the theoretical frameworks which were explored at great length in Chapters Two and Three respectively. Pertinent findings are then analysed through content analysis as explained and discussed in the research methodology chapter. For the purpose of this study the term School Management Team (SMTs) will refer to middle management such as head of departments and deputy principals.

6.2 Discussion of findings

The following responses were from the four SMTs of primary and secondary schools:

6.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership

Surprisingly, the majority of the SMT members who participated in this study were very curious about my interest on ethics and ethical leadership. They felt that these are “big” terms for some big corporations. They were not sure whether I was running out of ideas. Most of SMTs were convinced that ethics is not for them and that they do not have to bother themselves about it. As time goes they just realised that this “ethics” thing sounds interesting. They correctly concluded that ethics is the same as values. In short, they believe that ethics is something related to professionalism. Mrs Nondaba, a Deputy Principal at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, stated this very simply during the interview when she said:

What I understand is that it is something related to professionalism. If you are an educator and you have ethics, you know what is expected of you in the field of

education, your behaviour to other colleagues, teaching and learning and the approach you use if you are a manager.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Few participants believe that ethics are guidelines prescribed to guide educators on how to behave. Miss Ndaba, anHOD at Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

In my own view, ethics is similar to values which means they are those standards that mould an educator so that in doing whatever they do you will always bear in mind that there are guidelines that specify how they should behave at any given time or place. Ethics help educators not lose their dignity and respect, for instance, by engaging in activities like corporal punishment and having romantic affairs with school children. (Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Some participants believe that ethics is the same as policies. Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School—during the interview said:

... like I said in the beginning we do them in my subjects so I didn't know that you will need ethics in real life. I thought it was just in business only, we never touched on it in school environments.

(Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

On the other hand, the majority of participants correctly concluded that ethics are morals, conduct and behaviour. They believe that ethics is the way you engage with other people, or how your approach others. In short, ethics is about how to carry yourself in public. Miss Mzobe—HOD of Impumelelo Primary School believe that ethics is about a set of principles that help one to decide between the right and the wrong thing. She emphasised that ethics is about morality. *“According to my understanding, ethics in schools is a set of principles that people must use to decide what is right or wrong (that is morality),”* said Miss Mzobe theHOD at Impumelelo Primary School.

Furthermore, participants, even though they were sceptical about the importance of ethics at school, soon realised that ethics are relevant and needed to be considered at schools. They believe that ethics will help schools to excel. Hence, learners will also be raised well with morals. One of the participants mentioned this during the interview:

... if you want your school to succeed you must practise ethics. Ethics must be central so that the school will teach what the department expects. Kids will also be raised well, with morals.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

During the data generation process, I noticed beforehand that SMT members have a lot to share with me concerning an ethical leader. Some of the things come out during interviews pertaining ethical leadership that I am going to dwell on in the next discussion are; (1) *ethical leadership in caring about other people*; (2) *ethical leadership as trusted individual*; and (3) *ethical leadership in creating open communication*.

As I mentioned above, participants were willing to share with me a lot about ethical leadership. They were very excited about the concept even though at the beginning were skeptical and curious about “ethics” and “ethical leadership” especial when it comes to schools and education. All SMT members who participated in this study believe that in order to be qualify as an ethical leader you have to demonstrate the element of “*care*” in your leadership role. One of the HOD articulated this very well during the interview when she said, “*understand feelings of educators and be a father to them when there are experiencimg times of difficulties*” (Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School). To be a “*father*” according to SMT members who participated in this study is to create a conducive environment for educators and learners. It is also to instill Ubuntu to staff members by teaching them the importance of helping one another. To be a father according to participants is not a title for all leaders. “Father” is the one who promotes the well-being of followers, the one who solve their problems and keep things confidential. Further, to be a father is to show sympathy and empathy to other people. One deputy principal supported this notion nicely when she said, “*By showing empathy and sympathy to all stakeholders and taking in to cognisance the welfare of others*” (Mrs Nondaba-Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

In addition, participants claimed that genuine care is fair, honest and unbiased, meaning that a leader has to acknowledge the element of humanity. Expectations to be realistic take into account different characteristics of humans. According to participants, an ethical leader in order to take into account different characteristics of humans he/she would establish a support structure which caters for different areas of a life of a person. Miss Ndaba theHOD at Ikusalethu Secondary School said:

...establish support structures within the school which will cater for different areas of life of a person, for example, social, spiritual, physical, economical and academic. (Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

She further emphasised her point and said:

Acknowledge personal achievements and empathise with unfortunate events. The principal must find out how best to help in such times.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The following quotation, extracted from the questionnaire, seems to corroborate the views of participants that an ethical leader cares about the followers.

This can be demonstrated by showing concern for staff, parents and learners. Principals must empathise with the people they work with, and not only be strictly task or work-oriented. (HOD-2 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

Further, another response from the structured interviews which was generated from all educators in sample schools corroborates the above-mentioned notion on ethical leader and caring. HOD-1 at Qhakazangemfundo Primary said:

A good leader always knows the importance of fairness, especially when dealing with people. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. Fair is fair, it cannot be diluted. (HOD-1, Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

She further extended her concern and said, “A leader must have a strong “backbone”. He/she must be someone who holds on the principles of fairness, discipline and humility “learners scan for these principles in an educator/ leader” (HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary). Also, the following abstract from the questionnaire seem to corroborate the above discussion on ethical leadership and caring. One of the HOD presented her idea about ethical leadership and said, “Ethical leaders care about their staff and give them support if necessary” (HOD- 3 Impumelelo Primary).

In addition, this argument supported by HOD-1, Khethimfundo Secondary School, when she said, genuine caring demonstrated through “ensuring and promoting the well-being of educators such that educators who are sick should be assisted”.

(HOD-1, Khethimfundo Secondary)

As much as all educators are willing to have a leader who cares about their wellbeing, unfortunately not all leaders care about other people. In contrast, some participants claimed that leaders do not care about educators; they only care about the school. One of the HOD submitted this practical example during the interview, when she said:

... he always tries to safeguard the interest of the school which is a good thing but might not go down well with the affected individual.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusalethu Secondary School)

She further complained that even when staff members need the principal's intervention, he normally abandons them. She said:

It generally depends on where the problem has emanated from. Sometimes the problems emanate from the learners and some emanate from the educators. In most cases the principal has a habit of ignoring problems that emanate from the educators.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusalethu Secondary School)

This claim is also supported by HOD at Khethimfundo Secondary, when she said “...he is genuinely caring at times. Sometimes he shows no caring in the manner that he approaches other educators” (HOD-2 Khethimfundo Secondary). She further argued that even though her principal does not show caring sometimes but she believes that he is an ethical leader because he has got Ubuntu. She justified her argument when she said:

...he shows humility because he can apologise to certain situations when he realises that he did something wrong. He always shows humility to other departmental officials.

(HOD-2, Khethimfundo Secondary)

So far, the study found that SMTs have a clear understanding of ethics, they believe that ethics was the same as values, morals and is something related to professionalism in teaching. This study also found that SMTs view ethics as being about a set of principles that help one to decide between the right and the wrong. Furthermore, the study found that an ethical leader cares about people. Caring stems from being a “father” to followers and being able to acknowledge the element of humanity. The findings on ethical leadership and caring are corroborated by Khoza (2011). The latter posits that the leader should demonstrate competence along with caring so that respect is truly won. Maxwell (2014) further states that: People do not care how much you

know until they know how much you care about them. Also, the views of SMTs about caring were corroborated by the ethic of care put forward by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). They argue that ethic of care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Wood & Hilton, 2012). In addition, the ethic of care is characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust (Shapiro & Gross, 2008). Therefore, these findings seem to suggest that at schools, school principals should take a good care of followers in order to be trusted. These findings are also in line with Khoza (2011), who argues that no leader can get along and be effective without an understanding of the hearts and minds of the followers. The strength of African moral philosophy is that it influences a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision (Khoza, 2011). He further argues that compassion rests on the empathy we feel when we have knowledge of the “inner state of others” and leadership without a compassion is “hollow”. To lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral. To lead you need to have a ‘feel’ for people: you need to have empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority (Khoza, 2011, p. 81). In addition, Mkhize (2008) refers to Ubuntu as the process of becoming a human being and calls for a particular mode of being in the world, which requires each person to maintain social justice, to be empathetic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience.

All the SMTs who participated in this study believe that an ethical leader cares about the followers. They further claimed that caring stem from being a “father” to followers. However, in practice, not all the school principals demonstrated caring to followers.

In contrast, all the SMT members who participated in this study believe that ethical leader is the one who is trusted and the leader who treat followers fairly and in a respectful way. In addition, SMTs believe that to be trusted the leader must be an exemplar to the followers. An ethical leader is the one whom they may learn on him/her. One of the HOD mentioned this during the interview. She said:

I can say ethical leadership is to lead by example number one and then treat everybody the same, “ungabi nabantu obakhethayo” [treat everyone equally].

(Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, HOD-Ikusasaletu Secondary stated this:

...because as a leader you must lead by example. You must be the one showing what is expected of them. If you know that the most important thing is teaching and learning, you must be the first one who goes to class and teach. You must be the

first to show some respect, not that you are buying them but you would be showing them what is expected of them. You must not be the one who is disorderly. You must know what is expected of you as a leader.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

During the interview, the deputy principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary made her point clear when she said:

Fairness goes in the same way as trust. A person who practises fairness is trustworthy. A good leader always knows the importance of fairness, especially when dealing with people. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. Fair is fair, it cannot be diluted.

(Mrs Nondaba--Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further argued and said:

A good leader has to take into account the element of humanity when dealing with people, when implementing fairness and trust to his/her people. Rules are rules, though sometimes a need to consider people as humans differs drastically.

(Mrs Nondaba--Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

On the other hand, participants believe that an ethical leader is one who demonstrates an unbiased stance and fairness in his/her leadership role. One of the participants made the point clear and said

Fairness goes hand-in-hand with unbiased communication. Goals are pretty straight forward to understand, only if the people led believe in the leader.

(HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

She further argued and said:

...the primary reason is the belief in fairness, unbiased decision-making principles.

Ethics regulate the different characteristics of people in a place.

(HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

In addition, the following abstract from the structured interview resonate with views of the participants about ethical leadership and fairness. HOD-2 Ikusasaletu Secondary supported this notion when she said, “...by making quality judgments that are free from discrimination”

(HOD-2 Ikusasaletu Secondary).

Throughout the data generation process, I noticed that most of the SMTs were desperately willing to have an ethical leader at schools but things seemed far from their wishes. Some of the school principals projected themselves as good leaders but their practices were the opposite. Some HODs claimed that their principals were trusted, treating all staff equally and they were in line with the policies and the procedures of the Department of Education. In practice, that was not a case. The following quotation contradicts Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School, who claimed that her principal was ethical, good and that his decisions were in line with the procedures of Department of Education she said:

...my principal is very sympathetic, but then again if you start misbehaving, he will not allow you to waste his time. My practical example is, I'm always on time and this one time at home there was a wedding and my baby girl was the flower girl. The schools were going to close the week before the wedding, I swallowed my pride and explained to the principal the situation. He never asked too many questions, he just told me to finish up my work and reports and then go. Then he told me I can leave a week before the school's close and no leave form was submitted.

(Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Whereas, the above quotation implicates some of the school principals that they are not in line with the policies and procedures of the Department of Education, not all the SMT members were convinced that their principals were good, ethical and trusted. One of the participants said:

The problem is in decision-making. Sometimes the behaviour that he exhibits is inhuman. He shows no respect for others just because they are subordinate.

(HOD-2 Khethimfundo Secondary)

She further said:

I can say he is not fair enough on ethical leadership because you can find some other cases being unfair in treating other educators. He fails to sympathise or share solidarity with other educators. (HOD—Khethimfundo Secondary)

The above two quotations drawn from questionnaires also refute claim from the interview submitted by Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School—when she claimed that her principal sticks to the policies and procedures of the Department and is sympathetic,

on the basis of which she views him as an ethical and good leader. Even though SMTs and principals of schools need to be trusted and, by reciprocal turns, to trust followers, challenges are always there. The majority of the SMT members who participated in this study believe that the character and the behaviour of the principal play a crucial role in the principal being trusted. One of the Qhakazangemfundo Primary HODs mentioned this during the structured interview:

Dishonesty, unreliability and disloyalty on the part of some school principals serve as obstacles in being trustworthy to the staff.

(HOD-2 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

Similarly, her colleague said:

Hatred and not being acceptable to the staff may be an obstacle to the principal to be trustworthy. Sometimes inferiority complex may be the cause of lack of not being trustworthy.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further justified the reason some of the principal are hated and not accepted by followers when she said:

Lack of knowledge and networking as well as not being updated with the recent educational policies and issues. Lack of dedication on the side of the principal may cause them not to promote ethical conduct on the staff.

(Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, Impumelelo Primary School HOD (Miss Mzobe) believe that open communication helps the school to achieve the same goal. She said: “*Educators are free to raise their opinions or views about their school*”. In contrast, some of the SMTs who participated in this study claimed that some of the school principals are not ethical and are not good. They believe that to be ethical you have to take good care of other people; you have to be trusted and you have to create an open and health communication. Some of the participants said:

Sometimes there is transparency and open communication but in some cases, he makes decisions alone without consulting the staff.

(Miss Mathe –HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

This notion was supported by deputy principal at Qhakazangemfundo Primary, when she said:

Some of the principals are authoritative. They are not open to the staff's suggestions. They do not create platforms, e.g. staff meetings where the staff can be vocal and raise their ideas.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, all the SMTs who participated in this study believe that ethics and ethical leadership are necessary at schools. Ethical leadership will help the school to run properly. Hence, ethical leadership is about morals and values, how you treat other people and how you conduct yourself. Ethical leadership is to lead by example and be consistent in your dealings with all educators and be responsible with a clear propensity to act on issues correctly and honestly. Miss Mzobe--HOD, Impumelelo Primary School said:

It is necessary for productivity and excelling in the school. Leaders also will know the wrong things can harm the institution.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Taking the forgoing point further, Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

It is important because institutions should be driven by ethics and there should be reminders all the time of the core business of the school since along the way people forgetting these things. For the functionality of the school we need to know what are the do s and don'ts at school.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

In addition, some of the participants argued and said, “*In schools that is where we develop pupils who are going to be members of the society who are trusted in South Africa as well as the whole world*” (HOD-2 Khethimfundo Secondary School). In short, participants believe that learners need to be developed about the important of values and principles while they are still young and innocent. One of the participants said:

...because your behaviour is based on how you were moulded. You cannot change a behaviour when you are old. You have to be moulded whilst you are still young. This is why it is important to instil the values whilst they are still young. When they are adults and working, they will know what is expected of them. For example, I have mentioned the use of the code of conduct. They will know that there are laws. You do not do anyhow. You have to follow certain laws. So even if they are at work, they will know what is expected of them.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The discussion so far has shown that trustworthiness, fairness, having a “*strong backbone*” and to be principled were regarded as important traits of an ethical leader. Furthermore, this study found that ethical leaders are characteristically trusted by followers. To be trusted the leader has to show humanity and fairness in his/her leadership role. Moreover, this study found that ethical leader manages to create an open, healthy communication. Also, this study found that ethical leadership is necessary at schools because it is where future leaders were built. Also, it is important to instil values and principles to the learners while they are still young. These findings were corroborated by the view of Borgonovi and Burns (2015) who posit that education and trust are fundamentally intertwined and dependent on each other. Trust is the glue that binds the leader to her/his followers and provides the capacity for institution success.

Furthermore, the views of participants that a leader, in order to be trusted, has to show humanity and fairness in his/her leadership role and to be principled, are corroborated by Khoza (2011). He posits that, to lead, you need to have a ‘feel’ for people, as well as empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority (Khoza, 2012). Moreover, Mkhize (2008) and Khoza (2011) refer to Ubuntu as the process of becoming a human being and calls for a particular mode of being in the world, which requires each person to maintain social justice, to be empathetic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience. These findings are also corroborated by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), who posit that care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of each individual; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Shapiro and Gross (2008) further state that an ethic of care is characterized by virtues such as compassion, understanding, and trust. Furthermore, these findings are in line with Khoza (2011), who claims that to be human is to show kindness to other living beings. When he speaks of humanness, however, he goes to the deepest level, implying that one human being can empathise with another because they take “their being” form each other, and each draw on the collective spirit of humanity (Khoza, 2011, p. 88). Therefore, Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2011).

These findings suggest that schools and Department of Education in particular need to move towards ethical leadership. Since ethical leaders are trusted, they will manage to achieve the vision and goal of the Department of Education to deliver quality education and instil good morals in the next generation together with educators. In addition, trust is an important precondition for accountability and capacity building.

The majority of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that ethical leadership is to be firm though reasonable when dealing with educators or followers. Ethical leadership is involving principles in deciding on what is right or wrong in the institution. Also, ethical leadership is about transparency, allowing members to say their views on your leadership. Therefore, ethics and ethical leadership viewed by participants as necessary at schools to deliver quality education and instil good morals to the next generation.

6.2.2 Experiences of SMTS about Ethics and Ethical leadership in schools

The majority of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that most of the school principals, HODs and educators were not dedicated to their work. Absenteeism, leaving school early, failure to work especially on a pay-day and not reading policies of the Department of Education were some of the things mentioned by participants as unethical practices. Moreover, principals ran the school as their own private properties, causing educators to be rebellious. Also, their authoritative leadership style was viewed by participants as a favourite to some of the school principals. One of the participants argued about this and said:

Sometimes principals do act unethically. For example, some are not dedicated. They do not even study the policies. If you are a leader, you must know what is expected of you to do. They tend not to worry about what they must do. Some spend most of the time absent from work, doing their own things because they have got those powers. Sometimes the staff will not know where the principal is. If he is not at school, they think he is at the circuit office or attending a meeting while the principal is busy doing his own thing.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further grumbled and said:

Sometimes they tend to practise authoritarian leadership where they do not give the staff a chance to raise their voices because you cannot manage alone. You need the views of other people, for example the SMT. Sometimes they tend to run the school as if they are running their families or homes because they do not involve others. They even say at 'my school' this is what will happen - while that thing has not been discussed. That is unethical. Maybe educators try not to do what they are expected of them because they are trying to show him their disapproval because of

not being involved.

(Mrs Nondaba--Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Impumelelo Primary School, HOD said:

Some of the educators by nature are lazy and some are stubborn. They resist change. They are not committed to their profession. They are not called. They came to the teaching profession because they needed money. That is the most serious case. Some of them have not come to build future leaders. They are just doing it for the sake of doing it, without any focus.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Furthermore, Ikusasalethu Secondary School, HOD said:

there some educators who just choose to be absent without good reason while some only become absent when there is a valid reason.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasalethu Secondary School)

The following findings from structured interview corroborate findings from the interview. The following quotations is abstracted from some of the questionnaires:

Some of the principals are authoritative. They are not open to the staff's suggestions. They do not create platforms, e.g, staff meetings where the staff can be vocal and raise their ideas. (DP, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Sometimes there is transparency and open communication but in some cases, he makes decisions alone without consulting the staff, the behaviour that he exhibits is inhuman. He shows no respect for others just because they are subordinates.

(HOD-2 Khethimfundo Secondary)

Besides, participants believe that some principals were abusing female educators sexually due to lack of morals. Some school principals were collecting money from educators that have been employed. Miss Mzobe, an HOD at Impumelelo Primary School, put this very bluntly during the interview when she said, *"I think what is unethical is receiving bribery, sometimes exchanging posts for sex and practising nepotism"* (Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School). Also, the Deputy principal from Qhakazangemfundo Primary supported this notion when she said:

Some do not have morals and values. They tend to use their powers to give educators a hard time. Some male principals like to be involved in a relationship

with female educators at the school. Some even hire you and at the end of the month you must pay a certain amount to the principal because they gave you a job.

(Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The majority of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that having a relationship with learners is unethical and also disrupts the learners' future. Miss Mathe said:

love affairs with the learners, is the number one issue. I'm talking both males and females because now it not just males. There was once an issue it didn't go anywhere because the complainants were absent, the issue was pushed under the mat because the boy left the school.

(Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, the Deputy Principal from Qhakazangemfundo Primary expressed concerns:

Some educators in high schools have relationships with learners. If you are a child you do not know how to behave so if an adult tells you something you will think it is the right thing to do. They end up disturbing the learners and make them not finish schooling.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In contrast, one participant viewed intimate relationships of educators with learners as something to do with learners. Educators are sometimes being hooked by learners who are ill behaved and they fall for it. Although it is not allowed, it happens especially to male educators when openly challenged by girls, through the way they sit, showing private parts. Miss Ndaba said:

When you rebuke the learners as a female educator they think that you are being jealous towards your colleague.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, the majority of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that school principals manage the issue of school funds more than the curriculum. Some of the school principals misuse school funds they do not use funds properly such as to buy school resources. Some of the School Governing Body (SGB) members their terms never end for convenience to the school principal and the SGB was for the choice of the principal. Participants also revealed that sometimes school principals do not treat the staff equally. They have those educators who were very close to them and those educators end up not doing the work properly. One of the participants said “*favouritism amongst the colleagues or speaking badly about the*

others” (Miss Mathe-HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School). Further the HOD of Ikusasaletu Secondary also felt the same when she said:

Yes, they also have a tendency of being selective to staff members and giving preferential treatment to the members of the staff that they have close ties with.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, the HOD from Impumelelo Primary mentioned this during the interview:

Favouritism to educators and not treating the staff members equally like when you are losing a family member the principal does not treat educators the same in line with the number of days taken by the educators, there is no consistency.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Conversely, the HOD of Ikusasaletu Secondary observed:

What I usually notice among principals is an interest in the schools’ financial issues more than other aspects of their duties. They often do not use the funds to completely meet the needs of the school but sometimes to meet their own personal needs.

(Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Findings from the structured interview corroborate findings from the semi-structured interview whereby participants viewed some of the school principals as unethical and used power for their own benefits. The following quotations are extracted from some of the questionnaires. Participants hinted some of the disturbing practice by school principals. Some of the school principals viewed by SMTs who participated in this study as selfish. Some of them do not care about the school. What is most important is their personal needs. They often abuse power for personal gain. They have a lot of skeletons in their closets. As a result, they struggle to discipline educators when it is needed. HOD-2 at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School summarised this very nicely when she said:

Unethical behaviour of the principals themselves which can make them fear exposure of their skeletons in the cupboards. Lack of information/ knowledge on what ethical conduct is about.

(HOD-2, Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

Moreover, Impumelelo Primary school HOD, asserted:

...sometimes they put their needs forward and forget that the needs of their schools

must take priority. (HOD-1 Impumelelo Primary)

He further said that:

Having personal interests which they do not disclose to stakeholders which might be in conflict with the values of the department of education.

(HOD-1 Ikusasaletu Secondary).

However, some of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that educators are the employees of the Department of Basic Education (DBE), but others were lost and confused by the educator unions who question and defy the policies of the Department. The Deputy Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary commented and said:

...as an educator, you must know what is expected of you so you must know that you are an agent of the department. You have to apply and implement the policies of the department. But now we have seen that people have lost the direction. They do not know what to do. Some are disturbed by the unions. If you are a union member sometimes you tend to question the Department.... as a result, the departmental policies are not implemented. That is unethical because you are not doing what you are supposed to do. So, we are losing direction as educators in our profession.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, the HOD of Impumelelo Primary said:

Sometimes when educators are misbehaving, unions support them when they are wrong because they are leaders of those unions.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Participants felt that Educator Unions support educators even when they were wrong. They want to impress their members since they have close relationships with them. So, this practise of educator unions sends a wrong message to educators. Educators think that educator unions are more powerful than the Department of Education and the educators were working towards impressing the unions instead of inspiring learners and upholding the ethical standards of the teaching profession. Therefore, educator unions must go beyond the interest of their members and think about how to improve learning outcomes and to maintain the good reputation of the teaching profession. Both educators and educator unions must come out of the box and pay more focus on inspiring the young minds and maintain the nobleness of teaching profession.

The findings of this study suggest that educators are behaving unethically because they know that educator unions are always on their sides.

One more thing that seems unethical about educators is the use of cell phone in class. Educators were busy with social networks during teaching and learning time. Some of the educators did not do preparation as a result they end up not teaching in class and not focusing on the prescribed curriculum. The only thing they do is telling jokes and stories to learners. One participant hinted this during interview:

There are things that educators do which are unethical, for example, the cell phone issue. They bring cell phones to classes and they will be busy on the social networks. Some come to school unprepared. They do not know what to teach on that particular day. You may think that they are teaching but they would be busy telling stories and making jokes.

(Mrs Nondaba--Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, some of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that some of the HODs are not doing their job well and just stamp for signing without proper moderation. In other words, they do not call the phase meetings to discuss about teaching and learning and do not develop educators. They are also afraid of putting order in educators because they lack training in supervision. The Qhakazangemfundo Primary Deputy Principal summarised this very well and said:

I think there is - if they do not know what is expected of them. Some just put a stamp on submitted work without thoroughly checking. If you are an HOD, you have a mission to develop those educators that you are leading. So, if you just put a stamp without reading, there may be a lot of mistakes. What causes that also is that an HOD fails to develop the educators because they do not know the challenges. Some are shy to even call a meeting for their phases to discuss phase issues regarding teaching and learning.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In the same vein, participants viewed some of the HODs as not leading by example they do notn't submit on time while forcing educators to submit timeously. Miss Mathe-HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

HOD's like to... let's say we have to submit mark lists on a particular day, you get that educators submit on the day but the HOD submits after deadline. They don't lead by example. (Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Surprisingly, one HOD revealed that most of the time the members of the SMT cover for each other. Miss Ndaba, an HOD at Ikusasaletu Secondary School once said:

Like agreeing that as the SMT we should cover for each other and no matter how much we err it should never be known by the other members of staff.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

In addition, dress code and degrading one another in schools were also hinted by some of the SMTs who participated in this study. Some participants mentioned this in passing “*dress code by educators which is not professional at work*” (Miss Mzobe). Similarly, Miss Mathe, an HOD at Khethimfundo Secondary School raised a concern about the manner of approach of some educators. She said: “*degrading other colleagues where you are not respecting other colleagues*”. Educators play a pivotal role as front liners in every education system. They are role models within themselves for their learners who, consciously or subconsciously, emulate their behaviour. They instil values and morals that will influence the lives of their learners. They are the prime investment in good quality education. In addition, one of the norms and standards for educators is community, citizenship and pastoral care. Thus, educators are expected to be in line with this standard. Educators are expected to practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards others. Therefore, based on the above statement, an inappropriate dress code and the demeaning of other educators by colleagues is unethical. Further, educators are leaders in their classrooms. They have a responsibility to manage learners and learning. Consequently, educators need to model good behaviour by creating a conducive learning environment, respect, tolerance for one another and dress appropriately. Once all these are maintained then the nobleness of the teaching profession will be protected and valued by the society.

In addition, as indicated in the research methodology chapter, I also used documents reviews in this study. All four schools allowed me access to school documents such as the Log books, minutes books, disciplinary books, etc. which gave me an insider view of what was occurring at school pertaining the behavior of educators. The records perused had evidence to the effect that unethical practices are still occurring at schools.

The findings from the interviews about educators drinking alcohol in front of the learners and sleeping with the learners were thus corroborated by SGB minutes dated, 13 November 2014. The following is extracted from the SGB minute book. The SGB minutes were written in isiZulu and read thus:

“wena uthuma abafana besikole utshwala, uphuze ngesikhathi somsebenzi futhi uthandana nomunye umfana wakwa X ofunda u grade 8” (you send school boys to buy alcohol, you even drink during school hours and you are also having an intimate relationship with X boy who is in grade 8.)

(SGB minutes, 13 November 2014)

I was also permitted access to the disciplinary record of one school. The records seemed to corroborate findings from the interviews that HODs are not dedicated. Some of them are not doing their job and are also not exemplary. The following extracted from the disciplinary book dated 06 August 2015:

... withholding educators' mark list. Withheld the educators mark list (keeping them in his cabinet) as results educators could not submit them upon request and the entire school could not submit the analysis to the circuit office. Also, failed to meet the submission deadlines, his mark list was at home with him. HOD ask forgiveness of all mistakes further promised that such thing won't happen next time (Discipline book, 06 August 2015).

So far, this study has found that some of the school principals were abusing their power to satisfy their personal gain and some of them are authoritarian. This finding is in line with Riggio, Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010) who posit that if leaders behave in a way that seeks to benefit themselves at the expense of others, these acts are unjust. This readily calls to mind Shapiro and Gross (2008) who substantiate Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) proposal that school principals who considered each member of the community before making an ethical decision utilise the ethic of justice as they strive to be fair and equitable. Moreover, this study also found that school management as a whole sometimes fail to demonstrate good behaviour to educators, learners and the whole community. As a result, they spent a lot of time and energy hiding their bad practices to followers. Further, they found it difficult to confront or call into order other educators who demonstrated bad behaviour. Therefore, principals seem to be embracing unethical behaviour exhibited in schools. This finding is corroborated by Castro and Moore (2015) who posit that a school leader is a person who dramatically influences the

thoughts, feelings and/or behaviours of a significant number of individuals. These researchers further posit that school principals are expected to guide their schools through the challenges posed by an increasingly complex environment. Then, the study also found that some of the principals and HODs do not have leadership skills. Hence, the development of educators in some schools not seen to happen. This finding is in line with Yukl (2013) who posits that effective leaders develop employees' skills and empower them to become change agents and leaders themselves, and that effective leaders set an example of moral behaviour, and take necessary actions to promote social justice (Yukl, 2013).

Therefore, the findings seem to suggest that principals embrace the rampant unethical behaviour that is happening in most schools because principals are the ones who are modelling the behaviour to the followers. Further, the findings seem to suggest that Department of Education and schools in particular do not have good leadership yet. What is most scary is that even in future schools do not have prospects of having such leaders. There is a deficit of good and ethical leadership at schools. Furthermore, the findings seem to suggest that more harm on learners is likely to happen inside the school gates than outside. This suggestion is corroborated by a disgusting video currently making rounds showing an educator having sexual intercourse with a learner at the school (Langa, 2016). The call for ethical leaders in schools corroborated by Khoza (2011). He argues that a leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts. "Our humanness overrides our differences" (Khoza, 2011, p. 32). In addition, Mangena (2011) also emphasises that the Western notions of ethical leadership focus more on the qualities and role of the leader while African notions of ethical leadership focus on both the role the leader plays in promoting communal/group interests and the role of those he or she leads. Therefore, ethical leaders allow subordinates a say in decision-making and listen to their ideas and concerns and also provide followers with voice (Brown, *et al*, 2005; De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2009).

In short, most noted unethical behaviours demonstrated by school principals, according to SMTs, is the abuse of power. They sometimes use their power in exchange for sex. Further, school principals are not dedicated to their work, they are always absent from school, especially during pay days and on Fridays. Some of the school principals did not care about the school. They focus on satisfying their personal needs. On the other hand, HODs and educators were behaving more or less the same as their principals: they do not care about learners. They were sleeping with learners, drinking alcohol and behaving very badly in public and were using cell

phones in class during teaching and learning time. To conclude, school principals and educators alike seem as to lack a conscience and Ubuntu.

6. 2.3 Causes of unethical behaviour

Some of the SMTs who participated in this study divulged challenges when dealing with unethical practices. Most of the time educators did not take them seriously and they tended to watch the SMT if they were not around, at which opportunity they would do wrong things. Besides that, their instructions educators were aware of the disciplinary processes so, when the letter of the warning expired were they committed the offence again deliberately. The deputy principal from Qhakazangemfundo Primary School mentioned this very clearly when she said:

You have to go to that person doing unethical practices and tell them what is expected but when you go in the office, the person resumes the same behaviour from where they ended. So, this thing of ethical is in a person, that he or she must do justice, whether the SMT is there or not. You cannot teach a person to be ethical. You know what to do. If you observe this behaviour, call the person to order by doing a verbal or written warning. A written warning has a period in which it has to be kept in a file so the person continues with the unethical behaviour again after the written warning has expired.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The findings seem to suggest that the Department of Education does not have sufficient mechanisms to correct ethical problems, and participants indicated that the DoE officials do not teach educators about ethics. Similarly, SACE was also fingered for not offering workshops to educators on ethical behaviour. Further, participants felt that SACE is not closely connected to educators; they have rules but they are not in touch with reality. In addition, participants mentioned lack of in-service training on ethics for educators by the employer including from higher education institutions when training to become educators. One of the participants said:

I am only beginning to notice some of these things as a result of being in the SMT. They invite us as the SMT for workshops to discuss these ethical matters but they do not hold such workshops for the educators to hear for themselves from SACE. I

think the Department of Education should assist by organizing workshops and addressing this topic more. (Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusalethu Secondary School).

In addition, the HoD from Impumelelo Primary School supported this argument when she said:

...the Department is lacking workshops and research findings should be implemented to assist educators using other officials externally from the school.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, the deputy principal of Qhakazangemfundo School captured this appropriately and said:

The problems originate from where they were trained. Maybe the institution must try to emphasise the SACE code of conduct while the educators are still being trained. Some join SACE when they have already started working. They are not taught how to conduct themselves. When they go to the schools to teach, they do not know how to behave. When they see the learners, they do not see them as children because they are almost the same age as them.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, demotivation of the school principals and overstaying at one school doing one and the same thing ends up in principals not having goals, especially if there is no chance for networking and developing new skills. This predisposes the school principal to doing wrong things and apply redundant and moribund skills which no longer work. The majority of the SMTs who participated in this study believe that some school principals take the schools as their own, that is, they do not want involvement of other educators and do not accept suggestions from others. During an interview with the HOD at Impumelelo primary school she mentioned this very simply:

Most of the principals in the schools were appointed and given nothing at the beginning to guide them how to lead the school. The principal builds the school by himself. So now they started working alone with two or three educators of their own choice. To stay along for a long time can lead you to do something wrong, not knowing that you are doing something wrong because you do not have stakeholders that will challenge you. Sometimes when a principal chooses a chairperson, the chairperson is of his choice so that chairperson cannot tell the principal whether

he is wrong or correct. So, he runs the school the way he wants to.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Furthermore, Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School extended this argument when she said:

Some lose interest because they are used to the job. The zeal that they had the first time is gone. That is why one must not spend a long time doing one and the same thing. You must develop yourself. Some learnt a very long time ago. If you upgrade yourself, you get new things. You network with other people and get recent information. Some do not talk about their problems. That makes them apply skills which are no longer in use making their schools not to progress.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The following quotation from the questionnaire corroborates the above views of SMTs about lack of interest in teaching profession as one of the reasons influencing unethical behavior among educators.

Some educators are demotivated and uninterested in the profession. Some have family problems. This may hinder the principal's influence on the educators' ethical conduct. (HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

In contrast, all SMTs members who participated in this study believe that the salaries of educators are not enough. Educators also need more money and are constantly trying to get other means of getting more money to reduce debts and running away from debt collectors. “*The money is a factor since educators are not paid well*” (Miss Mathe—HOD, Khethimfundo Secondary School). In addition, the removal of the notch system in payment of educators was demotivating. In this regard, the HoD from Impumelelo School said:

I think sometimes the money that educators are getting is not enough.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

She further said:

Long time ago when you upgraded yourself in the profession, they used to upgrade your notch and your salary. Educators were motivated by that but now when you develop yourself by learning, it will just be a ‘thank you’ that you receive then back too square one. So, the educators are getting demotivated.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Likewise, in supporting this argument Mrs Nondaba the Deputy Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

The other issue may be because of the salaries that educators are getting. The department also needs to revise the educators' salaries commensurate with the work. We are the ones who produce all the professions so I think educators need to be motivated through incentives. Also, the generation that we have now (born-frees) is not the same as the one before them. They just do not care. Now we have young educators and they are not motivated. They are just there for money. They want tangible things. They go to the classes with phones because of lack of motivation. They do not see the importance of their work. They love beautiful things but they cannot have those because of their salaries, especially if you are a PLI educator.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, she emphasised her point and said:

Like I said, if you are PLI you earn peanuts so people are fighting for better positions, only to find that they are not enough for all of them so they end up killing each other. In education if you are holding a better position you earn more. If you are a PLI and you produce excellent results but realise that you are earning peanuts, you earn more if you are in a better position.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, participants felt that pressure on school principals to produce good results by the Department of Education causes school principals and educators to encourage learners to cheat during final examinations. The participants also mentioned that high failure rates were caused by infrastructure and Post Provisioning Norm (PPN) ration that is not solved. Further, the failure of the Department of Education to discipline educators correctly on previously reported cases causes other school principals and educators to behave the same with impunity. Mrs Nondaba - Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

I think the way the department reacts when a school fails puts pressure on the principals. You end up thinking of other ways of improving marks - in a bad way - whereby children are allowed to cheat.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

On the one hand, Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

The ethics issue is not emphasised, and even if there are offences there are no disciplinary hearings that are reported and dealt with. Follow up are not done in such cases even if reported so that it acts as a lesson to all other educators.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

On the other hand, educators' unions present obstacles in terms of acting in accordance with ethical values. Miss Mzobe-HOD, Impumelelo Primary School said:

I think they have a close relationship with their members so they do not stand for the truth. They want to impress their members. Even if you are wrong they can support you. By so doing, they are destroying in double proportions.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

The following findings from structured interviews corroborate the view held Miss Mzobe, the HOD at Impumelelo Primary School, on the issue of educators' unions: "*Sometimes principals are hindered by powers of unions to act in accordance with ethical values*" (HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary). Further she argued and said, "*Expectations disguised in hidden agendas for personal/ political glory. This hype on Matric and ANA*".

(HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

However, participants viewed incompetent and unethical behaviour of the principal as the one who stimulates and cascades down unethical practices in schools. One of the participants said:

Lack of knowledge and networking as well as not being updated with the recent educational policies and issues. Lack of dedication on the side of the principal may cause them not to promote ethical conduct on the staff.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Her view is echoed by her colleague when she indicated:

If the leaders lack leadership skills, sufficient qualities of leadership will create good environment. Truthfully speaking, there are times when people do all it takes to mess up a good environment intentionally. A good leader must take this into account.

(HOD- 1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

The issue of SGB and recruitment were never left unmentioned when it comes to things

motivate unethical behaviour of educators in schools. Most of the SGBs are not populated by an educated cohort. If they are educated, that school is very lucky. Mostly, Department of Education “*relies on the interviews*” when appointing educators, “*some people are very good at selling themselves. They can speak everything but when it comes to working they fail to deliver*”.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

In this section, I found a number of factors that seemed to contribute towards unethical behavior of school principals, SMT members and educators at schools. First among these is the quality of principals the department has in some of the schools. It has been noted that some of the school principals are struggling to address the issue of bad behaviour of the staff members at schools. The reasons may vary; it may be either school principals’ lack of knowledge and skills of leading human resources or they are together in this struggle of vulgarizing the teaching profession. Some participants were accusing school principals of having a lot of skeletons in their closets, as a result of which they lack the courage to confront other culprits. Secondly, most educators lack knowledge and understanding of how to behave professional. They did not receive even an inch of training on ethics. Oddly, they were depending on school principals to show them a way of how to behave ethical. Thirdly, this study found that overstaying at work make people to slide into complacency and to build networks that supporting him/her on unethical practices. Aschool principals end up taking school as his/her tool of strengthen his/her personal needs. Lastly, Educator Unions tend to support educators even when they were wrong. They also convince educators not to follow procedures and instructions from the employer.

These findings seem to suggest that a vigorous intervention from the Department of Education in addressing the issue of unethical behaviour in schools is not yet fully in place. Further, the findings seem to suggest that the role of principals in dealing with unethical behaviour is not well articulated. Hence some of them were failing to play their role to positively influence educators to behave ethical instead they influence them to do otherwise. For the leader to be able to influence people or followers, they have to be trusted. You cannot be a leader without followers; followers must first *choose* to accept a leader before leadership may commence. Followers accept leaders they can trust. These findings were also in line with Waggoner when she posits that trust is considered the glue of leadership and promotes long-term success (Waggoner, 2010). These findings are also validated by Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) when they aver that without good ethics it is extremely difficult for a leader to develop integrity,

authenticity, an identity or other traits that produce effective leadership. Furthermore, school principals supposed to set clear and ethical standards, which are frequently communicated to their followers (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). Even though the school principals have all the rights to be leaders in educator unions, they have to apply the *ethic of critique* to analyse and evaluate the role and responsibilities of being a president of educator union against the responsibilities of the critical school leadership position (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). School principals are expected to critique and analyse any policy before implementing it. This should help the school principal to ratify wrongs while identifying key morals and values of accepting the leadership position for educator unions (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005).

Findings of this study indicate that some of the educator union leaders back the educators even though they were on the side of wrong. These findings imply that school principals who are educator union leaders were working together with educators in tarnishing the reputation of the teaching profession. The Standards for Principalship (2016) also demands that school principals should subscribe to ethical standards which should guide their behaviour as they lead and manage their schools. School principals are expected to model good behaviour in order to be a good example to educators. In accepting a position to lead educator unions, school principals are liable to influence educators to be union activist instead of being ethical. It is taken as a given that educators are considered ethical in their practice if they adhere to the SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators. Further, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) assert that the moral aspect of the profession is to serve the best interests of the learner as the focus of ethical decisions. Additionally, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) also posit that the ethic of the profession should be central to complete the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care. Besides, the findings of this study are also corroborated by Khoza (2011) when he posits that Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2011).

To conclude, participants revealed that it is a challenge to address the issue of unethical behaviour in schools. Most of them felt that educators are demotivated because they are not earning enough money to satisfy their needs. Some of the educators in schools are under a lot of pressure and they stay away at home and the Department of Education is pushing them very hard to produce good results.

6.2.4 The perceptions of the SMTs regarding education on ethics

All SMTs who participated in this study were never exposed to any training on ethics while training to become educators. Similarly, when already employed as educators, and undergoing in-service training, few of them attended workshops which addressed ethics.

Even though participants did not attend any training on ethics but they believe that as an educator it was important to undergo such training. One participant said:

You will know what is expected of you as the educator if you undergo training

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Furthermore, Miss Ndaba an HOD at Ikusasaletu Secondary School, proposed that *“It is important if it can be done monthly so that educators can be in a position to know what is correct and be reminded of these”*. Further, training will assist educators since sometimes they do things unaware of unethical issues. The Impumelelo Primary School HOD articulated her view very simple and said, *“It is important so to avoid mistakes at work and to afford educators introspection”*.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

The majority of the SMTs who participated in this study felt that SACE was just for educator registration and nothing else. Some participants viewed SACE as a guide on how educators should behave. Participants believe that SACE forces educators to register and to be known that they are practising. One of the participants said:

It is a good thing because it stipulates the conduct that the educator should follow. It talks about the relationships between educators and the learners, the educator, the community and the Department. If it is incorporated with educator training, the educator will come out knowing what is expected so I think it is very important.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, the HOD at Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

The way I see it, SACE does not do anything for the development of the educators. You just register with them and that is the end

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

In addition, the following extract seems to endorse the views of the participants about the complexity of SACE. This extract taken from one questionnaire which was administered at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School.

...very long use of complex language in contrast to plain and simple language.

Purpose of the code of conduct not stated.

(HOD-2 Qhakazangemfundo Primary)

So far, this study found that educators claimed they were never trained on ethics while training to become educators. Most of them, especially the SMTs, had attended single workshop on ethics but felt that the workshop was not enough. Furthermore, this study found that sometimes educators behave unethical unaware of the consequences. Also, this study found that the SACE document is very long and is written on a very complex language which is difficult to understand. Thus, the purpose of the code of conduct is not known to some of the educators.

Therefore, these findings seem to suggest that educators do not know much about ethics and the Code of Professional Ethics. Hence, the ethic of the profession acknowledges that there are guiding values (e.g., principles, codes, assumptions, mores, and expected behaviours) within each profession. Thus, adhering to these values is an obligatory duty to a leader's craft. In particular, professional codes of ethics are paramount to honouring the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). These findings are in line with SACE, (2000) when SACE indicated that, in performing their duties, educators are required to act professionally and, specifically, to act ethically (SACE, 2000). The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has responded to these challenges by developing the Code of Professional Ethics. These findings also seem to suggest that Department of Education and SACE are not paying much effort on instilling ethics in educators. Workshops on ethics according to the findings of this study are more important in teaching and leading the school. This is also in line with Khoza (2011). He posits that to lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral (Khoza, 2011). He further argues that leaders need to be trained to exercise both mental and emotional intelligence. Therefore, reasoning is necessary because it cements society and affirm the values by which we are guided. Certainly, humans must use reason to solve problems- not just technical problems, but existential problems about how to live and get along with others (Khoza, 2011). Furthermore, these findings suggest that the SACE document is complicated and is not easy to be understood. This view is held by educators about their frustrations on following the complex document is also corroborated by Brown (2014). He posits that the goals that work best conform to certain attributes or characteristics. They are clear and are easily understood (Brown, 2014). The Educators' Code of Professional Ethics postulates that developing the ethics of the profession means making the Code a part of every educator's

professional life. To achieve this, the Code must be more than just a piece of paper but must influence the way educators act in their relations with other people (SACE, 2000).

Most of the educators were never exposed to any training on ethics while training to become educators. Educators felt that one workshop on ethics was inadequate. Instead, they prefer continuous training on ethics in order for them to be able to behave accordingly.

6.2.5 Perspectives of SMTS on how to arrest unethical behaviour in schools

SMTs who participated in this study all believe that the Department of Education should organise workshops for school principals and educators on ethics and to take actions where there is any breach of the code.

I also think there should be tougher stance in dealing with offenders. This might go a long way in discouraging educators from engaging in unethical behaviour and such educators are supposed to be arrested or have their duties terminated.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

In addition, SACE should have some short courses on its code of professional ethics before registration after completing educational degree. Random workshops should be done also, just like random workshops for the curriculum. The Ikusasaletu Secondary HOD asserted this very simply when she said:

The most problematic issue is pride where educators come with bad attitudes. Workshops are needed to assist.

(Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

She further said:

I think the Department of Education should assist by organising workshops and addressing this topic more.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Similarly, the Deputy Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, said:

Yes. They know what is expected but we are trying to emphasise that if you are an educator, this is what is expected from you because some tend to forget so it is better to remind them continuously like workshopping them on values and ethics.

(Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

She further asserted:

I suggest that SACE must be the module for educators because you are told that once you are done you have to register with SACE whilst you are not even aware of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. If SACE becomes part of the studies when you reach the final year.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Mzobe, HoD of Impumelelo Primary School, mentioned a similar statement when she said, “*Implementing and enforcing SACE and school code of conduct by introducing ethics training programmes*”.

In contrast, participants believe that most School Governing Body (SGB) members were not strong enough ethically to recommend educators during the selection process. Therefore, participants felt that the SGBs should not recommend during the appointments. Impumelelo Primary School, HOD asserted this very lucidly when she said:

Let us start in schools. In schools, there are SGBs. Most of the SGBs are not educated. If they are educated, that school is very lucky. The SGBs have the powers to choose the educators and the principals so I suggest that if maybe the powers can be removed from the SGB of recommending educators at school. That must be the circuit or district’s responsibility.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

In contrast, participants believe that what will assist in addressing unethical behaviour observed in schools is the change in recruitment process. In schools, the principals should observe the educators and the appointment will be based on the observed performance or, alternatively, interviewers also incorporate ethical questions.

Mostly, to rely on the interviews – some people are very good at selling themselves. They can speak everything but when it comes to working they fail to deliver so I think interviews must be removed and we go back to where principals or senior posts were appointed looking at the performance of that particular individual.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Besides the issue of trainings, recruitment process and the role of School Governing Body (SGB) other elements need to be taken care of such as timeframes spend by individual in the

same environment particularly principals and circuit managers. The circuit managers should not be permanent in one district or circuit they must rotate. The concern of spending long periods of time in the same place shown by participant when she said, “...*one must not spend a long time doing one and the same thing*”.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Mzobe the Impumelelo Primary School HOD extended this argument and articulated her view very well and suggested this:

Even at the circuit office evil is there because of bribery. I suggest that circuit managers must not be in a position for more than two years. They must rotate. They must be in that particular district for two years and move to another one for another two years so that they cannot build any relationships with the principals and the SGBs to avoid bribery. (Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School).

However, most of the SMTs who participated in this study felt that to improve educator salaries will motivate them.

Educators are the mother of all professions. I think that for educators to produce more competent professionals, they must be paid more than all the other professionals. Maybe not more than all but a salary that is good.

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

To conclude this discussion, one participant suggested the need for educators to meet and share the problems and revive the status of the profession by addressing the problems identified and find out what the problems are. Solutions can be derived from there. Then the Department of Education can come in after educators have seen what the issues are. One of the participants said:

Educators are not fans of paperwork. Team-building activities may help a lot in terms of bringing cohesion among staff members. Yes, team-building may be expensive but sometimes simple activities away from paperwork and learners may help.

(HOD-1, Qhakazangemfundo Primary).

The study also found that most of educators were not well equipped with SACE Code of Professional Ethics. Surprisingly, school principals seemed not to have much to address this knowledge gap. Consequently, in order to address unethical conduct, the Department of Education should organise workshops for educators about ethics and to take drastically actions

about those who behave unethical. Also, SACE should have some short courses on its code of professional ethics before registration right after educators complete the educational degree. Random workshops should also be considered because some educators tend to forget about what is expected to them so it is better to remind them continuously like workshopping them on values and ethics. Further, this study found that at schools there are SGBs. Most of the SGBs are not educated. If they are educated, that school is very lucky. Hence participants suggested that the powers be removed from the SGB and the circuit or district be the one responsible for recommendation and appointment. Likewise, this study found that in order to eliminate unethical behaviour, school principals should observe future leader and ensure that appointment is based on the observed performance or alternatively, interviewers also incorporate ethical questions. Furthermore, this study found that circuit managers who were staying in the same position, same circuit, same district for a very long time tend to be involve in bribery and corruption. Therefore, participants felt that they better rotate. In addition, this study also found that educators do not like paperwork. They prefer team-building activities. They believe that team-building may help a lot in terms of bringing cohesion among staff members.

Therefore, these findings seem to suggest that SACE must be one of the compulsory modules for educators in the higher institutions. Also, these findings seem to suggest that school principals do not have clear idea on what they supposed to do to instil ethics to educators. Further, the above findings seem to suggest that recruitment process need to be reviewed as well as period of stay by department officials in a circuit or district offices. However, findings also seem to suggest that unethical activities observed at schools originated from and are embraced by the Department of Education officials. Also, some of the circuit managers are part of the unethical conduct observed at schools. This may be caused by staying long in the same circuit because spending a long time at the same circuit or district gave them enough chance to build unhealthy and corruption network. To conclude, findings seem to suggest that personal traits are important ethical leadership. In addition, an individual with good ethics, principles and cognitive moral development will lead better than any other ordinary person. Good personal ethics are the backbone of ethical leadership. The abundant variables that determine effective leadership are affected by good ethics.

The aforementioned findings were also corroborated by Waggoner (2011) who states that without ethics, a leader is likely to fail, and with ethics a leader is more likely to develop effective leadership. Furthermore, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) argue that school leadership

is no longer conceptualised in terms of technical efficiency but as a predominantly moral and ethical activity (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). They further state that School principals faced with dilemmas and who are challenged to make complex decisions, justified those decisions as made in the best interests of the learners (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Shapiro, 2006; Stefkovich & Begley, 2007). These findings of this study are also in line with the research on ethical leadership which suggests that ethical leaders inspire high levels of commitment; trust and foster desirable behaviours among followers (Brown, *et al.* 2005; Den Hartog & De Hoogh 2009; Piccolo, *et al.* 2010; Kalshoven, *et al.* 2011). Therefore, it is essential to teach educators about ethics. Also, SACE should be closely connected to educators, as that will curb the unethical practices which are widely observed and reported at schools. In addition, school principals must adopt multiple-ethical paradigms putted forward by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) in order to address the issue of the unethical behaviour of educators and to instil an ethical culture in their schools. Furthermore, to lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral. It is clear that leaders need to be trained to exercise both mental and emotional intelligence. Certainly, humans, must use reason to solve problems-not just technical problems, but existential problems about how to live and get along with others (Khoza, 2011).

6.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of various SMTs elicited through the interviews, documents review and observations were presented and discussed in terms of research questions, literature review as well as the chosen theoretical frameworks. In a nutshell, some of the school principals are abusing power by exchanging posts for sex and spent most of school hours doing personal business. As a result, the reputation of the teaching profession is being compromised. In order to rebuild the reputation of the teaching profession, SMTs believe that ethics and ethical leadership should be emphasised at schools. In the next chapter, I present and discuss the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of various PL1 Educators.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATORS ABOUT ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN THEIR SCHOOLS

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and analysed the perceptions of School Management Teams concerning ethics and ethical leadership in the researched schools. As indicated in Chapter Five, due to the voluminous nature of the data generated, the data presentation section was subdivided into three chapters. Specifically, this chapter details the findings emanating from the data generated from educators. A critique of the findings is then facilitated through the research questions, literature review and the theoretical frameworks which were explored at length in Chapters Two and Three, respectively. Pertinent findings are further analysed through content analysis as explained and discussed in the research methodology chapter of this study:

7.2 Discussion of findings

The following responses were from educators of two primary and two secondary schools that formed the study.

7.2.1 Contextual conceptualisations and practices of Ethics and Ethical leadership

It was a great and humbling experience for me as a researcher to interact with educators around the Nongoma Circuit as they were so remarkable, welcoming and cooperative. Besides their welcoming spirit, they were initially very anxious and frustrated as if I was going to expose them to something unpleasant. As time progressed, they managed to relax and shared with me wonderful and interesting stories about their conceptualisation and perceptions on how ethics and ethical leadership were enacted in their schools. The issues of “policy”, “law” and “following rules” were widely presented when ethics and ethical leadership as conceptualised by educators was discussed. The findings from the majority of educators who participated in this study were convinced that that ethics meant doing the correct things and behaving in line with the Departmental of Education policies, law and that ethics has elements of morality. Miss Phe articulated her view and said:

I think it is where you do things according to the law. Not your own. Doing things guided by the laws (Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Further, another educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

My understanding of ethics has to do with doing the correct or right things and behaving in the right manner which does not go against policies and law, following policy and some element of morality in the way someone does things.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Celo said that:

I can say ethics is a set of moral principles to a certain group or certain institutions. As we know that all institutions have their own polices, if you follow those principles, you have ethics.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Hlaka from Ikusasaletu Secondary stated that Ethics is the behaviour acceptable in the workplace, morals, with the high prospect of enhancing respect among colleagues and learners. Moreover, ethics is about time management and being present at school. He also emphasised that absenteeism affects teaching and learning. He submitted a lucid example when he said:

...for example, as an educator you must uphold the values or respect the colleagues and the learners. There must be respect and also time management. You must always be at school at all times because in other schools you find that educators absent themselves for a period of more than a month and this affects teaching and learning. I think ethics is more about the way you address yourself in the workplace.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr John advanced a slightly different angle when he said that Ethics is the way you conduct business such that it is for the advantage of the people and the organization you are working for and in line with the law and the professional conduct as well as African humanism/Ubuntu. He articulated his point attractively during the interview when he said:

Ethics is the way you conduct business in such a way that it is to the advantage of yourself and the people and to obey rules set by the organization you are working for. It is to do things within the law without endangering those working with you. It is the way you conduct yourself in a professional manner, obeying the rules,

regulations and laws as set down by the institution that you work for.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, Mr Mike viewed ethics as principles, personality or consciousness. He presented his view as follows:

Ethics to me is like principles or I can say personality. It also comes in a form of consciousness. That's how I understand it. Ethics depends on individuals. Some people do not value the ethics that you have but like I said, it depends on individuals. That's how I understand it.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Findings from the semi-structured interviews from other participants seem to corroborate the above. The following extract from one of the questionnaires:

Understanding the abstract of morality as what may be moral to him/ her may be immoral to me (Educator- 6- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

In contrast, some participants believe that ethics were mainly for SMTs. Ms Celo from Khethimfundo Secondary said that: *“I can say ethics are when there are rules you have to follow as a leader”*. Similarly, Miss Khumalo mentioned that:

These are the rules or the conduct that are being set to be followed by the HOD and the principal, like in the recruitment processes and how are you treating the educators which should not be discriminatory.

(Miss Khumalo—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, one educator from Ikusasaletu Secondary asserted:

I think that ethics deals mostly with the SMT which includes the principal, deputy principal and HODs and it's not their job that they have to go to class and submit but it is to support us and show us how things are done so that we can also grow.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

However, one participant hinted an important aspect about ethics. She indicated that ethics is about Ubuntu; *“I think it's when you have Ubuntu and the way to treat people”* (Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School). In short, the majority of educators who participated in this study believe that ethics is to do something that is right and follow the rules.

Interestingly, educators who participated in this study believe that a leader who has ethics leads better than any other ordinary leader. Some of the participants believe that an ethical leader is the manager who follows the rules of the Department of Education and is operating in a fair manner to all the staff members. Mr Bern articulated his view very well when he said:

I think ethical leadership has to do with a leader or manager who does things in the right way, following the policies and rules of the teaching profession and operating in a fair manner to all stakeholders - both the employer (Department of Education) and the staff he/she works with. What is special about an ethical leader is that he/she is also guided by morals.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

He further argued and said:

What is special about ethical leadership is that the leader will be leading according to the rules of the book without diverting from what is expected by the Department of Education or by the employer.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Phe expressed the following view and said:

I think it is the way you lead as a school principal the rules you set are in line with the regulations set by SACE for the educators, it shouldn't be something of your own agenda.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Participants also believe that an ethical leader uses the policies of the Department of Education and puts aside his/her feelings. “*They must not be guided by feelings*” because that will lead to some form of oppression to the colleagues or someone Miss Phe said. Further, Mr Bern believes that normally things that are said when in anger end up prompting one to make a lot of mistakes. He said:

Even personally for me if I do things emotionally without giving it much thought I realise that I do the wrong things. If I were to cool down and let my temper subside, I find that I provide a reasonable response to the situation.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Findings from the questionnaires were in line with the findings from semi-structured interviews that an ethical leader follows rules, does not deviate from policies and he/she puts feelings aside. The following quotation taken from the questionnaires:

They should have policies in their schools and these policies should always be displayed so that every educator can have a look at it. Better still, the policies can even be distributed to all the staff members and pasted in the staffroom and classrooms (Educator -7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Similarly, Miss Nondaba, an educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary voiced a concurring view when she said: “*Ethical leaders run the school in line with the policies and has good moral values*”. Furthermore, the following quotation from the questionnaires also corroborated the above findings:

She shows respect to everyone and conforms to school rules and regulations. She is very mindful of dealing with individual issues. Does not treat or discuss issues pertaining to individuals as a group.

(Educator- 13- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The majority of the participants mentioned that an ethical leader is the one who follows the rules. So, one educator made a point during the interview when he mentioned that ethical leadership is not about following the rules but also to make sure that followers do the same. He further argued that an ethical leader is someone who oversees the implementation of principles and is able to identify if rules are not followed. Mr John stated this very lucidly when he said:

An ethical leader is someone in a managerial position, who has to make sure that they live by the ethics, for example, a doctor signs a code of ethics to say that his main duty is to save the lives of patients. For educators, for example, the ethics would be to educate someone in such a way as to equip them with knowledge. So, an ethical leader is someone who oversees that, to make sure people follow the principles and should they deviate from that, to point them in the right direction. Also, to identify if any codes are broken and to pay attention to that.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, participants also believe that ethical leadership is to lead by example, a leader who exhibits transparency, kindness and patience.

Ethical leadership means being honest and transparent in leading people. For example, if you are a leader you must lead by example. You must not tell people to do something that you are failing to do so it is mostly about being practical. You must demonstrate it so that the people that you are leading must see which is right and which is wrong in the workplace.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mike said:

I understand that if you are a leader you need to be transparent. You need to be informative (to let people know what is happening) within where you are leading. You also need to have kindness because you will be dealing with different kinds of people. You also need to have patience.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

He further argued:

If there is no transparency, then people will end up refraining from doing things that may benefit the school. One may want to come up with something positive but because of lack of ethical conduct by leaders, some people may hold themselves back in coming up with important ideas that may benefit the school and the learners.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, findings from the questionnaires seem to corroborate findings from semi-structured interviews that to be an ethical leader must be exemplary. One educator believe that his/her principal is an ethical leader when she said:

She is an example of what I call a professional leader. She leads with integrity. She does things in a way that promotes trust in the profession. She treats everyone with respect and she always takes responsibility and provides a high level of standard of service (Educator -12- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Further, one educator from Khethimfundo Secondary mentioned this on his/her questionnaire:

I prefer an ethical principal as that will make sure that the principal leads by example. Schools require educators who are ethical and ethics should be made transparent by the principal. If the principal is not ethical then there might be a problem (Educator -6- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

During the data generation process, when I was busy coding data generated through questionnaires, I noticed that participants had a lot to say about exemplary leadership. Another educator from Khethimfundo Secondary supported his/her colleague Educator -7 when she/he said:

It must all begin with the principals. They must be exemplary. For example, if they want to instill the idea of punctuality in their subordinates, they themselves should be punctual for work.

(Educator- 7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, an educator from Impumelelo Primary said:

...an ethical leader recognises the difference between right and wrong and strives to set an example of good conduct.

(Educator -10- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Likewise, an educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary said:

Principals should be humble and lead by example, be involved in most activities and also team-building exercises. This will create openness between the principal and the staff.

(Educator -10- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

On the other hand, Mr John believe that it could be a problem if there is an imposition of ethics because, in general, people do not like things forced on them. He said:

If this whole thing is followed the ethical code for example by the SMT then the educators will also follow because they will see them doing it and also try to do the right thing.

(Mr John--Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Surprisingly, findings from the data generated through questionnaires indicated that the issue of transparency was frequently mentioned by majority of educators who participated in this study. Almost, in all four schools that were part of this study educators indicated their concern about transparency. It also noted that transparency determine trust and a flow of information.

In short one educator from Khethimfundo Secondary said:

...must be transparent and engage every stakeholder in communication so that the school should be well-governed. Discuss new information with educators so that they will be well- equipped and know what is expected form them.

(Educator -2- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Further, educator from Impumelelo Primary simple said:

Principals must keep transparency in everything that is going to happen in their schools and make communication with educators to avoid surprises.

(Educator -8- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Also, his colleague supported his view when he said:

Principals can foster the open flow of information coming to them by being open with communication that flows from them. When they exchange their thoughts and ideas freely with the educators, it enhances perceptions of trustworthiness.

(Educator -10- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

On the other hand, Mr Mike supported this argument during the interview when he gave a practical example about his principal, he said:

...because there are things that I have never seen happening at this school. The flow of information is not smooth because sometimes we are not sure about the truth. We just hear rumours until the information 'dies' and there is no promotion of ethical leadership there (Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School).

Furthermore, an educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary strengthens this notion when she said:

There must be open channel of communication where no one feels threatened to contribute or share their opinions and not victimised. To be transparent, principals must be honest and uphold integrity.

(Educator- 6- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In like manner, her colleague stressed that:

Every activity that is done in the school concerning sports, money, etc. should be pre-discussed and feedback should be given about the things that would have been done in and out of the school premises.

(Educator-5- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Besides, some educators are just not “*out-of-the-box*”. They are rather too reserved and would never voice out their opinions (Educator -10- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). So, participants believe that principals should be approachable, friendly and be a kind of a person whom one can be a “*shoulder to cry on*”. They should have suggestion boxes for educators to put their opinions without fear of being victimised. Also, one educator at Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

Learners need suggestion boxes to express their feelings about the functioning of the school (Educator- 7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

In addition, participants believe that an ethical principal should have humanness and be approachable. An Educator from Impumelelo Primary said:

Staff members should be able to rely on the head to always put a hearty smile on their faces (Educator- 3- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School).

Also, her colleague claimed that school that has an ethical principal is a very good school. She said:

...it is always good to come to school. The environment is always happy and the standards of that school are very high.

(Educator -11- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

She further said:

I prefer an ethical principal. Ethics play a key role in the smooth running of a school and for that matter, the entire society. If principals are unethical, the entire school system will break down.

(Educator -11- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Echoing the same sentiment, an educator from Qhakazangemfundo said:

I would prefer a principal that is ethical so that we understand all that is needed and protect us in every way. Transparency is very important.

(Educator- 5- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, participants felt that, if possible, principals should be able to detect “*educators’ change of mood*” and endeavour to confront them personally with the aim of assisting them through words of encouragement (Educator -13- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). To conclude, participants believe that transparency is the bottom line whenever there are decisions to be made. There should be transparency in everything then, “*trust will take its course*” (Educator- 9- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). But the reality is that, some principals are not transparent to the staff. That makes it difficult to be trusted.

Some staff members cannot be trusted too and then the principal won’t be open about certain things (Educator- 10- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

This study found that educators were correctly concluded that ethics are morals and principles. They also believe that ethics is to do with doing the correct or right things and behaving in the

right manner which does not go against policies and law. In short, ethics is about following policy and some element of morality in the way someone does things. Surprisingly, this study also found that some participants believe that ethics is only for the SMTs.

However, the study found that an ethical leader is a leader who follows *the rules and puts aside feelings*. Ethical leaders lead better than any other ordinary leader because the leaders will be leading according to the rules of the book without diverting from what is expected by the Department of Education or by the employer. Also, school principals must not be guided by feelings because that will lead to some form of oppression of the colleagues or anyone. Furthermore, this study found that an ethical leader is *an overseer and example*, who makes sure people do follow the principles and, should they deviate from that, to point them in the right direction. It is the business of the ethical school principal to identify any broken codes and to pay attention to that. Principals should be humble and lead by example, be involved in most activities such as team-building exercises. This finding is corroborated by Yukl (2011), who views leadership as being about influence or the ability to influence followers. It is noteworthy that Yukl (2011) further posits that without influence, it is impossible to be a leader. Of course, having influence means that there is a greater need on the part of leaders to exercise their influence ethically. This will also create openness between the principal and the staff. The finding also is in line with Van Zyl and Boshoff (2010) who claim that leadership sets the example; for behavioural role models and their philosophies and behaviour resultantly can be seen to affect the ethical behaviour of employees.

Moreover, the study found that ethical leader *exhibits traits of transparency, kindness and patience*. It is also noted that transparency determines trust and the flow of information. In much the same way, kindness and patience help the school principal to be able to detect educators' change of mood. This will afford him occasion to approach them personally with the aim of assisting them through words of encouragement. In other words, the ethical principal is able to connect with the inner state of the educators and intervene accordingly. These findings are consistent with Starratt (2004); Shapiro and Stefkovich, (2005) as they argue that school leadership is conceptualised as a predominantly moral and ethical activity (Starratt, 2004; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Since school principals have ethical responsibilities, they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Starratt, 2005; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). Therefore, these findings seem to suggest that school principals need to be ethical and model good behaviour so that—following

their good example—educators behave ethically as well. However, the above findings seem to suggest that principals must be knowledgeable and be principled in order to model good behaviour. Plus, they have to be able to connect with the inner feelings of educators to be able to influence them. These views that are echoed by participants are congruent with Khoza (2011) when he posits that, in Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glues the society together, lubricates tolerance and respects human dignity. He further states that *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to ethical leadership. The strength of African moral philosophy is that it will influence a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision (Khoza, 2011).

To encapsulate the above discussion, participants viewed an ethical leader as the one who models good behaviour, the one who leads by example and is as much transparent transparent as s/he demonstrates kindness and patience to followers. Concisely, an ethical leader is a leader who possesses emotional intellect. The greater part of the educators who participated in this study believe that ethical leadership manifests itself in how the SMTs treat staff members. They assumed that an ethical principal should not be a boss, but a leader doing things who will motivate educators to be skilled in doing their work. They also believe that if the educator has a problem or is sick, an ethical principal needs to offer support and protect his/her dignity. One of the educators from Ikusasaletu Secondary stated that:

...like maybe you're a school leader, you shouldn't be a boss but a leader and this means you lead by example you shouldn't use your powers to keep reminding us that you are the principal but you should do things that will make us to be leaders like you one day (Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

In much the same fashion, Miss Celo said:

Ethical leader should know that we are all human beings and we have feelings. S/he needs to show that everyone is important individually. They must have a good manner of approach and must not use harsh words to their staff.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Over and above that, Miss Khumalo believes that ethical leaders respect educators, especially PL1 educators. She said:

Ethical leaders respect the educators, especially the PL1 educators because some of the principals think that PL1 educators are nothing.

(Miss Khumalo- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Further, Mr Bern believes that ethical leadership is shown by being a servant leader. He said during the interview:

...ethical leadership can be demonstrated when one does not price his or her status and dignity as a principal above his or her subordinates. This can be shown by being a servant leader as opposed to being too proud and bossy to serve and respect others. (Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, participants claimed that some principals are not consistent in their behaviour. One participant mentioned this on his/her questionnaire:

Sometimes principals can be humble; but sometimes they are not. To demonstrate humility, they must remember that despite being in a position of authority, they need people under their authority to be free to express their opinions. Principals should reach out to their subordinates and make them feel comfortable to raise anything that may be of concern.

(Educator- 7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

I mentioned before that I also had an opportunity to generate data through structured interviews. As a result of such interviews, the findings from the structured interviews seem to tally with the findings from the semi-structured interviews. Participants mentioned that, for the principals to be considered ethical leaders, they must be open and approachable and also be a shoulder to cry on. The following quotation extracted from one of the questionnaires:

Humility is rare as most principals tend to use their high pyramid positions to their own advantage. Principals should be humble so that the other members of staff feel that they can approach them should the need arise. In other words, principals should be open and approachable.

(Educator- 6- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

In addition, participants stated that:

Humility is part of our African culture so it should be the easiest thing to do. So far principals lack that or it is slowly dying because of selfishness.

(Educator-1- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Further, he said, “...in Africa we always preach humanity so being ruthless is no excuse” (Educator-3- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School). Thus, the educator from Qhakazangemfundo primary wished that:

Principals must learn not to humiliate other educators in front of others. They must discuss personal or work problems privately and not in front of others. They must be humble and share most of the things with the staff.

(Educator -1- Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, the majority of the educators who participated in this study also believe that ethical leadership has to do with equal treatment of all people in the workplace, being democratic and taking the views of others into account when making decisions. Mr Bern from Qhakazangemfundo Primary said:

An ethical leader is obviously a principal who is ethical in the sense that he/ she is not biased and hence treats everyone equally and fairly. He or she follows school policies and guidelines (Mr Bern-Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

He further argued that:

An ethical leader has good management skills and is able to know what to do during certain circumstances. That leader is also able to lead and allow networking among himself and educators as well as parents.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Celo stated this during the interview. She said:

I think ethical leader is a principal who treats his staff equally. He does not have secrets and he keeps everything open. He does everything in the best interest of the school as opposed to benefitting himself. He is a principal who shows humanity and who believes that as a leader he needs to lead by example.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

She further said:

Everyone should be equal in the workplace especially on things that are personal. There shouldn't be people who are being treated in a certain way because the principal benefits from them. If the principal has laid some rules, the rules should apply to all of us. (Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The following finding from the questionnaires corroborated the above findings. One of the educators from Khethimfundo Secondary mentioned this during the structured interview:

...an ethical leader is the one who shows humanity when dealing with others and also gives support and guidelines to colleagues. They also treat colleagues equally and show good values to colleagues to make them feel comfortable at the workplace.

(Educator- 2- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Even though participants believe in equal treatment, at schools is not always the case. The following findings supported this notion. One of the educators mentioned this very simply in his/her questionnaire. The below quotation extracted form one of the questionnaires.

Minority of principals tend to be fair but in most cases, they have their favourites. Fairness should be shown through all school activities. There should be transparency and consultations so that other members do not become disgruntled.

(Educator -6- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

In addition, he said, “...*treating all educators equally and appreciating great work done by the educators*” (Educator -6- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School). Similarly, another educator from Khethimfundo Secondary elaborated the reason behind unfairness very clear when he said:

Sometimes school principals can be unfair. For example, they love to make other educators spies get information from them in the staffrooms. The ‘spies’ are also motivated by incentives such as better positions or even interview questions scopes.

(Educator -7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

However, the majority of educators from Khethimfundo Secondary School during the semi-structured interviews mentioned that their principal treated them equally; yet the following response refutes the above findings. One educator said about her principal:

He does not include other people’s opinions. He believes in his ideologies only.

(Educator- 1- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Further, Miss Mthembu said:

My principal does not treat us equally I don’t know if it’s because he has his favourites or what, like if one comes with a problem he will follow up and address till the very end, where else if someone else comes with an issue he doesn’t pay much attention to it. Also, happens when we call in sick as educators, he does not trust us; this one time one of our colleagues had a habit of being absent but he told

us to understand her situation, this just shows us how much we are not treated equally. (Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Additionally, she indicated that:

...we submit the same way and then we have what we call late departure, some people sign and some people don't and I don't understand that because we are all educators. (Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

She further expressed her disgruntlement when she said:

...like I had said, he doesn't treat us the same because even his SMT there is a better HOD, we as PLI educators also notice that he usually gives one HOD more work compared to the other one.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Interestingly, the majority of educators who participated in this study were fully convinced that ethics and ethical leadership are necessary at schools. They believe that an ethical leader provides good leadership, put things in order, limits misbehaviour and reduces chances of violation of code of conduct for educators. Generally, they assumed that ethics and ethical leadership assist the principal to lead with integrity. One of the educators from Ikusasaletu Secondary stated that:

According to my understanding, when you are a leader you must lead with integrity. Ethics are about doing what is right and not doing wrong things. So as a school, ethics must be central to everything the school does because it builds future leaders. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mike said:

...because they give us good leadership. They also put things in order. Misbehaving and violation of the code of conduct will be reduced. Therefore, ethical leaders should be promoted. They are very important and useful for the survival of the school. (Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, Mr Bern argued that:

... for a leader to command authority or for the leader to achieve his or her goals he has to do things in an ethical manner, especially in view of his or her subordinates. They are more likely to work more with him if they realise that he or

she is ethical. Once they notice unethical behaviour, it will be difficult for the leader to lead or control them.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In general, participants believe that ethics and ethical leadership were important in schools for better teaching and learning, to avoid conflict and for preventing disturbances in teaching and learning. Miss Phe stated her view and said:

...ethics and ethical leadership are important because here we are dealing with children's lives and parents trust us to help their kids come out better people after school. If you find that in school there is a bad leader, that also negatively affects the children because the moment something bad happens in the office, it goes down to the educators and they also see no point in doing right because the principal comes up with nonsensical rules. We end up having conflicts within the staff, people losing their interest and that will result in teaching and learning being affected.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Observing ethical modes of conflict resolution, Miss Mthembu supported the above notion when she said:

...if a school has conflict then we cannot work properly and in some schools the marks are even dropping because educators are focusing on the SMTs behaviour. Sometimes you find that educators are not going to class because the principal is not at school. I think ethics are necessary in schools so that things run smoothly.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

However, Mr John offered a different view when he said:

...people will take chances. It is human nature. If they see that there is a loophole, they will try and do something about that loophole. So, it is sometimes necessary to have someone to observe loopholes and to address them before they become serious. So yes, there is a need for ethics. Not necessary for someone to play police but just someone to oversee that the school ethos is to educate the learner and not sitting and chatting on the phone the whole day. It should be just to make sure that the ethics are maintained in the school. I do not think that the principal should be playing that role alone to make sure that ethical behaviour is there. It should be done as a team.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, some of the participants believe that ethics and ethical leadership were needed in schools so that the school runs smoothly. Miss Celo quipped:

Because without ethics, one might end up leading in whatever way they want to so we need ethics and rules (Miss Celo-- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Mr Mike from Impumelelo Primary also believe that with ethics and ethical leadership at school makes things go well. He said: “*People are assured of success and growth to another level if the ethics are there*”. Similarly, Miss Mthembu believe that ethics and ethical leadership were important so that educators would be able to support one another and develop trust. She said:

Because they create trust in a school and as we know results in schools are not very good this is because ethics are not being followed.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

In support of the above view on indispensable ethics, Mr Bern added:

If there are no ethics it would be difficult for the leader to operate. The subordinates will not even take him/ her seriously. They will not see any obligation to do so. Actually, it encourages the junior staff to behave in a wayward manner as well. (Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Celo said:

...because without ethic, people would behave anyhow and forget the given rules but if they are educated, they will know that they shouldn't do some things because the consequences are not pleasant, that will put us in order and guide us into not doing unethical things (Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

She further said:

...yes, because if there weren't any, people would end up behaving recklessly, we'd find corporal punishment and also educators physically fighting.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The discussion so far found that an ethical leader is a “*leader*” not a “*boss*”. Also, ethical leadership can be demonstrated when one does not place his or her status and dignity as a principal above his or her subordinates. This can be shown by being a servant leader as opposed to being too proud and bossy to serve and respect others. In the same vein, the study found that

an ethical leader treats followers equally and is informative. Besides treating all educators equally, an ethical leader is also expected to acknowledge and appreciate the great work done by educators. Also, this study found that an ethical leader is the leader who cares and respects other people. This finding deeply resonates with Trevino and Brown (2006), who argue that ethical leaders are characterised as honest, caring, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions. Also, the finding is in line with Kalshoven, *et al.*, (2011) as they posit that ethical leaders treat their followers with respect, keep promises, allow employees to have an input in decisions and clarify expectations and responsibilities. Furthermore, the above findings are also endorsed by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). They argue that care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of each individual; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In addition, the findings of this study are also consistent with the tenets of Khoza's Attuned Leadership (2011), particularly when he postulates that Ubuntu incessantly broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of Ubuntu (Khoza, 2011). However, this study found that some of the school principals lack information. They do not attend workshops. They do not further their studies. Furthermore, the study found that ethics and ethical leadership are necessary at school because it informs good leadership practice, puts things in order, limits misbehaviour and reduces the violation of code of conduct. In addition, the school can benefit because the ethical person will know how to do the right thing and be able to disseminate the information to other educators.

Therefore, the findings seem to suggest that in order to be a good and ethical leader school principal, s/he needs to take good care of the educators, learners, parents and the whole community around the school. The findings also seem to suggest that educators need to be congratulated about the job well done. That will motivate them to do more in future. Furthermore, these findings seem to suggest that open communication, transparency and fairness build trust with followers. A school principal who demonstrates the above traits is more likely to be trusted by followers. Interestingly, the above findings are corroborated by Mangena (2011). The latter states that leaders in Africa are not supposed to be "*Great men*" but servants of the people. Also, the findings corroborated by Walumbwa *et al.*, (2008), they posit that ethical leadership is mostly related with self-actualization, moral relationship, moral perception and unbiased dealing.

In a nutshell, to be a good and ethical leader does not demand a leader to be bossy, to be a great man, or to be a saint. Rather, it needs a little caring and understanding heart and mind. As a result, educators, learners, parents and the whole community will notice the principal's leadership and start to trust and follow him/her.

7.2.2 Experiences of educators about Ethics and Ethical leadership

The majority of the educators who participated in this study believe that having an intimate relationship with the learners is unethical. What counts is the conduct towards the community; it can bring the profession into disrepute. For example, an extra marital relationship within the community is taken as unethical.

Miss Mthembu said:

... the principals sleep with learners and they bribe parents of affected learners they promise them marriage because in rural areas it is acceptable and they don't realise that they are taking away the child's right to education.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

She further pointed out:

...with educators, unethical behaviour does happen that they have favourite learners, when I recently got here there was an educator who had a weak point with male learners, I even sat down and spoke to her, telling her what she is doing is not right and this will cause learners losing respect for us educators because she even drinks with the learner.

(Miss Mthembu- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr John concurred with the above statement when he said:

You also hear about principals or even educators who prey on the learners, for example, by getting involved in intimate relationships for their own selfish purposes, not because they care about the child but to satisfy their needs. That is unethical.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

It was noted that it is not only the school principals who have intimate relationships with learners, Mr Hlaka raised the issue of intimate relationship between the educators and the learners. He said:

You find that in other schools the educators have romantic affairs with their learners. That is also unethical.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

He further argued that:

You find that other educators are in love with their learners and they end-up impregnating them. That becomes a problem and it is unethical because it is not allowed to have any sexual affair with the learner when in actual fact you are supposed to be a parent (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

In like manner, Mr Mike observed:

Sometimes it happens that educators' impregnate learners. It also happens that educators themselves will develop illicit relationships amongst themselves. If ethics are applied, they become central in avoiding all this behaviour.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Also, Miss Mthembu extended her argument and gave a practical example, she said:

...this did happen once but the educator was smart about it, he spoke to the learner and the parents never came to report that the child is pregnant because he was supporting the child. So, they were happy that the educator gave them money every month end (Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

In contrast, Mr Bern submitted this crucial point during the interview. He said:

Normally a principal is regarded as a community leader. The eyes of the community will be on him/ her. You find that other principals are known to be married but they engage in relationships with staff members or someone's wife in the community. I have heard of such cases and it puts the leader in a bad light.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

However, the majority of the educators who participated in this study believe that using the school for one's own gain and purposes, as well as misusing school funds, are regarded as

unethical. Mr Hlaka, an Educator at Ikusasaletu Secondary School mentioned this during the interview:

Most of them do not take the school as a working place but as a place they own and also where they get personal benefits.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

He further argued:

In other schools, you find that educators don't know anything about the budget of the school. It is only the principal who has that information. I think every staff member must know about the use of the school money like here in my school I can say I don't know how the school is in terms of money.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr John said:

From what I have heard and seen, it is the principals who use schools for own gains and purposes. They use school property for private use and you hear about funds allocated to schools somehow disappearing in to the pocket of the principal.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Moreover, Miss Phe said:

When the time comes for the principals to hire, you find that they will hire their friends or a family member. That is nepotism. And the hired staff misbehaves because they know that the principal is not going to do anything to discipline them; and most cases you find that they end up becoming part of the leadership of the school. Sometimes they force them into the system, they create positions just so the friend can join the school

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Furthermore, participants mentioned that there was no communication in most schools. Principals were withholding information from them, but would write to learners and communicate with them. Sometimes principals treated learners better than educators which causes problems. On the one hand, Miss Mthembu said:

They think they are doing well but from our perspective we see that they are doing the wrong thing, like maybe if there is something to do with us educators, we only find out during assembly along with the learners not beforehand.

(Miss Mthembu- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

On the other hand, Mr Bern said:

Not following the Departmental policies would be unethical. Doing unfair or biased things would also be unethical. Also, disclosing information that would be considered as confidential can count as unethical. Discussing a staff member's confidential issues with someone else is also unethical.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Some principals collude with the SGB, especially the chairperson, in order to misuse school funds in the rural areas. One of the educators from Khethimfundo Secondary articulated this clearly:

...and sometimes you find that in his governing body there's a member who has been there for years and if you check you find that they don't have a child at the school, and that will lead to serious misuse of funds because they are friends and they can just sign illegitimate cheques saying they will fix or replace windows but the windows are not fixed and the money is gone.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

In addition, some participants viewed unjustifiable absenteeism by some school principals as unethical. Some principals were hardly at their schools and were running their businesses during teaching time without declaring this to the employer. These principals were “*Taking time off for private matters and record that as attending meetings*” (Miss Khumalo). Further, Miss Phe mentioned that:

...a principal just takes trips during school time, you hear that he has gone to pray elsewhere but he hasn't done his job and he left during school time, he goes the whole day and sometimes he doesn't even come back.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, Miss Celo argued that:

You find that some principals get absent a lot from work, although our principal does not do that. We see some principals who rarely go to work, and you find them around town and you wonder, when do they actually go to work?

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr Bern said, “*Other principals are absent from duty due to questionable or unjustified reasons*” (Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

In addition, one of the participants articulated his view about absenteeism very well during the interview. He said:

Not doing what is expected of you to do, your function in the school is to teach children. That is what you should be doing, not running your side business during teaching time, not being absent from work continuously for your own agenda. You have to take the needs of the children and the school foremost, before your needs. If you are not doing that then you are not following the ethics of the school (the care of the child) (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

His colleague supported him when he said:

I find that to be unethical. Some educators give false information about why they have been absent from duty.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Further, Mr Mike said:

...they decide which one is good for themselves between their business and teaching. That is when they break ethical conduct. Some choose not to come to school because of small problems which do not warrant absenteeism. Some even decide that even if they do a misconduct they will just accept the punishment and move on.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Miss Celo supported him when she said:

...educators being absent; you get educators that don't come to school for two weeks then they come back with a doctor's note. You find that the letter is not legit and they were not sick.

(Miss Celo- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Sharing the same concerns about absenteeism Mr Hlaka said:

Absenteeism, not attending your period and also not giving learners their real marks when marking. Others give question papers to the learners before the date of writing. This is unethical because you are killing the child's future.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, some views of participants indicated very clearly that other school principals and educators do not care about learners. Miss Celo said:

Educators were going to class unprepared, because if you are unprepared there will be noise in the class and no learning happening.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

However, Mr Hlaka mentioned this during the interview:

The way you address yourself to the learners like calling them by bad names and also coming to school drunk. You are supposed to show the community the good image as an educator. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

To further compound matters, Mr John submitted a very interesting point. He said:

In this age of technology, most educators have access to smartphones. They have access to chat groups and so forth so you often find educators sitting there chatting to their friends instead of actually teaching the child. That is unethical because you are not being paid to chat on the phone. You are being paid to teach the child. Also, educator who do not care about the well-being of the child. They will see that there is a problem but they will just say it is not their problem. That is unethical. You are here to show passion and compassion as well.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Still on this notion of unethical behaviour demonstrated by school principals and educators at schools, a few participants highlighted some of the unethical practices. They mentioned the delay caused by educators when classes are meant to resume after the school break. In the event that they return to class, there are poor marking habits. For example, some educators do not use correct rubric to assess learners and causing some deserving learners to fail, or vice versa due to the work load and the pressure to meet deadlines. Miss Phe stated it very clear when she said:

...the bunking lessons as educators, you find that the bell has gone but the educator is still sitting or taking their time to go to class and they get to class late. That is unethical because they left home to go to work and they end up not doing their work properly like taking their time when going to class and there's very little time left of the lesson. (Miss Phe- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

She argued further:

the moment an educator decides to bunk lessons, that affects the school and it's pass rate, you might not see it with the lower grades but the matric results will reveal all. So yes, since he instils on attending lessons he is being ethical.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, her colleague said:

You find that some educators have the tendency of bunking lessons, you find that

they know they have a lesson to go to but they will stay in staffroom and not go. Other instances are some educators argue in front of the school children. Find that we have a pupil here in the staff room, educators will argue and some will even talk about their personal issues, issues that kids are not meant to know at all.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Moreover, Miss Phe also said:

We often use rubrics to allocate marks so some educators will not even bother to follow the rubric and then the learners are effected as well because they are marking according to their own standards and it doesn't go accordingly. Then the wrong learners pass and fail.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Moreover, the majority of the educators who participated in this study believe that some HODs abuse their power, they normally sent educators to do their job especially paperwork. Also, during file submission they do not properly control educators work especially files and they do not support educators, do not care about the developmental workshops. Some of them do not follow the rules and deliberately avoiding the rules because of laziness. Miss Phe said:

...sometimes HODs make time to ask for educators during break and sometimes just because they do not have a lesson coming up, they take their time. They give you their paperwork, all this is done at the wrong time because you still have to go to class and if you do not submit the paperwork, you are considered to be going against their orders. (Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Miss Celo said:

...some call a meeting for educators as an HOD, they get there and you can tell they are not in the right mood today, they will end up speaking anyhow with you and see that it's not fine. And I'd prefer it if they speak to me personally about something they're not happy with, they shouldn't go and mention it again to staff meetings.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mike stated:

Let me talk about the HODs. What I understand is that sometimes they are not well-informed. When you report about something to them they will tell you that they do not know what to do and they refer you to the principal.

(Mr Mike- Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Findings from the data generated through questionnaires also corroborated findings from the semi-structured interviews. Findings revealed that for the principals not to respect educators, not to manage the school democratically and not treat them equally were viewed as unethical.

The following quotations extracted from some of the questionnaires:

...unable to differentiate between personal matters that cannot be discussed with others. Being bossy to staff members and does not rule the school democratically. Not respecting educators. Reminds them that s/he is a leader.

(Educator- 2- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

She/he further said:

Does not give support equally. Does not treat colleagues as adults and he is full of discrimination. Many of his approaches are not good. He does not believe that human beings can be sick. Not transparent in some information that is needed.

(Educator- 2- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, another educator from Khethimfundo Secondary mentioned this during the structured interview:

He treats us unequally. Sometimes he also makes sure that what he says goes without taking other members' opinions. He also talks about learners' / educators' personal things. He does not sympathise with the staff when one has health problems.

(Educator- 3- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

His/her colleague supported the argument when said:

The problem starts with the principals. They give preferential treatment to other educators and side-line the others. They do not treat educators equally. When time comes to act accordingly, they find it difficult to execute their jobs.

(Educator- 7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Furthermore, findings from questionnaires also seemed to be in line with findings from semi-structured interviews that most of the principals were involved in bribes, abusing educators and treating them unequally. The following were stated by some of the educators during the survey:

Giving the scope of questions to other educators when there is a leadership post like the HOD post. Having 'spies' and not being responsive to other staff members. Taking decisions without consulting the staff.

(Educator -7- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

So far, this study found that some of the principals and educators are still behaving unethically at schools. Moreover, some school principals were taking the school as their own benefit, accepting bribery, hiding the budget from educators so that it becomes easier for them to misuse school funds. Furthermore, some school principals were taking time off for private matters and record those activities as attending meetings. The study also found that school principals and educators were involved in relationships with learners. In addition, school principals and educators were absent from school for unjustifiable reasons. Some are hardly at the school: they were running their own businesses without declaring it to the employer. Moreover, this study found discrimination when dealing with the staff, and sleeping with prospective educators in exchange for jobs, are continuing malpractices by some of the school principals at schools.

By some odd chance, this study also found out some of the unethical practices mostly demonstrated by educators included the following: the use of smart phones and spending time on chat groups during learning hours; lack of commitment which leads to taking time off for private use; late-coming and early knock-off and absenteeism; not practicing pastoral care; having intimate/love relationships with learners and drinking with them. In addition, not teaching quality, not marking correctly and giving learners the examination paper before it is sat for. Furthermore, the above findings suggest that schools need ethical leaders in order to run smooth. This is also in line with Waggoner (2010), who claims that without ethics, a leader is likely to fail and with ethics a leader is more likely to develop effective leadership (Waggoner, 2010). These findings also suggest that principals need to model good behaviour so that educators behave in an upstanding fashion as well. However, the above findings suggest that principals in order to model good behaviour they must be knowledgeable and be principled/ethical. Plus, they have to be able to connect with the inner feelings of educators to be able to influence them. The findings are consistent with Khoza (2011), he argues that to be ethical is a universal duty, African humanism makes up a deficiency in Western individualist rationalism by insisting that morality is an expression of the collective spirit and not merely an individual duty. Ethical leadership is an extension of this duty and spirit (Khoza, 2011).

In addition, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) call for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession. Likewise, the Code of Conduct for Educators also tells educators that they ought to act in a proper and becoming way such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute (SACE,

2000). Furthermore, findings suggest that rural communities are more exposed to be the victims of unethical behaviour than urban areas. This is also in line with Chikoko and Khanare (2012), like Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008) earlier, who postulate that poverty is one of the major characteristics of rurality in the South African context. These researchers further argue that rural schools as part of such communities would therefore be equally marginalised and disadvantaged and, therefore, many learners become vulnerable.

To conclude, this discussion so far has indicated that the mismanagement of school funds is one of the unethical practices routinely carried out by some of the school principals. Principals were treating the school as a personal account for their own benefits, hiding the budget from educators so that it becomes easier for them to misuse school funds. In addition, most of the school principals were involved in bribery. Furthermore, the rural areas are more vulnerable to unethical conduct due to the general lack of information and poverty. So, school principals and educators are more likely to take advantage of the situation by impregnating school learners and bribing parents.

7. 2. 3 Causes of unethical behaviour

Some educators who participated in this study believe that School Governing Bodies (SGB's) were not knowledgeable in schools; instead, they sheepishly followed whatever the principals were saying. They were not workshopped properly on their roles. Likewise, participants believe that some parent SGB members lack education and training on how the SGB work and this becomes a legal and ethical factor. They trust principals because they think they are knowledgeable and therefore correct in whatever they do. In addition, lack of integrity within the SGB causes educators not to fear being referred to them especially if the SGB is known to be corrupt. Mr Hlaka said:

We can say they are lacking information because some may be uneducated. They cannot read and understand before they even sign documents. They also trust the principals. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Another participant also said:

How I see it is that the SGB members are “puppets” of school principals. I have never come across an SGB member who is strong enough to stand and make firm decisions, all they do is follow principal's orders.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Further, on this point, the majority of the participants argued that unethical behaviour was more prevalent in rural areas than in urban/township contexts. Rural parents are sometimes very happy to find out that their child is involved with an educator because that is perceived as a way out of poverty. Thus, do they not report these cases. This is worse in the rural areas since parents are not aware of what should be happening due to lack of resources and knowledge. Mr John brought forward a very strong argument when he said:

I think there is a stigma that they can get away with it in the rural areas. Rural areas are not like cities where there is a police station after every 5km so if an educator from a school 20km from a police station does something wrong, the effort of going there to report might be a problem. It is also a case of bringing shame to the school. They'd rather protect the image of the school than bring out what is happening. The communities are small and people talk and the fear of being embarrassed or bringing shame to the family name is there. Also, the resources are not there. Although it also happens in the cities but I think it happens more in rural areas. (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

He further argued that:

The majority of the children in rural areas stay with grandparents and many of the older generation are not knowledgeable. So, they do not always have means of knowing that what has happened is actually wrong and they should have reported it to the police. The support is not always there. I read the other day about a girl who was molested at school and the grandmother said it would have taken too much effort to go and report and was afraid that the child would be taken away from her. Because the educator got away with it, a couple of months later he did the same thing to another girl because he got away with it the first time because the guardian did not report it.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Phe said:

I think that could also be the parents, sometimes they actually get happy when their children are dating educators and principals because they see a potential husband and money income. So, they don't report it because it is good news for them. So, the parents also encourage this behaviour of school kids dating educators, some

even give them money so that they keep quiet. Even if it is reported, some parents will see no issue in it and actually condone this behaviour.

(Miss Phe- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

In addition, Miss Phe said:

I think it is worse in rural areas because in rural areas some parents are not educated and some don't even have means of communication, so they struggle to differentiate between right and wrong, you find them saying 'is the educator not meant to have a girlfriend'. They are not informed or involved with the world so they don't know what is happening around them hence they suffer more than urban area.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

On the other hand, Mr Mike also stated:

Yes, they are more vulnerable especially given the fact that in certain rural places in South Africa there is a higher ratio of females to males for example, so it is as if the females are scared. It's as if they are scared because they have been brought up being told that they are women and are not allowed to speak out if they notice anything wrong. There is fear of intimidation. So, if someone sees someone not doing the right thing they are scared of reporting it because they think that the people will find out somehow that they were the ones who reported and they will be intimidated and they fear for their lives. So, that is probably why things are not always mentioned if ethics are broken in the school.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Also, Mr Hlaka supported the argument when he said:

I think it is not the same because in rural areas educators behave unethically as they think the law is not effective. If they are doing something people won't report them. In most cases educators abuse learners take advantage of poverty by giving them money. That is why many cases go unreported.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The majority of the participants mentioned that background and the salaries that were not sufficient to educators may be the cause of unethical behaviour; but greed/materialism was also widely mentioned by participants as a cause of unethical behaviour among both school principals and educators. They mentioned that some of the principals and educators were not happy/satisfied about what they have. Mr Bern said:

There is a plethora of reasons why. One could be some people are just inherently corrupt. The second reason could be some people might not have adequate training on ethics and the SACE Code of Professional Ethics A leader has to be trained as opposed to just being promoted without some sort of training. Thirdly, people might be unethical because of laziness to think or to act.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, his colleague, Mr John stated his view and said:

Nowadays there is a culture of trying to keep up with the neighbours in terms of material things. If a neighbour buys a beautiful car, then they (the neighbours) also think of buying a similar car by syphoning school funds, even by creating ghost educators or telling an educator that they are supposed to fire them but they are just suspending them on condition that they get half of their salary.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Some of the principals and educators are moonlighting because of money not being enough to meet their needs, they view their salaries as insufficient. Miss Khumalo said:

Salaries not enough, debts are too high, social problems like sickness in the family, sexual orientation of males causing them to fail to control themselves.

(Miss Khumalo—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Further, Mr Hlaka mentioned that there was an educator in his school who was making aluminium window frames and if the client called him, the educator just left the class and attended to his client and that “*affects the school’s functionality*” (Mr Hlaka- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School). He further said that:

...others are complaining about money. They say the money is less but the job is too much.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Likewise, Miss Mthembu- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School mentioned that:

If it happens that you really don’t have any money, you will end up being absent because the debt collector knows they will find you at work to collect their money.

(Miss Mthembu- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

However, Mr John believe that some of the school principals and educators are greed. He said:

...they also sell vacancies to get money. There is an element of greed to keep on

advantaging themselves. That is why they will keep on doing it until they are finally caught red handed (Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Moreover, Mr Hlaka said:

I think it is because of greed and also since they are in control the school's money it is easy for them to use it for their own benefit.

(Mr Hlaka- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Also, Miss Mthembu pointed out that “*it's greed because even if a person had a million, they still want more*” (Miss Mthembu, Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School). Similarly, Mr Bern said:

Some may feel that the remuneration that they are getting is not enough. Others may be motivated by greed.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, Mr Mike mentioned that:

Other reason is greediness. Some of them are very greedy. They do not want to be content with what they have (Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School).

A few educators who participated in this study also believe that the abuse of power, the relationship between the principals and top management in District and Circuit Offices, may lead to unethical behaviour demonstrated in some schools. Mr Mike mentioned this during the interview:

I think it is because of 'fear of man'. Also, there is the issue of favouritism, if I may put it like that. Also, there are illicit relationships, sometimes sexual conduct that I mentioned before that cause them to break the rules laid down in the Code of Conduct. The other reason is power. Some need to be seen that they are in power and they also want to show that they are indeed powerful.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Furthermore, Mr Hlaka said:

I think is the abuse of power and also the corruption that is happening these days. You might find that the principal is the best friend of the circuit manager and this makes principals to continue being unethical.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Some of the educators who participated in this study believe that there are educators and school principals who committed unethical practices before and they were never caught. Also, some cases were reported but they were never attended to. So, that makes school principals and educators to ignore the policies, given that the punishment is not visible. Briefly, the failure of the Department of Education to discipline educators correctly on previously reported cases cause school principals and educators to continue behave unethical.

During the interview with Mr John, one of the educators at Qhakazangemfundo Primary said:

It could be that they have never been caught or they were caught but nothing was done to them. It encourages them to do it again because they know they can get away with it. (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, Miss Phe said:

...could be that sometimes when it is reported, the case disappears in thin air. We don't know whether they pay their way through or maybe the case is taken lightly. (Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, Mr Hlaka supported the above notion when he said:

I can say it's because those who have been in such situations have not been penalised for that and that is why others to be not worried. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

However, lack of knowledge and ignorance concerning ethical conduct together fuel unethical conduct, as demonstrated by educators at schools. Mr Hlaka- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

We can say some educators are here at school but they have not adequately informed about ethics while they were still in university or advised as to how to overcome issues that they are going to face in school. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr Mike said:

Because there is no one who is focussed on it or making sure that these things are happening and I do not see any paper or notice whereby all educators may know or understand those ethics or whereby everyone understands that these are the

ethics of the school. Even when you are a newcomer, you are not told what you must do (the ethical things). They are not being revealed clearly. Maybe you just know about it after you have done something. That's when you are told that you are not supposed to do it. That is when you realise that you did not know about it.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

He further said:

They decide which one is good for themselves. That is when they break ethical conduct. Some choose not to come to school because of small problems which do not warrant absenteeism. Some even decide that even if they do a misconduct they will just accept the punishment and move on.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

To conclude, few participants raised a point that pressure from the Department of Education to meet a certain target and not being appreciated when they did a good job cause school principals and educators to behave unethical.

Yes, because if the pass rate did not meet the targeted one they end up allowing learners to cheat in order to meet the target said:

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

On the other hand, his colleague said:

...as we all know, we need to be appreciated for the good work we are doing and I don't think anyone would continue doing work if they are not appreciated, this is why some educators even leave their jobs and change schools.

(Miss Mthembu—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

This discussion so far has shown that the incompetence of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and the issue of “rurality” seem to be the main reason why school principals and educators are still behaving in an unethical fashion. This study found that SGBs entrusted the school principals so they follow principal’s orders. This study also found that unethical practices are more prevalent in rural areas. For instance, parents sometimes are very happy when their child is having an intimate relationship with the school principal or educator because of poverty as a result, they do not report these cases. Sometimes parents get excited and see a potential husband and money income. Furthermore, this study found that many children stay

with grandparents, as a result of which it becomes easy for people to take advantage of them— simply because grandparents are easily intimidated. Allied to the foregoing malaise, this study found that some educators end up being absent because they are afraid of debt collectors. Educators were afraid that debt collectors may come to school to collect their money. In addition, this is because others have done unethical practices before and they were never caught and some cases were reported but nothing has been done. And also, some educators do not know much about ethics.

So, the findings suggest that people in rural areas are more vulnerable and some lack crucial information. This is emphasized by Howley and Howley (2010), who posit that schools in rural settings, in particular, are challenged by severe poverty, high levels of illiteracy and unemployment and poorly developed infrastructure. The findings also suggest that school principals and educators took advantage of people in rural areas. Further, the findings suggest that school principals need to be more ethical in order to influence educators to behave ethically. This is also in line with Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015) who state that a school principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by acting with integrity, with fairness and in an ethical manner. These researchers further state that school principals should demonstrate integrity, dedication, humility, openness, creativity, honesty, forward-thinking competence, inspiration, intelligence, fairness and assertiveness. Similarly, Shapiro and Stefkovich, (2005) state that school principals have ethical responsibilities which means they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education. Furthermore, the Code of Conduct for Educators also requires educators to exercise authority with compassion. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) note that the professional ethic often means codes, rules and principles, all of which are aligned with the traditional concepts of justice, but maintain that their interpretation of the ethic of the profession considers other paradigms such as professional judgment and professional decision-making. The foregoing findings are in line with Khoza (2011), who argues that the strength of African moral philosophy is that it influences a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision (Khoza, 2011). He further argues that compassion rests on the empathy that leaders feel when they have knowledge of the inner state of others. Leadership without a compassion is dead. To lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral. In addition, Ubuntu requires a leader to maintain social justice, to be empathetic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience (Khoza, 2011).

Rural communities are more exposed to be victims of unethical behaviour practices by school principals and educators because of poverty and illiteracy. Some parents celebrate when their children are dating school principals or educators. Therefore, more needs to be done in order to addressing the issue of unethical behaviour widely reported as practices by some of the school principals and educators at school.

7.2.4 The perceptions of educators regarding education on ethics

The findings seem to suggest that the majority of the participants did not receive any training on ethical education while training to become educators. Some mentioned that only a few of them who heard something about ethics especially those that have studied further at Honour's level particularly in Management. Mr John said:

Yes, in a way they would talk about the way you need to behave, especially at honour's Management (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Similarly, Miss Phe said:

There were modules which were focusing on professionalism and ethical issues especially in management, but as students you do not put that into practice.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

On the other hand, with regards the issue of in-service training, only few participants who attended training.

I have attended a school based one where the principal was explaining to us about it and he even assisted us to register to SACE.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The majority of the participants did not attend any in-service training on ethical education organised by the Department or SACE. Mr Hlaka said:

No, I haven't attended it but there was a section that I read talking about it during my spare time. (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, Miss Celo said:

No...I will be lying. The workshop or training I have attended are ones about my subjects, it had nothing to do with ethics.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Even though the majority of participants have not been exposed to ethical education, they believe that this kind of training was necessary. Mr Mike mentioned the same when he said:

It is necessary and know why they are important and know which ones are important and be able to apply it.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

Further, Mr John as an Educator at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School mentioned that, “*it is necessary and be done regularly so that it can assist educators*” (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School). Some of the educators were confused they did not have a clear understanding of SACE and what it stands for. Mr Hlaka went on articulate his confusion about SACE Code of Professional Ethics when he said:

Yes, SACE is the Council of Educators. It is there to protect the educators but they also punish them when they have a case. They have a right to revoke an educator’s certificate (if found guilty of a serious offense) but at the same time they protect me and that misleads me. That confuses me a lot (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

He further said:

I think the Department of Education and schools don’t have interest on ethics because since I came here there have not been any workshops conducted by Department of Education or SACE to address ethics so I think their focus is on teaching and learning. Even though there are cases reported about those who behave unethically it ends up being unclear which steps were taken about that report. They just implement the policies which have no feedback.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr John said:

No. with SACE I have only filled and signed a form to say that I will uphold the teaching profession but I have never received any formal training on what is ethical or not. But I think it is also the responsibility of the school to ensure that the staff member is aware of ethical conduct.

(Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Some educators know that the educator is guided by the SACE Code of Conduct and if you do not abide to the SACE Code of Conduct, they could take or revoke your certificate. One educator mentioned that:

...they are the body where educators are registered and are able to cancel your certificate they are involved when there is a case. they should be involved mostly in training educators.

(Miss Celo- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Further, Mr John said:

...no since there has been no proper training except that you fill in a form and have a SACE certificate, but the training is important.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

The discussion so far has shown that the majority of educators did not attend any training on ethics and were confused when talking about ethics and SACE Code of Professional Ethics. This study found that educators knew that educators are guided by the SACE Code of Conduct and if they do not abide by the SACE Code of Conduct SACE could revoke their teaching certificate. So, all in all, the findings suggest that educators were not fully aware of SACE Code of Professional Ethics and also the principals and the Department of Education do not do much to instil Code to educators. Therefore, these findings seem to suggest that principals should start to set ethics to their agendas and communicate ethics to educators in order to instil good behaviour to the members of the institution. This is in line with Brown and Trevino (2006), Eisenbeiss (2012), Naidoo (2012) and Piccolo, *et al.*, (2012) all of whom posit that moral managers set ethics on the agenda and visibly use and communicate ethics in order to stimulate their followers to make them more accountable for their behaviour. Moral managers really try to set an example for their followers on how to behave ethically by making ethical decisions and by rewarding the desirable outcome (Brown & Trevino, 2005). Furthermore, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) posit that educational administrators of the 21st century school need to develop personal and professional codes of ethics to be prepared to lead schools that are not only accountable, but are also tolerant of a demographically diverse community. According to Khoza (2011), qualities that are especially important in leadership were serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability, which is a natural extension of Ubuntu.

To conclude this section, most of the educators do not have a clear understanding of ethics and

SACE Code of Professional Ethics. The majority of them never exposed to any training on ethical education however they believe that such training is very important to them.

7.2.5 Perspectives of educators on how to arrest unethical behaviour in schools

Unexpectedly, the educators who participated in this study were aware that addressing unethical conduct won't be an easy task. There are challenges in addressing this such as the educators would try to cover their tracks; delays in handling cases cause the offence to be repeated; etc. They articulated some of the factors that may hinder the process of addressing unethical conduct. Mr Mike mentioned his view very well during the interview. He said:

A human being is very difficult to deal with. Ethics is a state of mind of a human being because at that moment a person will not even think that there are ethics that guide him/ her. They will just do anything and then later realise that they have messed up but the damage would have been done already. That is why I say, I do not think it will end because it is difficult to deal with a human being. The human mind is very complex because what we value as ethics, others do not. People are being taught but still some do not believe it. By conducting and attending workshops, it may decrease, not end per se.

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

In much the same way, Mr John echoed the same sentiment:

I think they do but it is not going to happen overnight. One thing that is going to take a while is there is a mind-set with some people that they see others doing it and getting away with it then they think they can do the same.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, the majority of the participants believe that workshops will assist in eliminating unethical behaviour among school principals and educators at schools. They emphasise the view that workshops for principals and for educators should be done, District offices should communicate these things as this will eliminate unethical behaviour. Also, principals should stop using emotions and apply the law punish wrongful acts. Participants suggested to be consequences for anyone who conducts themselves unethically. According to Mr John, an educator at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School:

The only way they are going to root out the problem is to make examples of those who are caught doing the wrong. Suspension by exposure depending on the severity of the offense. If it is a principal or educator who stole money from the school, that educator should be taken to court because it is wrong. Also, educators who insist on continuing with corporal punishment even after they sign the documents to say that it is illegal and they will not administer it must be punished, not just being put on suspension with full pay. They should maybe stop the salary because they become comfortable. They know that if they do something wrong, it will take five years for their case to come forward. They will be taken out of the school but still be receiving salary for the next five years. They start doing something extra while getting a full salary (Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

On a slightly different salnt, Mr Hlaka emphasised on the issue of trainings and workshops and said:

I think government must try to implement continuous workshops and to those who have already been involved in cases they must get punishment so that other educators will avoid committing such offenses. There must also be a research based on educators' behaviour in schools and also negotiations about salary. Principals must attend the workshops based on leadership, that is, how to be good leaders and ensure that implementation is effective in the schools.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Likewise, Mr Bern supported the above insistence on workshops and expand further, saying:

What should be done is to train them about the disadvantages of engaging unethical behaviour. The Department of Education must have a mechanism to supervise principals to see to it that the code of ethics is adhered to.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Conversely, parents should be taught on their rights, and the learners too. This this will assist parents to understand their rights better. Miss Phe said:

...educate the parent about rights, let them know that it is not right because the educators are old and once the student starts dating them the education may affected also because they allocate them false marks and make them think they are passing and that is not the case, and that will only reflect badly in matric. There's

also the issue of diseases. (Miss Phe- Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

It becomes very clear at this stage that very few educators who participated in this study believe that school committees must be established in order to uphold ethical standards at schools. Also, participants felt that the suggestion box must be emphasised whereby anyone including the pupils can suggest things and educators can also write down what they think is not right within the school. Suggestion box must not read by anyone within the school but an “*external figure like SACE*”. If things are written like “*affairs and drunk educators... the department will know*” (Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School).

we need to form committees at schools which will be responsible for ethics. Also, principals and educators must go under training/workshops so that they are well-versed about ethics. Also, encouragement is needed to make sure that they attend

(Mr Mike—Educator, Impumelelo Primary School)

In addition, participants claimed that the Department of Education must have special people who will be involved in managing the school’s funds. Also, participants felt that the Department of Education is mainly focused on “*teaching and learning*” at school not on problems that schools have (Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Based on the data presented in this section, this study discovered numerous pathways to be followed in order to deal with the unethical conduct that has been widely reported at schools. Some of them are presented as follows: firstly, this study found out that dealing with unethical conduct is no light matter: a human being is a very difficult being to deal with. Secondly, ethics is a state of mind of a human being because at that moment a person will not even think that there are ethics that guide him/her (but, rather, would have internalized ethics). They will just do anything and then later realise that they have messed up but the damage would have been done already. Therefore, for now, unethical practices may decrease, but not end per se.

In addition, conducting and attending workshops may also decrease unethical conduct because sometimes educators plead ignorance and say they did not know that what they were doing is unethical. Both Department of Education and at universities do not exactly give that training. Focus is placed on teaching the child. Therefore, educators need to be educated, especially new educators. Hence, training must focus more on the disadvantages of engaging unethical

behaviour head-on. School committees must be established to uphold these ethics. Also, use of suggestion boxes must be emphasised whereby anyone including the pupils can suggest things and educators can also write down what they think is not right within the school. Suggestion box must not be read by anyone within the school but an “external figure like SACE”. There must be some especially competent people who will be involved in managing the school’s money, not for the finances to be the scope solely of the principal and SGBs. Furthermore, the study found out that the only way to root out the problem is to make examples of those who are caught doing wrong. There must be consequences for anyone who conducts themselves unethically because other principals and educators can see others doing it and getting away with it, then they think can do the same. Also, this study found out some of those who have been suspended still get a full salary every month and they have got another business running. Therefore, findings seem to suggest that schools need a good and strong leadership. In addition, the current leadership needs to be reviewed and, where possible, to be replaced with the good and ethical leaders with principles in order to address unethical conduct at schools. Since principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on educators is also important. Also, these findings suggest that a dedicated focus on teaching the child only needs to change: the focus must be more on both teaching and instilling ethical conduct at schools. Further, these findings suggest that educational leaders need to be able to critique the current policies and procedures in order to address unethical conduct.

Likewise, a study conducted by Cezmi and Toprak (2014) found that a school leader needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support. Therefore, their findings seem stand corroborated by views of the participants, namely, that principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on educators. This leadership dimension is also in line with view of Yukl (2011) when he argues that ethical leadership is assumed to involve setting and pursuing ethical goals and influencing others in an ethical manner (Yukl, 2011).

Consider in tandem, the findings of this study were in line with view of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) when they argue that school principals faced with dilemmas and challenged to make complex decisions, justified those decisions as made in the best interests of the learners. Therefore, school principals have ethical responsibilities, which means they must be knowledgeable and able to use and make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of

each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Starratt, 2005; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Begley & Stefkovich, 2007). In addition, the findings of this study also resonate with Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2005) view that school principals are daily faced with ethical dilemmas so and have to take decision in the best interests of the learners (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Therefore, school principals have ethical responsibilities to make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Shapiro & Stefkovich organisations, 2005). In addition, Ubuntu is essential to school leadership since it directs towards an "*ethics of care*". The humane style of leadership generated by African humanism puts people first. In Africa, the *Ubuntu* philosophy is an ethical code that glues society together, lubricates tolerance and respects human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership (Khoza, 2011)

7.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of various educators elicited through the interviews, documents review and observations were presented and discussed in terms of research questions, literature review as well as the theoretical framework underpinning this study. In a nutshell, the data presentation chapters have shown that at schools, school principals and educators are still behaving unethically and findings indicated that they lack both humility and Ubuntu. Humility is part of our African culture so it should be the easiest thing to do. But it is rare as most principals tend to use their high panoramic positions to their own advantage and end up being unethical. Hence a school that has an ethical principal is a very good school. Educators always feel good to go to such a school. Therefore, all schools need an ethical leader who is a servant leader as opposed to being too proud and bossy to serve and respect others. In the next chapter, I present and discuss the themes, trends and patterns that emerged from the presented data.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION OF KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters were devoted to the descriptive analysis and interpretation of how the participants conceptualised and enacted ethical leadership in their schools. In this chapter, I present and discuss the key themes that emerged from the findings. The chapter is not an attempt to condense all the themes and sub-themes that arose from the findings. Rather it places a focus on the major themes that I believe were significant, if only for the purpose of responding to the research questions posed earlier in this study. Findings presented in previous three chapters led to particular themes and sub-themes which are presented and analysed evaluatively and theoretically in this chapter. Each theme is defined and then developed by demonstrating how the theme manifested in the data with reference to the key findings. Each key theme is further interpreted with relevant supporting literature to generate assertions, suggestions and recommendations. Further, as in the previous data presentation chapters, the names used are convenient pseudonyms chosen by the researcher. In addition, in discussing the themes, intentional attempts are made to relate the findings to the research questions, literature and theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter Two and Three respectively of this study.

8.2 The following key themes emerged:

After presentation and careful scrutiny of findings in the previous three chapters, the following themes emerged from the study: contextual conceptualisation of ethics and ethical leadership; ethical leadership; modelling good behaviour; trust/integrity as a pillar of an ethical leader; egotism and self-interest; decline of Ubuntu values in the community and the vulnerability of rural areas.

8.2.1 Contextual conceptualisation of ethics and ethical leadership

The recurring key theme from the findings presented in the previous three chapters was that ethics was to do the right thing. The majority of the participants believe that ethics is a set of principles that people must use to decide what is right or wrong. Normally, what is right or

wrong is guided by a set of beliefs by the group of people or a community. Furthermore, ethics is acceptable moral behaviour in the workplace, enhancing respect among colleagues and learners. Moreover, ethics is about time management and being present at school. Hence, other important factors found by this study was the issue of “being accepted” and the “majority”. In order to be accepted, it comprises the element of endorsement by the majority. However, the findings of this study seem to suggest that ethics and ethical leadership were conceptualised in the context in which the participants lived and worked. For example, this study was conducted in rural communities whereby participants lived in the environment which was infested by corruption, materialism/tenderpreneurship, decline (of Ubuntu values), poverty and HIV/AIDS, all of which sum up the vulnerability of rural communities. In addition, the participants contextualised ethics as something related to the values of the community. Participants also believe that the behaviour of some members of the rural community embrace unethical behaviour practised by school principals and educators. Further, it has noted that poverty experiences stripped some of the rural community members of their values and moral principles. As a result, homes and the community in general are not as strong as they used to be, and that they are corroding. The above findings are consistent with those of Northouse (2010) and Vogel (2012) who posit that ethics are the beliefs and values of what is right or wrong from a moral perspective. Further, ethics act as the guiding principles that guide an individual or a certain group of people in making decisions in a particular situation (Northouse, 2010 & Vogel, 2012). The following narratives serve to highlight this perception:

I think ethics deals with moral behaviour of a person. It is about how a person conducts himself/herself in the school and in the community. It refers to how an educator conducts himself/herself within the school and even out of the school. Long ago, not everyone could be an educator. Only ministers of religion could be educators, and ministers live by the Bible.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Ethical leadership in schools is a set of moral principles that people must use to decide what is right or wrong (that is morality).

(Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School)

Ethical leadership means being honest and transparent in leading people. For example, if you are a leader you must lead by example. You must not tell people to

do something that you are failing to do so it is mostly about being practical. You must demonstrate it so that the people that you are leading must see which is right and which is wrong in the workplace.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Further, another educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

My understanding of ethics has to do with doing the correct or right things and behaving in the right manner which does not go against policies and law, following policy and some element of morality in the way someone does things.

(Mr Bern—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Based on the findings that have been presented so far, concisely, ethics is a set of principles people use to decide on what is right and wrong. Ethics is about moral behaviour, how a person conducts himself/herself within the school and in the community. Furthermore, in the past, education was regarded as a noble profession, so much that generally, before the state got involved, education was provided by missionaries or church schools. Therefore, the educators and leaders in education had to uphold impeccable ethical standards and were almost always associated with the ministers of religion. Participants even referred to olden days where teaching posts were mainly occupied by the ministers of religion because these members of the community were known to uphold high ethical standards.

Furthermore, another major theme that emerged from the findings was that ethical leadership in schools was to lead in such a way that leadership benefits the learners. Mr Ndaba, the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School, described an “*Ethical leader as the leader who manages the school in such a way that it benefits the learners.*” This study also found that an ethical leader is someone who cares about other people, someone who has a good character, who takes good care of the learners, who is principled and consistent in decision-making. The findings of this study were consistent with view of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) who argue that school principals are faced with ethical dilemmas and so should take decisions, and those decisions must be in the best interests of the learners (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Therefore, school principals have ethical responsibilities to use make moral judgments and decisions with the dignity of each person in mind, while promoting equality in all aspects of education (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In addition, *Ubuntu* is essential to school leadership since it directs organisations towards an “ethics of care”. The humane style of leadership generated by

African humanism puts people first. In Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glue the society together, lubricate tolerance and respect human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership (Khoza, 2011) Furthermore, an ethical leader is exemplary to others in the workplace, someone whom people look up to, someone who also encourages other people to do likewise and ensuring that ethical standards are kept or maintained. Being a school principal means that you are a role model not only to educators and learners but also to the whole community therefore you are expected to model good behaviour, demonstrate a good character and be exemplary. Moreover, an ethical leader is a “*father or mother*” to the followers. Ethical leaders create a conducive environment for educators and learners and instill a sense of *Ubuntu* to both staff members and learners by teaching them the importance of helping one another. To be a father/mother of a school to promote the well-being of followers, solve their problems and keep them confidential. In addition, an ethical leader shows sympathy and empathy to other people. One Deputy Principal supported this notion when she said:

By showing empathy and sympathy to all stakeholders and take into cognisance the welfare of others.

(Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Likewise, one HOD articulated this very well when she said: “*Understand the feelings of educators and to be a father/mother to them when there are times of difficulties*”. (Miss Mzobe—HOD, Impumelelo Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Hlaka-an educator from Ikusasaletu Secondary School concurred with the above comment as follows:

Ethical leadership is to be honest and transparent in leading people. For example, if you are a leader you must lead by example. You must not tell people to do something that you are failing to do so it is mostly about being practical. You must demonstrate it so that the people that you are leading must see which is right and which is wrong in the workplace (Mr Hlaka- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Significantly, the findings also showed that the participants were influenced by their religious upbringing to be ethical and good leaders. They also argued that a school leader who is grounded in religion manages to maintain being morally upright, despite the possibility that the

School Governing Body (SGB) may be ignorant of some basic financial management skills and therefore may be easily deceived. Further, to be scripturally bound (in terms of Biblical orientation) drives school principals to express ethical values like love, humility, joy, being at peace and self-control. In other words, ethical leaders lead in such a way that followers notice that a leader has a heart to feel and the ear to listen to them. Ethical leadership is to be able to create an environment which is safe for future leaders to be moulded and to re-install the sensitive and critical layers of being an African or human being which is Ubuntu. Among other things the participants mentioned the following to illustrate the above argument:

As a devout believer, I am scripturally bound to express ethical values like love, humility, joy, being at peace, self-control (to mention a few).

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Similarly, Mr Mathe said:

Long ago, not everyone could be an educator. Only ministers of religion could be educators, and ministers live by the Bible.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The participants' understandings of ethical leadership were in line with what I found in literature, such as: integrity, honesty, fairness, character, transparency, morality, modelling and good behaviour. Participants further claimed that ethical leadership is about considering the best interest of the learner in every decision taken, achieving excellent results/outcomes and being scripturally bound.

Consequently, based on the findings of this study, it can be safely deduced that ethical leadership is about caring about other people; being a trusted individual; and creating open communication. Also, this study found that ethical leadership takes into account different characteristics of humans: S/he establishes a support structure which caters for different areas of a life of a person. Findings from this study also show that an ethical leader is grounded with ethics and spirituality or religious upbringing, and that both are rooted in *Ubuntu* that values the community, humanness and wellbeing of every person. This finding embraces the African philosophy of ethical leadership whereby a leader complements *Ubuntu* to achieve the desired goal. The *Ubuntu* philosophy espouses group solidarity, which is central to the survival of African communities (Mbigi & Maree 2005). Moreover, Nelson Mandela, from South African president describes *Ubuntu* as a philosophy constituting a universal truth, a way of life, which

underpins an open society (Mandela, 2006). In Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glues society together, lubricates tolerance and respects human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership. *Ubuntu* springs from “*muntu*” (a human being), a word found in all Bantu languages in Africa, meaning being human and concerned with others, summed up in the maxim ‘I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am’ (Khoza, 2011). However, without good ethics, it is extremely difficult for a leader to develop integrity, authenticity, an identity or other traits that produce effective leadership (Waggoner, 2010).

Furthermore, the findings from this study also compliment the Western philosophy of ethical leadership. Resick, *et al.* (2006) describe ethical leaders as people-oriented, as and when an ethical leader reflects genuinely and caringly about other people. In addition, Brown and Trevino (2006) and Piccolo *et al.*, (2012) posit that an ethical leader act in a normatively appropriate manner. They further explain that to act in a normatively appropriate manner is to act consistently with general expectations regarding how leaders should behave in a work context. ‘Normatively appropriate’, implies that leaders are fair, honest, principled, and trustworthy in taking responsibility for their actions, and use rewards and punishments where appropriate to hold subordinates responsible for their actions (Piccolo, *et al.*, 2012). Ethical leaders, as described by Brown and Trevino (2006), should exhibit traits that are consistent with normative ethical principles such as honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness.

8.2.2 Ethical leaders model good behaviour (Exemplary leadership)

One of the prominent themes that emerged from the findings was that ethical leaders model consistently good behaviour (being exemplary) in the context of massive corruption and nepotism in society. In all four sampled schools, participants repeatedly expressed a view of an ethical leader as someone who is exemplary to a certain group of people, someone to whom people look up to, someone who also encourages other people to do likewise and ensure that ethical standards were kept or maintained despite massive corruption and nepotism in the community and society where these leaders work. Being a school principal means that you are a role model, not only to educators and learners, but also to the whole community therefore you have to model good behaviour, demonstrate a good character and be exemplary in your behaviour. Throughout the data presentation and analysis, I noticed that school principals or educators were viewed as pillars of hope for the rural community in which they worked.

Mostly, the future of the people in rural areas somehow depends on ethical and good educators within that community. Based on the findings, the school principals were perceived by the majority of the participants as the most significant person in the eyes of educators and parents in the researched rural schools. So, their behaviour matters the most to the whole community and remains pivotal for the people in these communities to transform and escape the chains of poverty and inequality.

Further, school principals are expected to model good behaviour as they lead the school with integrity. However, this study found that some of the school principals practised unethical behaviour and these practices not only destroy the institution which the school principal was leading but destroyed the whole community with negative consequences for both the institution and the wellness of the whole community. As I presented above, the educator is regarded as the pillar and the bridge to the future of members of the community. Consequently, modelling good behaviour and consistently demonstrating what one preaches, is a cornerstone of being an ethical leader. With regard to such credible leadership, Brown and Trevino (2006) posit that good leadership always starts with the inner person and that the people can sense the depth of a person's character. They further argue that a moral person is fair, is a principled decision-maker, is caring about the wider society behaves ethically in both his/her personal and professional life (Brown & Trevino, 2006). In addition, De Hoogh and Den-Hartog (2008) postulate that personal characteristics such as the leader's personality and upbringing are related to ethical leadership. The above views of the participants are also consistent with the sixth and the last aspect of Khoza's (2011) Attuned Leadership Model which is commonwealth. According to Khoza (2011), as people we owe our existence to the commonwealth of others and we search for the meaning of being in our relationships with others. Commonwealth emphasises the link between common action and common benefits. It is about collective and communitarian values. So, *Ubuntu* is a living force that bridges differences between people and makes shared vision and action possible (Khoza, 2011). Furthermore, good leadership strives to fulfil the common good. Leadership is efficacious when the followership embraces the vision and strives for transformation too. A leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts (Khoza, 2011).

To link this with this study, Mr Mathe, the Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School said: “As an educator in the community, I am a role model so the way I conduct myself is important”. He further neatly related his character to ethical leadership when he said:

As a principal, you need to conduct yourself in a good and ethical manner in the community. You need not be tempted. There can be instances that can come and tempt you so if you know the ethical code, you cannot be tempted because you know that this is going to negatively affect your work environment, even the morale of the staff because now there would be no secrets so it is important for a leader to live by the ethical code.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Likewise, Mr Ndaba, the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School also believe that an ethical leader should demonstrate good character. He said:

I strongly believe in good character, so to me character is the number one value. If my character is not ethical or moral, it can be possible that I can use the school’s funds to pay for my needs. It is easy to talk to the SGB - some are poor and corrupt I can talk and sign the bank cheque but because I know that God is my judge and He is looking at me, even if I don’t have any money but I would not steal the school funds.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

To be a good example allows the school principal to positively influence other people. It also allows the school principal to encourage followers to do likewise, ensuring that ethical standards are maintained. To be exemplary leaves no room for being neutral when it comes to ethical conduct. A school principal either builds or destroys his/her institution. Thus, school principals should either be ethical or not ethical and there is no sitting on the fence. So, it is greatly beneficial to have ethical leaders at schools who will be able to model good behaviour especially in rural communities because such communities do not have many leaders to look up to. A number of authors argue that ethical behaviour is very critical to a leader’s credibility and his/her ability to meaningfully influence followers at all levels in the organisation (Piccolo, *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, ethical leaders who are highly responsible for their actions can be perceived by their followers as effective (Kalshoven, *et al.*, 2011). Hence, followers are likely to copy behaviours of the ethical leaders, which again should positively influence institution

effectiveness (Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009). In addition, leaders are also motivated to be open, approachable and willing to listen to their followers (Huberts, Kaptein & Lasthuizen, 2007). Consequently, one of the school principals mentioned that:

The educator is the only senior person the learners see every day so if the educator is seen living a life which is immoral, this would tarnish the image of the teaching profession hence learners will end up copying the bad behaviour. Since an educator is a role model to learners, it is important that these educators behave morally.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Furthermore, school principals are not working alone at schools. There are staff members, learners and different stakeholders including community members. Accordingly, they have to set the tone; they have to lead all these people. Consequently, all these people have to follow and learn from the choices of the school principal. However, if the school principal models unethical behaviour, a number of people will possibly learn and do as the school principal does. Hence, findings from this study indicate that to lead with integrity you have to be humble, to be the school principal who has an ear to listen. Also, be the one who learns and improves, serving as a role model for what ethical behaviour looks like. School principals are supposed to model ethical leadership, with their judgements, words and conduct in full alignment. Kannan-Narasimhan and Lawrence (2012) also describe behavioural integrity as the perceived pattern of alignment between an actors' words and deeds (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012). However, Palanski and Yammarino (2009) deem integrity as a virtue, which is defined as a distinct component of good character. These authors further categorise the various meanings of integrity in the management literature into five main categories and these are: (1) integrity as wholeness; (2) integrity as consistency between words and actions; (3) integrity as consistency in adversity; (4) integrity as being true to oneself; (5) and integrity as morality or ethics. Furthermore, the discussion is also in line with Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), who posit that the ethic of the profession acknowledges that there are guiding values (e.g., principles, codes, assumptions, mores, and expected behaviours) within each profession. Thus, adhering to these values is an obligatory duty to a leader's craft. Professional codes of ethics are paramount to honouring the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). At school, a school principal needs to act in accordance with ethical values, being a role model, having an intellectual and moral influence on people, and providing individualized support

(Cezmi & Toprak, 2014). Further, to lead effectively, a leader should be ethical and moral. Also, leaders need to be trained to exercise both mental and emotional intelligence (Khoza, 2011). According to Khoza (2011), qualities that are especially important in leadership, where serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of *Ubuntu*. Furthermore, Alqahtani and Alkrdem (2015) state that a principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by acting with integrity, with fairness and in an ethical manner.

Likewise, if school principals want to see positive change in the institution including learners' outcomes and educators' commitment, they have to be that change first. Everything must begin with them as leaders of the schools. School principals have to visualise the combined impact when everyone they lead follows their example. If the school principal's example is positive, then they probably get enhanced ethical behaviour. If their examples are negative, then obviously, they get abundant unethical behaviour. An educator from Khethimfundo Secondary supported this notion when he said:

It must all begin with the principals. They must be exemplary. For example, if they want to instill the idea of punctuality in their subordinates, they themselves should be punctual for work. (Educator- 7- Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, an HOD from Ikusasaletu Secondary School stated that:

...because as a leader you must lead by example. You must be the one showing what is expected of them. If you know that the most important thing is teaching and learning, you must be the first one who goes to class and teach. You must be the first to show some respect, not that you are buying them but you would be showing them what is expected of them. You must not be the one who is disorderly. You must know what is expected of you as a leader.

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Furthermore, to emphasise the importance of modelling good behaviour, participants believe that if ethics is forced on people, that could be a problem, because in general people do not like things forced on them. One of the educators said:

If this whole thing is followed the ethical code for example by the SMT then the educators will also follow because they will see them doing it and also try to do the right thing. (Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

So, modelling good behaviour to the followers precisely could motivate and prompt them to practise the same.

To conclude this section, based on the presented theme of exemplary leadership, I then concluded that little things matter. In order to influence ethical behaviour of followers, school principals are expected to practice what they preach. Followers look up to their leaders to set the moral examples for them to follow (Ciulla, 2014). To be humble does not need much effort from the school principal. Also, one has to remain concerned for the greater good, strive for fairness, take responsibility and show respect for each individual also need little effort. Moreover, ethical leaders set high ethical standards and act in accordance with them. They influence ethical values of the school through their ethical behaviour. Besides, leaders who serve as role models for their followers and show them the behavioural boundaries set within an organisation they are proclaimed as credible, honest, trustworthy, courageous and demonstrating integrity. The more the school principal walks the talk (Brown, 2014), the more followers do the same as a result the higher level of trust and respect he/ she generates from followers because, most of the time followers want to see their leaders in action now is the time school principals show not tell.

8.2.3 Role of trust/integrity in ethical leadership

Another prominent theme that emerged from the findings of this study was the role of trust in ethical leadership. Participants repeatedly stated that trust was the backbone of ethical leadership. Normally, trust is a choice enabling individuals to take a leap of faith based on the trust in the relationship, making reliable decisions beyond available evidence (Maxwell, 2010). In addition, trust is taken as an important precondition for instilling ethical behaviour among educators and is closely related to the professionalism of educators. Furthermore, based on the findings of this study, trust is essential for good governance and healthy work relationships. Building a shared culture in which trust can flourish is a difficult task to the majority of school principals. Similarly, while trust is hard to gain, it is easy to lose. Further, trust in education is very relevant and current unethical practices at schools such as chronic educator absenteeism, bribery, stealing of school resources, intimate relationships between educators and learners, misuse of school funds and nepotism raise the question how to restore trust in a complex system such as the schooling system. This is particularly important as trust is essential for social and economic well-being of the school.

Almost, all the participants believe that an ethical leader should care about other people. Interestingly, participants viewed the root of care differently. School principals believe that caring stems from understanding the environment. They feel that, it was important for the school principal to listen to one's condition(s) that change with the times. On the one hand, they emphasised that understanding times and seasons that are ever-changing is essential. On the other hand, the SMTs believe that caring stems from being a "father" to followers and being able to acknowledge the element of humanity. In addition, PL1 educators felt that caring stems from being honest, someone who upholds integrity, being approachable, being friendly and a kind of a person who can be a "shoulder to cry on". The notion presented at the beginning of this chapter by the majority of the PL1 participants about trust in particular springs from being Africans who believe that all human beings are interconnected and share a common and communal responsibility for each other. Therefore, sympathy was important in African culture as well as *Ubuntu*, which is closely related to ethical leadership. Sympathy is the foundation of which a culture of caring is built. The roots from the need to help another person. Sympathy enables a team to achieve meaningful in life and maintain healthy and meaningful relationship (Khoza, 2011).

However, participants may have interpreted caring differently; but what is important is that caring was taken as an important element for the leader to build trust. In addition, participants claimed that genuine care is fair, honest and unbiased. An ethical leader should be able to take care of other people, and he/she has to acknowledge the element of humanity. Furthermore, the above findings are also corroborated by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). They argue that care is based on empathy and responsibility for the well-being of everyone; it focuses on the needs and desires of the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). In addition, the findings of this study are also consistent with Khoza (2011), who he postulates that *Ubuntu* incessantly broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of *Ubuntu* (Khoza, 2011). In addition, *Ubuntu* is essentially to school leadership since it directs organisations towards an "ethics of care". The humane style of leadership generated by African humanism puts people first. In Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glues the society together, lubricates tolerance and respects human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership (Khoza, 2011).

According to participants, an ethical leader takes into account different characteristics of humans, he/she establish support structures which cater for different areas of the life of a person. Miss Ndaba, an HOD at Ikusasaletu Secondary School said:

...establish support structures within the school which will cater for different areas of life of a person, for example, social, spiritual, physical, economical and academic. (Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

In addition, Mr Mzobe, the Principal of Impumelelo Primary School, further elaborated on this point:

As the leader, I have to understand the numerous ailments plaguing the workforce this time, a leader has to get into the shoes of a member whose health relatively deteriorates towards underperformance. I have to understand when to reduce the workload, who to distribute to, taking into account we work under very strict Post-Provisioning Norms; I have to understand issues of incapacity among staff members; so, caring stems from understanding of our health relationships, economic, moral challenges. Have a hearing ear.

(Mr Mzobe—Principal, Impumelelo Primary School)

Furthermore, as I mentioned before that in order to build trust, the school principal must be a “father” to the followers. One of the HODs articulated this very well during the interview when she said: “*understand feelings of educators and being a father to them when there are times of difficulties*” (Miss Mzobe, HOD, Impumelelo Primary School). To be a “*father*” according to participants is to create a conducive environment for educators and learners. It is also to instill *Ubuntu* to staff members by teaching them the importance of helping one another. Moreover, to be a father is to promote the well-being of followers, to solve their problems and keep it confidential. Further to be a father is to show sympathy and empathy to other people. One deputy principal supported this notion nicely when she said:

By showing empathy and sympathy to all stakeholders and take in to cognisance the welfare of others.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

To build trust school a principal must have a “strong backbone”. He/she must be someone who holds on the principles of fairness, discipline and humility “*learners scan for these*

principles in an educator/ leader” (HOD-1 Qhakazangemfundo Primary). Likewise, caring and understanding were regarded as elements of trust. To be trusted by followers/colleagues, the school principal must demonstrate genuine caring. Moreover, if one looks at the various philosophies on leadership, each adopts distinct attributes that are essential to create a bond between the leader and the followers who are being led. So, how the bond is created that provides the leader with a vehicle for success. Thus, trust is a twofold function that acts as the glue that binds the leader to his/her followers and provides the capacity for organisational and leadership success. Hence, trusting does not indicate softness but it is a strength and a precondition of any alliance or mutual understanding (Ciulla, 2014). Maxwell (2010) also posits that integrity is important to building relationships. Similarly, character makes trust possible as a result, trust makes leadership possible. The role of the leader according to Ciulla (2014) entrusted in achieving the goal of an organisation. So, in order for the leader to achieve the goal he/she mostly depends on other people in some different ways. Therefore, their goals can be achieved only by collective action. In addition, to be an ethical leader is manifested by being transparent to the staff as well as being trustworthy.

Moreover, the study found that being transparent, being trustworthy, to communicate with all stakeholders and treating them equally and to respect them built trust. Open communication with staff members was beneficial to them and the school as it built trust and helped staff members to disclose personal and sensitive information which, ordinarily, they would not do if the element of trust did not exist. Open communication also indicates that the principal is concerned with the staff members’ well-being. Respect and dignity are the building blocks of trust. The way in which the school principal conducts himself/herself around others who may be either staff members or the community members is very crucial in building trust. Africans, especially the Zulus, always take into consideration the human worth and interconnectedness of people. So, for them, in order to trust the school principal, they observe the way the school principal interacts with community members. Since people in rural areas believe in African Humanism that “*umuntu, umuntu ngabantu*” (a person is a person through other persons), Khoza (2011) puts this notion simpler when he says: “I am because we are”. Khoza also speaks of “*being, humanness, individualism, compassion and moral necessity*” in his description of African Ethics. He further argues that a good leader is a leader that appreciates that the success of others does not diminish his own success, but rather adds to the good of the commonwealth. A leader that generate trust because what glues the relationship between leader and followers is, simply trust. A leader practices introspection and self-renewal. This suggests the fact that

man cannot live in isolation. *Ubuntu* means that each individual expression is ideally expressed in relationship with others. *Ubuntu* is a concrete manifestation of the interconnectedness of human beings. Respect entails listening to the other person humility, honesty and treating others as you want them to treat you (Khoza, 2011). This suggests that in order to be complete humans, we also need other human beings. In the same vein, Burchell and Robin (2011) posit that fairness, which includes balanced treatment for all in terms of rewards, absence of favouritism in hiring and promotions, and lack of discrimination and process for appeals. This model is literally grounded in the foundation of trust (Burchell & Robin, 2011). In addition, open and healthy communication between the school principal and other stakeholders build trust. The ability to communicate appropriately is an essential component for effective leadership and to build trust. However, based on the findings of this study, it seems that too often leaders either don't communicate, over-communicate, communicate inappropriately through outbursts, anger or blaming, or simply don't communicate clearly, all of which undermines educators' productivity and performance. In addition, failing to listen attentively to feedback, ignoring alternative viewpoints, etc. can undermine leadership effectiveness and trust. Communication is identified as one of the most critical leadership skills. The ability to listen, read body language, ask questions, provide feedback and generate effective two-way communication builds trust and can unblock challenges of performance problems down the road. Also, the findings seem to indicate that no school principal can break the trust with educators and other stakeholders and expect to keep the same levels of influence he/she had with them before. Trust is a foundation of leadership. If you violate your people's trust, you no longer qualify to be called a good or ethical leader. It is important to maintain integrity by taking care of the little things. Ethical principles are not flexible. A little white lie is still a lie (Maxwell, 2010).

During the interview, Mrs Nondaba the Deputy Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary made her point very clear when she said:

Fairness goes hand in glove with trust. A person who practises fairness is trustworthy. A good leader always knows the importance of fairness, especially when dealing with people. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. Fair is fair, it cannot be diluted.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Likewise, humility is part of our African culture therefore in order to strengthen trust the school principal must display elements of humility. This study found that in reality humility should be the easiest thing to do but is so difficult to some of the school principals. Participants believe that an ethical leader should know that followers are human beings and they have feelings. S/he needs to show that everyone is important individually. School principals must have a good manner of approach and must not use harsh words to their staff. The following quotation is extracted from one of the questionnaires:

Humility is rare as most principals tend to use their high pyramid positions to their own advantage. Principals should be humble so that the other members of staff feel that they can approach them should the need arise. In other words, principals should be open and approachable Educator- 6- Khethimfundo Secondary School).

Furthermore, Mrs Nondaba said:

A good leader has to take into account the element of humanity when dealing with people, when implementing fairness and trust to his/her people. Rules are rules, though sometimes a need to consider people as humans differs drastically.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Concisely, trust is crucial to ethical leadership in order for the school principal to maintain, build or to restore trust he/she must be able to care about other people. Further the school principal must be able to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning. To maintain and to build trust the school principal must create open communication where by followers feel free to participate and submit their views with ease. To conclude, the majority of participants believe that an ethical leader is the one who shows humanity or Ubuntu when dealing with others and also gives support and guidelines to followers. They also treat staff members equally and show good values to colleagues to make them feel comfortable at the workplace. As a result, trust will be maintained, build and restored.

8.2.4 Egotism and self-interest

Another recurring key theme throughout this study was that some school principals and educators were self-centred and full of egocentricity. The findings suggest that most school

principals were running schools as their own property causing educators to be rebellious. In addition, some spent most of the time absent from work or attending to their own personal errands because they have got those powers. They don't visit classes and check the books of the learners on how they are doing in class, as a result educator end up not doing their work properly as they are aware that the school principal will not do inspection. Other findings indicate that some of the school principals were selfish and did not care about the school. Their personal needs are more important to them. They often abuse power for personal gain and have a lot of skeletons in their closets. Consequently, they end up struggling to discipline educators when it is required. HOD-2 at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School summarised this very accurately when she said:

Unethical behaviour of the principals themselves which can make them fear exposure of their skeletons in the cupboards (HOD-2, Qhakazangemfundo Primary).

Considering the self-centredness and egocentricity of the educators especially school principals, this manifests itself in many different ways, for example, from school principals practising authoritarian leadership whereby they use such terms as 'my school' more often when referring to the school where he/she is in charge, embezzling school funds and sometimes end up in jail, hiring their own companies to work in their schools, receiving bribes, sometimes exchanging teaching posts for sex and practising general nepotism, fighting and killing one another over the teaching and management positions at schools and some were promoting *stokvels* (making financial loans) during teaching and learning time. It is interesting that these practices have nothing to do with improving learning outcomes or access to quality education. This is all about school principals or educators' self-interest or sheer greed. One of the participants extended her dissatisfaction about the practises of some of the school principals and said:

Sometimes they tend to practise authoritarian leadership where they do not give the staff a chance to raise their voices because you cannot manage alone. You need the views of other people, for example the SMT. They tend to run the school as if they are running their private homes because they do not involve others. They even say at 'my school' this is what will happen - while that thing has not been discussed by the entire staff. That is unethical. Maybe educators try not to do what they are told to do because they are trying to show him/her their disapproval because of not

being involved.

(Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, the HoD from Impumelelo Primary School asserted that:

...sometimes they (school principals) put their needs ahead and forget that their schools must take priority (HOD-1 Impumelelo Primary).

People normally say “*imali impande yesono*” ... meaning; (*all evil acts are rooted from the excessive love of money*), so at schools, school principals decided to manage the issue of school funds more than the curriculum. Sometimes, some of these school principals misuse school funds. They do not use funds properly such as to buy school resources. Findings posit that not so long ago the teaching profession was regarded as a noble profession. Principals and educators were trusted by communities but now the majority of the participants claimed that principals in schools are abusing school funds by way of making the SGB to sign blank cheques. They are using a chance that some parents, especially in rural schools, are financially illiterate. Mr Ndaba, the Principal of Ikusasaletu Secondary School said: “*It is easy to talk to the SGB, some are poor, I can talk and have them sign the school cheque*”. Furthermore, an HOD from the same school said:

What I usually notice among principals is an interest in the schools’ financial issues more than other aspects of their duties. They often do not use the funds to completely meet the needs of the school but sometimes to meet their own personal needs.

(Miss Ndaba-HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

In addition, findings for this study reveal that using the school resources for own personal gain/purposes was perceived as one of the key unethical practices at the schools. Mr Hlaka-Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School from Ikusasaletu Secondary mentioned this during the interview:

*Most of them do not view the school as a working place. Instead, they normally view it as personal place where they get personal benefits. I know of one school principal who once said “*lesisikole itshitshi lami*”. (*this school is like my personal property*).*

(Mr Hlaka- Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

From what I have heard and seen it is principals who use schools for own gains and purposes. They use school property for private use and you hear about funds allocated to schools somehow disappearing in to the pocket of the principal.

(Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

He further moaned and said:

Principals taking time off to go on holiday and putting it down as 'attending a meeting'. There was an incident that I heard about the other day where they used school money to pay for the principal's house, upkeep and maintenance. For me it is principals who don't respect the school. For them the school is a way of making money. The school is for them a way of taking time off and go and have some fun.

(Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Sadly, school principals were not only embezzling school funds but they also indirectly benefited from the funds allocated for the schools. In the previous theme, I discussed the issue of trust. I discussed why trust was important in education and how participants were suggesting it could be built and restored. But findings from this study seem to suggest that many school principals were not trustworthy. They owned private companies and used them to run feeding schemes in their schools and this was conflict of interest and highly unethical. This finding was in line with Riggio, Zhu, Maroosis and Reina (2010) who posit that if leaders behave in a way that seeks to benefit themselves at the expense of others, these acts are unjust

However, one of the participants articulated his view very well during the interview. He said:

Not doing what is expected of you to do, your function in the school is to teach children. That is what you should be doing, not running your side business during teaching time, not being absent from work continuously for your own agenda. You have to take the needs of the children and the school foremost, before your needs. If you are not doing that then you are not following the ethics of the school (the care of the child) (Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Shamefully, it appeared as if some of the school principals were only at schools for the positions. They did not care about their role as school principals which is to lead teaching and learning. They just wanted to earn a salary without any vision for their schools. One of the school principals stated her view clearly when she said:

Principals fight and kill each other because of the positions, which is a bad thing so our intentions are not the same. They have got their own agenda of fulfilling their own goals (Miss Nondaba-Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

Further, the findings in this study seem to suggest that family pressures, societal expectations and poor salaries of educators play a huge role in unethical practices of principals and educators. Principals and educators believe their salaries are inadequate. They also claimed that they need more money in order to fulfil their financial needs. Another finding perceived as unethical demonstrated by principals, was the practice of not prioritising the needs of the school. Some of them, in cahoots with educator union officials, made applicants to pay bribes while applying for the vacant positions at schools. Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School said:

Schools do not have appointing powers, it is vested with the province, but the school is required to recommend an appointment. Therein lies the problem, teaching posts are being sold, some managers sleep with the applicants to confirm them, though some of these things are allegations which have not been proven. Normally these issues come out when the person had not obtained the post and has either paid money or slept with the manager to get the position.

(Mr Mathe-Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

On the other hand, Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School said:

The other issue may be because of the salaries that educators are getting. The department also needs to revise the educators' salaries commensurate with the work. We are the ones who produce all the professions so I think educators need to be motivated through incentives. Also, the generation that we have now (born-frees) is not the same as the one before them. They just do not care. Now we have young educators and they are not motivated. They are just there for money. They want tangible things. They go to the classes with phones because of lack of motivation. They do not see the importance of their work. They love beautiful things but they cannot have those because of their salaries, especially if you are a PL1 educator (Mrs Nondaba- Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

In addition, findings from this study show that some school principals were illegally collecting money from educators that had recently been offered employment positions. Miss Mzobe-HOD, Impumelelo Primary School expressed this explicitly when she said:

I think what is unethical is receiving bribery, sometimes exchanging posts for sex and practising nepotism (Miss Mzobe-HOD, Impumelelo Primary School).

Likewise, Mr John said:

...they also sell vacancies to get money. There is an element of greed to keep on advantaging themselves. That is why they will keep on doing it until they are finally caught red-handed (Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School).

However, this study also found that even at the Circuit Office there were unethical practices taking place there such as bribery. Consequently, participants suggested that circuit managers must not be in a position in the same circuit for no more than five years and be rotated.

To conclude this section, based on the findings of this study, some educators tend to put their needs first over those of the learners they teach and they perceive themselves above everybody else as they are affiliated to educator unions. Some lack dedication and are lazy to work. These findings are consistent with the Report of the Ministerial Task Team appointed by Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga that investigated the allegations into the selling of teaching and management posts in schools and in some Provincial Departments of Education by members of an educator union and some Departmental officials (Volmink, 2016). Findings also seem to indicate that some of the educators bought their teaching qualifications. The findings also revealed that, there was an entitlement mentality which originated from family pressure, societal expectations and poor salaries of educators. Principals and educators believe that their salaries are not adequate. They also claimed that they need more money in order to fulfil their financial needs. As a result, some of them were promoting *stokvels* (a *stokvel* is a financial grouping of saving money from which loans can be made to increase possible profits when dividends are paid) during teaching and learning time. Organising *stokvels* during school time and is unethical, and can end up causing conflict among educators that will distract the flow of teaching and learning. This finding suggests that some of the educators do not have a passion for teaching and they did not care about the best interest of the learners which is teaching and learning. They lack humanity. This finding was corroborated by Khoza (2011), who argues that a leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an

aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts. “Our humanness overrides our differences” (Khoza, 2011, p. 32). Further, when Khoza argues on humanness, he goes to the deepest level, implying that one human being can empathise with another because they take “their being” from each other, and each draw on the collective spirit of humanity Khoza (2011, p. 88). Therefore, *Ubuntu* continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of *Ubuntu* Khoza (2011). Further, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) assert that the moral aspect of the profession is to serve the best interests of the learner as the focus of ethical decisions. Additionally, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) also posit that the ethic of the profession should be central to complete the ethical frameworks of justice, critique and care.

8.2.5 Decline of Ubuntu values in the community

Another major theme that emerged also pointed to the decline of *Ubuntu* as an ethical issue. Africans in particular used to be known for their *Ubuntu*/humanness but some of the school principals and educators seem to have lost this value which used to bind them as people. The following practices seem to confirm this: dishonesty, lack of humanity, frequent absenteeism from work for no good reason, etc. In addition, dedication to the noble profession was no longer there. They did not have that spirit which used to characterise educators in the past. School principals were worried about the high rate of absenteeism. They viewed it as a major problem which was difficult to control. To aggravate this situation, some educators not only had the tendency of bunking lessons: even worse, school principals and educators were sleeping with learners and also bribed parents. Besides, some of them were drinking alcohol during teaching and learning time. Looking at all these unethical practices by school principals and educators, it is obvious that they did not have a conscience and the spirit of *Ubuntu* anymore. Their behaviour was contradictory to what it should be to be a moral educator.

Throughout the data generation process, participants consistently articulated that absenteeism and bunking of classes by some of the school principals and educators was a challenge. The following excerpts illustrate this notion:

... if any person is absent there should be attachment such as medical certificate because the Department of Education states that if it is one or two days there should be no attachment but since we know that people take advantage of policies (play

around with these things), they have to submit. Even submitting sometimes does not help. We have to motivate educators, appeal to their conscience and talk about morality – doing good things at school.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

It is noteworthy that Miss Celo, an Educator at Khethimfundo Secondary School supported him when she said:

...educators being absent; you get educators that don't come to school for two weeks then they come back with a doctor's note. You find that the letter is not legit and they were not sick. (Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School from Ikusasaletu Secondary said:

Absenteeism, not attending your period and also not giving learners their real marks when marking. Others give question papers to the learners before the date of writing. This is unethical because you are killing the child's future.

(Mr Hlaka—Educator, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

The moment an educator decides to bunk lessons, that affects the school and it's pass rate, you might not see it with the lower grades but the matric results will reveal all. So yes, since he instils on attending lessons he is being ethical.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Her colleague added:

You find that some educators have the tendency of bunking lessons, you find that they know they have a lesson to go to but they will stay in staffroom and not go. Other instances are some educators argue in front of the school children. Find that we have a pupil here in the staff room, educators will argue and some will even talk about their personal issues, issues that kids are not meant to know at all.

(Miss Celo—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Therefore, it is evident from this study that most of the school principals, HODs and educators are not dedicated to their work. Absenteeism, leaving school early, not working especially on pay days, reveals that they do not have Ubuntu and all these behaviours were perceived by the

majority of participants as unethical practices. Furthermore, evidence from this study, shows that love affairs between educators and learners were a breeding ground for many challenges within the institutions. Love affairs between school principals and staff members were also reported by most of the participants. Participants felt that intimate relationships between the school principals and staff members caused problems because the educators involved expected to be treated favourably, and that created challenges to the school principal. Some of these challenges were: the leaking of examination questions to learners who were close to them and educators unfairly allocated marks in favour of learners that they were in love with.

The following narratives serve to highlight this perception:

If an educator falls in love with a learner in the class, the educator will be called names by the learners such as a “sbari” (in-law). This will affect other educators because that class now will be special and becoming noisy and that educator cannot maintain discipline because he now has a girlfriend in that class. It will cause problems for him. What happens is that if that girlfriend belongs to a boy in the same school? It will bring enmity and that educator will end up being harassed by the learners.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Similarly, Deputy principal from Qhakazangemfundo Primary said:

Some educators in high schools have relationships with learners. If you are a child you do not know how to behave so if an adult tells you something you will think it is the right thing to do. They end up disturbing the learners and make them not finish schooling.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School supported the above quotation when he said:

You also hear about principals, or even educators, who prey on the learners for example and getting involved in relationships for their own purposes, not because they care about the child but to satisfy their needs. That is unethical.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Similarly, I perused the minutes of the SGB at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, and the following entry stands out in support the above findings:

One of the educators that was called in the principal's office for the second time was Mr X who impregnated one of the pupils. He said he would take care of the child. The SGB asked that the child's parents who came through and reported this matter to the headmaster and the SGB should meet with the parents and formally agree that Mr X would take care of the child (SGB minutes, 21 January 2016).

It is evident from the findings of this study that the majority of participants correctly viewed intimate relationships between learners and educators as completely unethical and therefore unacceptable, even though they understood the context in which it occurred (in some cases a form of poverty alleviation). Learners would entice/seduce educators by the manner they sit in class. Mr Ndaba said:

Learners are also not dressing well, short uniforms and they sit in a way that will attract educators to end up sleeping with them.

(Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School)

Other participants concurred by stating that:

When you rebuke the learners as a female educator they think that you are being jealous towards your colleague

(Miss Ndaba—HOD, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

Similarly, Miss Nondaba, the Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School expressed her opinions with the following argument:

I understand that they are human beings as educators but we must not point fingers at one person like we say it is educators. Okay, they are wrong because they are older and the learners are just children. In a way, I also blame the way our learners dress, especially girls – the hairstyles they do – it is no longer at the level of being a child. Further, they are the ones who fancy the educators. Maybe the educator was not prepared to be engaged with her but the educator will look at the way the learner acts before him – the way they dress (short skirts) and showing all the body parts.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

I found this as a very weak argument because, in principle, educators are supposed to be the parents and guardians. Being seduced by a learner does not justify their response. Parents trust

educators for the safety of their children. School principals and educators are role models to the community. They are expected to portray a good behaviour. In addition, the principle of ‘*in loco parentis*’ places an obligation on educators to protect, not to violate, learners. Sleeping with learners, bribing parents and abusing alcohol indicated that they were abusing their power and took advantage of poor, rural community. Based on the study’s findings, it was crystal clear that some people chose the teaching profession for wrong reasons. They chose to be educators because of lack of job opportunities elsewhere but don’t necessary have the “*calling*” to the profession. Mr Ndaba said:

...there are no educators, some of them enter the profession for wrong reasons because they were desperate (Mr Ndaba—Principal, Ikusasaletu Secondary School).

The following extract from SGB minutes in IsiZulu illustrates the above finding further:

“Wena usolwa ngokuthuma abafana besikole utshwala, uphuze ngesikhathi somsebenzi futhi uthandana nomunye umfana wakwa X ofunda u grade 8” (you send school boys to buy alcohol, you even drink during school hours and you are also having an intimate relationship with X boy who is in grade 8.)

(SGB minutes, 13 November 2014)

Another finding that indicates how unprofessional some educators are, was the use of cell phones in class. Some educators were busy on social networks during teaching and learning time while others did not prepare their lessons. Consequently, they ended up not teaching in class and not focusing on the prescribed curriculum, instead the only thing they would do was telling jokes/stories to learners. One participant said:

There are things that educators do which are unethical, for example, the cell-phone issue. They bring cell-phones to classes and they will be busy on the social networks. Some come to school unprepared. They do not know what to teach on that particular day. You may think that they are teaching but they would be busy telling stories and making jokes.

(Mrs Nondaba—Deputy Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, Mr John, an educator from Qhakazangemfundo Primary School mentioned the following very interesting point:

In this age of technology, most educators have access to smartphones. They have

access to chat groups and so forth so you often find educators sitting there chatting to their friends instead of actually teaching the child. That is unethical because you are not being paid to chat on the phone. You are being paid to teach the children. Also, educators who do not care about the well-being of the children. They will see that there is a problem but they will just say it is not their problem. That is unethical. You are here to display passion and compassion as well.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Viewed from literature, Salawu (2012) argues that there cannot be ethical leadership without society's return to *Ubuntu* ethics. *Ubuntu* articulates an African view of the world anchored in its own person, culture, and society which is difficult to define in a Western context'. *Ubuntu* implies living virtuously in a spirit of caring and community, responsiveness and dignity, peace and harmony. *Ubuntu* springs from Muntu (a human being), a word found in all Bantu languages in Africa, meaning being human and concerned with others, summed up in the maxim 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am' (Khoza, 2011). In addition, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) called for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession. Likewise, the Code of Conduct for Educators also tells educators that they ought to act in a proper and becoming way such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute (SACE, 2000). Furthermore, whilst the Code of Conduct for Educators tells educators that they ought to exercise authority with compassion, it also indicates that, in performing their duties, educators are required to act professionally and, specifically, to act ethically (SACE, 2000). Shamefully, the situation becomes worse when lack of *Ubuntu* demonstrated by the school principals because educators at schools end up imitating them. School principals are the ones who are supposed to influence the rest of the staff to behave ethically and to demonstrate *Ubuntu*.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that the only way to root out the unethical behaviour is to make examples of those who are caught. Suspension must follow, depending on the severity of the offense. Whether it is a principal or educator who stole money from the school, that educator should have their day in court because it is wrong and criminal. This study also found that some of the educators were suspended but still received a salary. For example, this study found that one deputy principal who has been suspended from school due to stealing school money still receives a full deputy principal salary every month while he has

another business running. The message sent to the others is that you can do something wrong and with impunity. So, participants felt that stricter measures should be put in place.

8.2.6 The vulnerability of rural communities

Another theme that was prominent in this study was the vulnerability of communities in rural areas. Despite the fact that unethical practices were noticed at schools in urban areas as well, findings from this study seem to suggest that the situation is more severe in the rural areas. Educators, especially in rural areas where educator monitoring is lax, do not want to work anymore; they are always absent from school for unjustified reasons. Some of them abuse the sick leave system; while others, even though present at school, spent teaching and learning time on drinking alcohol and sleeping with the learners. The following excerpts from the minutes' book of Khethimfundo Secondary School illustrates the situation at some of schools:

This educator does not want to work anymore. She has taken 3 months' sick leave, was supposed to return to work on the 5th April 2016, instead she submitted another 3 weeks' sick leave and now another 3 months' sick leave, what is that! She is kidding I have to call this person; she is not serious.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The following extract was from the SGB minutes. The minutes were written in isiZulu and read thus “*Yekela ukulahleka emini kanti nisemakhotheji niyaphuza; yekani nokuthuma izingane zesikole utshwala*” (Stop bunking classes during teaching time and disappear to the cottages to drink alcohol. Stop sending learners to buy alcohol for you), SGB member-SGB minutes-Khethimfundo Secondary School, 13 November 2014.

Findings also suggest that some of the school principals from urban areas came to rural areas with all the tricks of “*stealing*” from the schools and from the Department of Education. This finding implies that some of the school principals and educators who came from urban areas in order to work in rural schools, some of them were not bringing light to rural people. Instead they were there to steal what little the rural community have and further destroy their future generations. Further, findings from this study suggest that educators were aware of the challenges facing rural communities (some families do not have parents; some families are child-headed as parents died of HIV AIDS-related illnesses; poverty stricken learners who look after their families through state grants; etc.). So, sleeping with learners and making excuses

that learners were seducing them was a sign of inhumaneness and selfishness. They were using their power to take advantage of vulnerable learners. That is why many cases go unreported. The following narrative serves to illustrate this perception. Miss Nondaba (Principal of Qhakazangemfundo Primary School) said:

We understand that most of the families do not have parents. Learners look after their families and they need money. Learners will try to attract male educators so that they get money. Also, our leaners are lazy to learn these days. They want to get things easily. 'I will have an affair with an educator so that I will get questions and pass easily' because they are lazy. They want fast things in life. They want things to just come on the table without working for them.

(Miss Nondaba—Principal, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Findings from this study further indicate that some of the School Governing Bodies in most rural schools were not strong because of many incapacities (they followed the principals' orders, given that most of SGBs seemed as if they were not trained properly on their roles, they trusted school principals' decisions and believe that school principals were always correct and reliable). This study also found that in rural areas, parents sometimes were very happy to find out that their girl-child was having an intimate relationship with an educator or the school principal because that was seen as a way out of poverty. As a result, such cases ended up not being reported to the police. This situation seemed worse in rural areas since parents were lacking knowledge. Mr John, an Educator at Qhakazangemfundo Primary School, brought forward a very solid argument during the interview. He said:

I think there is a stigma that they can get away with it in the rural areas. Rural areas are not like in cities where there is a police station after every 5km so if an educator from a school 20km from a police station does something wrong, the effort of going there to report might be a problem. It is also a case of bringing shame to the school. They'd rather protect the image of the school than bring out what is happening. The communities are small and people talk and the fear of being embarrassed or bringing shame to the family name is there. Also, the resources are not there. Although it also happens in the cities but I think it happens more in rural areas.

(Mr John—Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

Furthermore, Mr Mathe—Principal of Khethimfundo Secondary School—observed:

... if an educator has fallen in love with a learner, they bribe them by giving them money and the parents are satisfied. That case will not go anywhere because the principal does not know. The parents themselves are accomplices. If maybe parents can be better informed about ways of disciplining educators. I recommend parental empowerment. Parents usually do not attend meetings. If maybe there can be people/officials who can be distributed everywhere to talk to the community. Not only those where learners are learning. Just go to the community gatherings and preach this gospel that if an educator has done this, this is what happens.

(Mr Mathe—Principal, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

The following narratives serve to illustrate this theme further:

The majority of people in rural areas like Nongoma for example, if you look at the children, a lot of them stay with grandparents and a lot of the older generation are not as clued up as about education. So, they do not always have means of knowing that what has happened is actually wrong and they should have reported it so it is lack of support. The support is not always there. I read the other day about a girl who was molested at school and the grandmother said it would have taken too much effort to go and report and was afraid that the child would be taken away from her. Because the educator got away with it, a couple of months later he did the same thing to another girl because he got away with it the first time because the guardian did not report it.

(Mr John- Educator, Qhakazangemfundo Primary School)

In addition, Miss Phe, an Educator at Khethimfundo Secondary School shared her thoughts:

I think that could also be the parents, sometimes they actually get happy when their children are dating educators and principals because they see a potential husband and money income. So, they don't report it because it is good news for them. So, the parents also encourage this behaviour of school kids dating educators, some even give them money so that they keep quiet. Even if it is reported, some parents will see no issue in it and actually condone this behaviour.

(Miss Phe—Educator, Khethimfundo Secondary School)

Thus, the findings in general show that rural communities were more vulnerable—especially given the fact that in certain rural places in South Africa there was a higher ratio of females to males. It is as if they are scared because they have been brought up being told that they are women and are not allowed to speak out if they notice anything wrong. There is fear of intimidation. So, if someone sees someone not doing the right thing they are scared of reporting it because they think that the people will find out somehow that they were the ones who reported, subsequent to which they will be intimidated and they fear for their lives. So, that is probably why things are not always mentioned if unethical practices take place in the school. Whereas these findings seem to suggest that school principals were failing to influence educators to behave ethically. As a result, unethical practices were still observed in schools. The findings are consistent with Khoza (2011), whose argument is that being ethical is a universal duty. Ethical leadership is an extension of this duty and spirit (Khoza, 2011). In addition, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) call for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession. Likewise, the Code of Conduct for Educators also tells educators that they ought to act in a proper and becoming way, such that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute (SACE, 2000). These findings also confirm the work of Chikoko and Khanare (2012), as well as that of Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008). They postulate that poverty is one of the major characteristics of rurality in the South African context. The other thing is that, communication with schools in certain urban suburbs is easy. In rural areas, it is difficult because of remoteness. Sometimes communication about certain issues will only reach the school six months after the schools in urban areas received the information. To conclude, from the themes that emerged from the data presentation and data analysis, a flow-chart was constructed that summarised the findings.

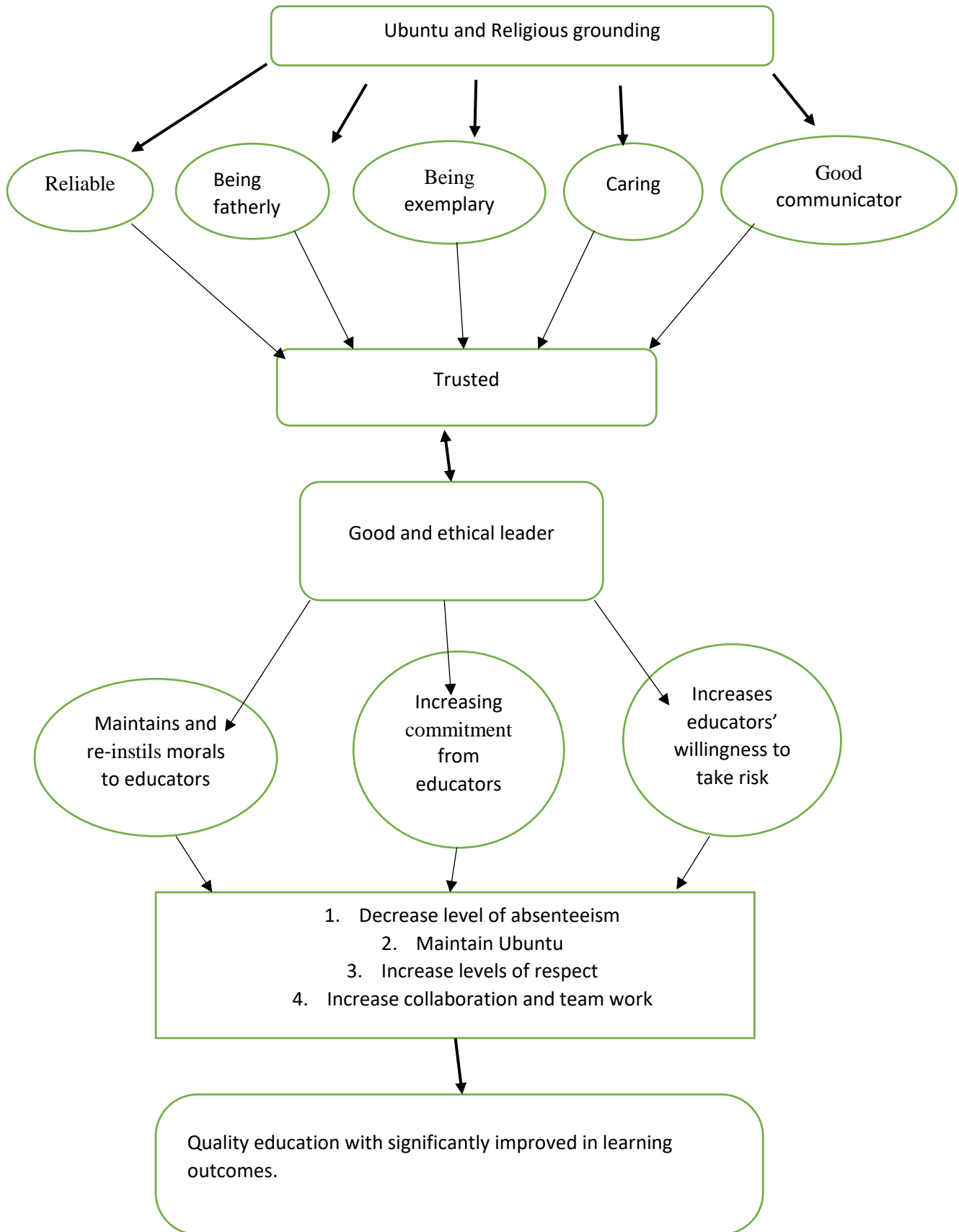


Figure 1: Summary of findings

8.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter Eight I have attempted to integrate some aspects of the existing literature and theoretical frameworks with the key themes that emerged from the research findings. In a nutshell, these themes are: conceptualisation of ethics and ethical leadership; modelling good behaviour (being example); trust as a pillar of being an ethical leader; egotism and self-interest; The dwindling of *Ubuntu* and humanity and; the vulnerability of rural areas. I therefore, I concluded the chapter by presenting a flow-chart to summarise the findings. In the next final chapter, the study summary, main conclusions, recommendations and implications for further research are presented.

CHAPTER NINE

LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

9.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with a presentation, analysis and discussion of themes that emerged from the study. After careful consideration of the data presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven and the themes that emerged in Chapter Eight, certain clear lessons emerged from the study. Based on the findings and themes outlined in the four preceding chapters and the lessons of this study, pertinent recommendations and implications for further research on ethical leadership in schools as well as in the Department of Education are presented.

9.2 Lessons learned

This study explored the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of the school principals and educators regarding ethical leadership and its implications on school leadership in four rural schools at Zululand District, KwaZulu-Natal. It utilised a qualitative multi-case study design. The findings seem to suggest that ethical leadership mostly related with self-actualization, moral relationship, moral perception and unbiased dealing (Walumbwa, *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, ethical leadership is based on personal characteristics and qualities of the leader, which are perceived by their employees as normatively appropriate like honesty and fairness. Resick, *et al.* (2006) also describe ethical leaders as people-oriented. Further, literature on ethical leadership suggest that it is the duty of leaders to engage in frequent open communication and guidance with all employees about ethics and ethical standards, for example, ethics should be part of the everyday processes and procedures of the organisational life as employees look up to leaders in shaping their ethical conduct (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Brown, 2007). Furthermore, after careful consideration of the findings and the key themes of this study, the study revealed a number of lessons to be learned. Ethics are a set of principles and values that people must use to decide between what is right or wrong and those principles were crucial for any leader who wanted to lead with integrity. Normally, what is right or wrong is guided by a set of beliefs by the group of people or a community. In short, ethics is the acceptable behaviour in the workplace enhancing respect among colleagues and

learners. Moreover, at schools in particular, ethics is more about interconnectedness, accountability, responsibility and humanity/*Ubuntu*.

Furthermore, another important lesson from this study was that ethical leadership particularly at school, is to lead in such a way that it benefits the learners. In addition, this study also found that an ethical leader is someone who cares about other people, someone who has a good character, who takes good care of both educators and the learners. In other words, an ethical leader is a “*father*” to his educators and learners; he/she creates a conducive environment for educators to teach and learners to learn; instills *Ubuntu* in all staff members and learners by teaching them the importance of helping one another; promotes the well-being of all; genuinely solves educators’ problems and understands the significance of confidentiality. Furthermore, to be “a father” is to show sympathy and empathy to other people.

In addition, the findings also showed that religious upbringing has a positive influence on an ethical leader. Participants argued that a leader who is grounded in religion manages to maintain being morally upright despite the possibility that the SGB may be lacking some basic financial management skills and, therefore, may be easily deceived or corrupted. Further, to be grounded in religion influences school principals to express ethical values like love, humility, joy, being at peace and self-control. In other words, ethical leaders lead in such a way that followers observe that he/she has a heart and ear to feel and listen to them. Ethical leadership is an ability to create an environment which is safe for future leaders to be moulded and to re-instil the sensitive and critical values of being an African or human being which is *Ubuntu*. Both ethics and spirituality or religious upbringing are rooted in *Ubuntu*, and a leader who is grounded in *Ubuntu* (who values the community, has humanness and wellbeing of every person) is regarded as an ethical leader. Findings from this study also showed that school principals and educators are regarded as sources of hope and the pillars of the rural communities. The future of rural people somehow depends on the positive/ethical influence of the school principal and educators who are ethically sensitive. Since an ethical leader is exemplary to a certain group of people, someone whom people look up to, someone who also encourages other people to do likewise and ensures that ethical standards are kept or maintained, schools need the school principals who are ethical in order to improve the lives of the rural community members. Being a school principal means that you are a role model not only to educators and learners but also to the whole community which depends on (him/her) transform their lives. As a result, the school principal’s character matters the most to the

community he/she serves, more so in rural communities in order for the people to escape the chains of poverty, ignorance, backwardness and inequality.

Furthermore, school principals are trusted by the members of the community, more especially in rural areas. In addition, another lesson learned from this study was that a school principal who is transparent, communicates openly with all stakeholders, treats them equally and with respect is trusted by educators. Besides, trust is regarded as an important precondition for instilling ethical behaviour among educators. Trust is also associated with the professionalism of educators. Thus, trust acts as a twofold glue that binds the leader to his/her followers including the entire community members and provides the capacity for organisational and leadership success.

The discussion presented above deeply resonates with the findings of the study by Wilson (2014) who posits that of all the values that constitute an organisation's culture, ethical values are considered highly important for leaders and followers. Ethics are the moral principles that govern an individual's way of thinking and acting (Mitchell, 2012). Without ethics, a leader is likely to fail and with ethics a leader is more likely to develop effective leadership (Waggoner, 2010). Without good ethics, it is extremely difficult for a leader to develop integrity, authenticity, an identity or other traits that produce effective leadership. Without these characteristics, it is impossible for a leader to develop trust. Trust is a strength and a precondition of any mutual understanding (Ciulla, 2014). Further, Maxwell (2010) posits that integrity is important to building relationship. Character also makes trust possible. As a result, trust makes leadership possible. The role of the leader according to Ciulla (2014) is entrusted in achieving the goal of an organisation. So, for the leader to be able to influence people or followers, they should be trusted. You cannot be a leader without followers; followers must first *choose* to accept a leader before leadership may commence. Followers accept leaders they can trust. Literature on ethical leadership suggests that it is the duty of leaders to engage in frequent communication and guidance with all employees about ethics and ethical standards. For example, ethics should be part of the everyday processes and procedures of the organisational life as employees look up to leaders in shaping their ethical conduct (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Brown, 2007). Further to this, Khoza (2011) argues that a leader who embraces Ubuntu will see the public good as not as just an aggregation of individual benefits, but as a gain for the whole community that is greater than the sum of its parts (Khoza, 2011). He further states that, to be without compassion is to cut oneself off the very source of one's being. On the other hand, leadership without compassion is paralysed. It cannot reach

into the community and resonate with the expectations and desires of the followership (Khoza, 2011).

Likewise, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) call for school leaders to consider professional codes and personal ethical principles, as well as standards of the profession, as they created a dynamic model that placed the best interests of the learner at the heart of the ethics of the educational profession. Furthermore, the Educators' Code of Professional Ethics postulates that developing the ethics of the profession means making the Code a part of every educator's professional life. To achieve this, the Code must be more than just a piece of paper but must influence the way educators act in their relations with other people (SACE, 2000). It must be a living document. The ethic of the profession acknowledges that there are guiding values; for examples, principles, codes, assumptions, mores, and expected behaviours within each profession. Thus, adhering to these values is an obligatory duty to a leader's craft. In particular, professional codes of ethics are paramount to honouring the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005).

In contrast, the majority of the participants indicated that schools faced a plethora of unethical practices demonstrated mostly by school principals. The findings of this study suggest that some of the school principals were failing their schools. On the basis of this failure, most participants believe that some of the school principals were not leading their schools well. Unethical practices demonstrated by the school principals not only destroyed their institutions but the whole community, ultimately leading to negative impact to the economy and the wellness of the whole country. In addition, findings from this study seem to suggest that many school principals were not trustworthy. They owned private companies and illegally used them to run feeding schemes in their schools. However, trust in education was very critical and relevant considering the current issues at schools where unethical behaviour such as educator absenteeism, bribery, intimate relationships between educators and learners, as well as the misuse of funds and nepotism were rife. All these issues raise the question on how to restore trust in a complex system such as the schooling system. I therefore believe that all school principals need to be ethical to be trusted by community members and staff members. Ethical leaders take a good care of other people. Leadership, according to Khoza (2011), requires intuition and understanding: no leader can get along and be effective without a leap of understanding into the hearts and minds of the followers. The strength of African moral philosophy is that it will influence a leader to exercise compassion when considering a decision

(Khoza, 2011). He further argues that compassion rests on the empathy we feel when we have knowledge of the “inner state of others”. Leadership without a compassion is “hollow”. To lead effectively, a leader should be ethical and moral. To lead you need to have a ‘feel’ for people, you need to have empathy. The wellbeing of the people you lead must be your absolute priority (Khoza, 2011, p. 81). Other findings of this study indicate that some of the school principals were selfish. They do not care about the school. Their personal needs are more important to them. They often abuse power for personal gain. They have a lot of skeletons in their closets; as a result they end up struggling to discipline educators when necessary. Principals and educators were trusted by communities but now the majority of the participants claimed that principals in schools are abusing school funds by way of making the SGB to sign blank cheques. They took advantage of the unfortunate fact that that some parents, especially in rural and township schools, are financially illiterate. In addition, school principals and educators were expected to portray good behaviour. Sleeping with learners, bribing parents, using cell phones in class and misuse of alcohol indicate that they were abusing their power and took advantage of poor communities. Based on the study’s findings, it was unfortunate that people chose the teaching profession for wrong reasons. They chose to be educators because of scarce job opportunities and not necessarily because it was a “*calling*”.

In contrast, structural loopholes in the recruitment process, whereby the education system ends up attracting and absorbing incompetent, inhumane beings who care less about ethics at schools. This occurs at all levels even at the leadership level and this leads to the escalation of the problem of unethical practices noted in most schools. The majority of the participants felt that the current recruitment process was flawed in many different ways. They believe that the critical elements of leadership, which includes the individual character, are being neglected. As a result, they believe that the ethical part of the potential leader should be scrutinised during the recruitment process. Further, findings of this study indicate that family pressure, societal expectations and poor salaries of educators played a huge role in the unethical behaviour of some of school principals and educators. In contrast, principals and educators believe their salaries were not adequate. They also claimed that they needed more money to fulfil their financial needs. However, the findings of this study showed that some school principals and educators were greedy, self-centered and egocentric. They tended to abuse the fact that some parents, especially in rural and township schools, were financially illiterate. I have learned that most of the school principals and educators in rural schools were not there to serve the community but to enrich themselves. Suffice to point out that Khoza (2011) states that the

individual is the locus of community consciousness. We are gifted with our power and capacities precisely to contribute to the growth and wellbeing of society, and others have a right to expect that we will give and not merely take. Ubuntu excludes an oppressive communalism (Khoza, 2011). He further posits that Ubuntu continually broadens the sphere of morality to ensure that leaders do not put themselves above others but seek to be at their service. Serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of *Ubuntu* (Khoza, 2011).

Similarly, the weakness of the procedures of the Department of Education in dealing with acts of misconduct and other unethical practises aggravates the situation among both the school principals and educators. Most of the time when the Department of Education is dealing with unethical/misconduct cases, they treat the perpetrators with “*velvet gloves*”. This study also found that some educators were suspended for lengthy periods of time but still received salaries. For example, this study found that one deputy principal was suspended for more than three years for stealing school funds but still received a full salary every month while he was running his private business. Justice delayed is justice denied. In most cases, the investigators do not follow procedures and so the Department of Education would lose cases on a technicality. These delays sent a message to others that you can do something wrong and no one will do anything about it. So, participants felt that stricter measures should be put in place to fight the unethical practices of school principals and educators at schools.

Likewise, poverty and lack of knowledge in rural communities were seen as contributory factors to unethical behaviour of school principals and educators. Findings from this study indicate that some of the SGB members, especially in rural schools, were not sufficiently knowledgeable about their roles in the school governing bodies and thus were hoodwinked to follow the school principals’ orders. They trusted decisions made by school principals without asking questions. They also believe that school principals are always correct and reliable.

This study also found that in rural areas, parents sometimes were very happy to find out that their child was having an intimate relationship with the educator or the school principal because this was perceived as a ticket out of poverty. Consequently, some cases of unethical behaviour ended up not being reported. This situation seemed worse in the rural areas since parents lacked knowledge and were affected by poverty. However, this study revealed that even at the circuit office there were cases of bribery. Hence, participants suggested that circuit managers should not be located in the same circuit office for more than two years. Instead, they should be rotated

after a particular period of time to prevent them building any relationships with the school principals and the SGB chairpersons to avoid bribery and other unethical practices.

The study also noted that individual upbringing and family values played a major role on ethical behaviour of school principals and educators. However, findings also indicate that school principals and educators were never exposed to any form of pre-service or in-service training on ethics and the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. Unfortunately, the study found that Higher Education Institutions training educators, the Department of Education and SACE were not innocent in this crisis that is taking place in schools. However, the findings of this study indicate that the other way to root out the unethical behaviour is to make examples of those who are caught. Consequently, findings of this study challenge the South African Council of Educators and Department of Education to grow teeth and be visible to support the crusade against unethical practices at schools.

Further, even though the Department of Education (DoE) and SACE were perceived by the majority of the participants as doing little in fighting unethical behaviour by the school principals and educators, the DoE has enacted a number of laws and policies to guide the behaviour of educators and other officials in the Department of Education such as: (1) The Employment of Educators Act No.76 of 1998 –Section 17 of this Act stipulates that an educator must be dismissed if he/she found guilty of having a sexual relationship with a learner; (2) The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) which states that educators are expected to practise and promote an ethical culture and also develop a sense of respect and responsibility towards others; (3) The SACE Act (No. 31 of 2000) also provides for a Code of Professional Ethics for Educators which stipulates that educators should act in an ethical, proper and becoming manner such that they do not bring the teaching profession into disrepute and (4) The Standards for Principalship (2016) which also demands that school principals should subscribe to ethical standards which should guide their behaviour as they lead and manage their schools.

However, even after the advent of the above pieces of legislation and policies, the unethical behaviour of principals and educators is still reported. Early in 2015 several Grade Twelve learners did not receive their results due to a suspected cheating scandal that occurred in some schools in KwaZulu-Natal and a few other provinces during the Grade Twelve examinations in 2014. What was troubling in that episode was that educators were suspected to have been involved and this is highly unethical. In addition, the above pieces of legislation and policies do not seem to have the desired outcomes. Furthermore, our education system is suffering from

poor quality education and outcomes, crime such as theft of school funds, corruption and other unethical practices perpetrated by educators, school principals, school governing bodies and other officials within Departments (Corruption Watch, 2013; Roane, 2013; SACE Annual Reports, 2009-2013) and these behaviours call into question the efficacy of ethical leadership in situations that are outlined above. In addition, School governing bodies recommend educators for employment in various positions of responsibility, not because of their knowledge and potential teaching and management expertise but because of nefarious underhand activities such as bribery and nepotism (Clarke, 2007). The alleged involvement of some educator union/s in selling of educator and management posts in various provinces, including the threatening and/or killing of whistle-blowers (Harper & Masondo, 2014) seriously all undermine ethical behaviour in the Department of Education.

9.3 Recommendations

This section presents and discusses recommendations which are made based on the research questions, findings and lessons of this study.

9.3.1 Ethics education should be made compulsory in Higher Education educator training institutions

The findings of this study indicate that was a desperate lack of ethics in some of the school principals and educators. It was also noted that ethics education had an important role in all spheres of life. Ethics are related to our values and virtues therefore our actions and experiences are subject to ethics. Consequently, we are all responsible for all our decisions and actions. Ethics is the study of what is wrong and what is right. Good-evil, right-wrong, virtue-vice, justice and injustice are some ethical concepts. Further still, education is a fundamental moral process of human life. Therefore, in education ethics have a very important role. Educators play a pivotal role as front-liners in every education system. They are role models for their learners who consciously or subconsciously emulate their behaviour. Educators at all levels instil values and morals that influence the lives of their learners for many years. Therefore, Higher Education Institutions which are responsible for training educators have to produce quality ethical educators and school leaders. Specifically, such institutions need to place ethics education at the centre of their curriculum. Findings of this study indicate that school principals

and PL1 educators did not receive any training on ethics while training to become educators, the emphasis was more on teaching and learning. Now is the time to go beyond teaching and learning when we conceptualise education. The role of Higher Education Institutions should be crucial in providing ethics education. Thus, introducing modules on Ethics Education at universities could provide educators with a platform to discuss and learn about ethics so that when confronted by situations where they have to make difficult ethical decisions, they are theoretically equipped to respond appropriately. In addition, having been grounded in ethics at an early stage of their teaching careers could help educators' development as ethical persons, a necessary characteristic for an ethical leader. In addition, this kind of ethical education could develop educators to realise what is right/wrong and thus make good ethical decisions in their profession. In addition, educators could learn to evaluate different moral standpoints and thus be guided by that evaluation/analysis when confronted with ethical decisions.

This recommendation is in line with Biesta (2006) who argues that we should go beyond learning on how we think about educational practice. This researcher posits that you can teach norms easily, but you cannot teach people to obey rules unless you teach them ethics. Therefore, teaching ethics has an important and necessary place in education. Educators who graduated from universities may be well-educated persons in their professions; but that in itself is not enough. This recalls a point that Aristotle poignantly makes: "*Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.*" Similarly, William Arthur Ward says: "*The mediocre educator tells. The good educator explains. The superior educator demonstrates. The great educator inspires*". Therefore, for the educators to inspire, they need proper training on ethics education.

9.3.2 SACE should be depoliticised, decentralised, made more to play its developmental role

The findings of this study indicate that the Department of Education has been lethargic and, as things stood, did not have sufficient mechanisms to correct ethical problems in schools. Further, the majority of participants (school principals and PL1 educators) indicated that the DoE officials do not teach educators about ethics. Similarly, SACE was also accused of not offering workshops to educators on ethical behaviour. Participants felt that SACE was not closely connected with educators – they (SACE) had rules but they were not in touch with reality at schools. SACE is perceived as "captured" by the Teacher Unions for example, they

also investigated the sale of teaching and management posts and found no wrong-doing while the Volmink investigation found incriminating evidence against certain teacher unions. This is seen as failure on the part of SACE as its senior people are former teacher union officials (politicisation).

Consequently, the problem of unethical behaviour of school principals and educators seemed to be persistent. It is not open for discussion that learners, among other things, they are expected to learn what is right and what is wrong at school. In addition, the school fosters to learners a sense of being trustworthy, responsible, and just/fair persons. Similarly, in the community and at home, learners observe parents and community members' behaviour.

The school has an obligation to foster into the learners to become persons who act in a morally correct way as determined by what is morally accepted into that school's community. In contrast, this study showed that ethical practices were lacking among some school principals and educators and, most dishearteningly, the Department of Education and SACE were struggling to instil ethics in educators. Consequently, schools as institutions (and the image and reputation of the teaching profession) and learners were suffering. I therefore recommend that the administration of SACE must be decentralised to the Circuit level to monitor the problem of unethical practices that happen at schools and be made more visible. The family is the basic institution for values education, yet in this study, findings indicate that in most rural societies, the family structure seems to be weakening. Poverty, unemployment, lack of knowledge, HIV/AIDS and the degradation of the moral fabric disempowers families, especially in rural communities from playing their parental/educational roles. These findings suggest that rural communities are vulnerable; as a result, school principals and PL1 educators find it easy to take advantage of them. Further, this study revealed that parents were unconsciously contributing to accelerating unethical behaviour in schools. Some study participants even claimed that they were "*accomplices*" in this matter. I believe that capacitating parents through training would be a great investment in education in particular and ultimately to the whole community at large. The crisis of ethical leadership reflects the struggles of the family. Conversely, schools have the potential of reinstalling the *moral fabric of society*, if only school principals and educators were conscientised and ethical. In order for this to happen, SACE and the Department of Education need to ensure that educators, parents and community members have the knowledge and understanding of what is right/moral or wrong/unethical and what is the expected ethical behaviour of school principals and educators.

The main aim of training school principals and educators on ethics is to influence their moral choices through values, rules, laws, regulations and a code of professional ethics. Training may also help school principals and educators to arrive at informed and defensible decisions when confronted by ethical problems. They must develop skills and strategies for exploring and solving ethical problems. In addition, educators should be at the position to recognise ethical problems when they occur and be capable of recognising what is at risk. In a nutshell, training school principals and educators on ethics and the Code of Professional Ethics increases educators' ethical consciousness. In contrast, community training on ethics should focus more on descriptive facts about *Ubuntu*, morals and values. A healthy family environment and ethical schools are vital to good character formation and ethical leadership training. According to Jansen (2011), the crisis of ethical leadership is a crisis of parental and educational leadership. It is a crisis that manifests the neglect of *Ubuntu* in the family and at schools. Further, Salawu (2012) argues that there cannot be ethical leadership without society's return to *Ubuntu* ethics (Salawu 2012). *Ubuntu* is a concrete manifestation of the interconnectedness of human beings. In the African culture and in the spirit of *Ubuntu*, even though you do not know the person who comes to your door step but in need for assistance, because they are human like you, kindness and generosity will be extended to him/her. Influenced by this spirit of humanity, Africans act out of compassion, based on an understanding of common human condition, recognising morality and dependence on one another. This implies respect for the other, helpfulness, sharing, caring, unselfishness, a sense of community (commonwealth) and respect Khoza (2011). Furthermore, in Africa, *Ubuntu* philosophy is the ethical code that glues the society together, lubricates tolerance and respect for human dignity. *Ubuntu* offers an indigenised African framework that would add a unique flavour and drive to leadership. Khoza (2011)

9.3.3 Recruitment process to be reviewed

Based on the views of most the participants, teaching in schools is considered a moral activity, because it is recognised that how educators fulfil their public duties influences the lives of vulnerable young people. Therefore, once the educator is employed and has signed the assumption of duty forms, that educator accepts both the public trust and the responsibilities to practice the profession according to the highest possible degree of ethical conduct and standards. Such responsibilities include commitment to the learners, the profession and its ethical code, the community and the family. Educators are held to high standards of behaviour

because they are entrusted with the well-being of their learners. The public expects that their behaviour exemplifies ethical and moral integrity. The majority of the participants felt that educators serve as role models who should recognise that their conduct, both on and off the school, can profoundly impact their professional image. In order for this to happen, the Department of Education needs an ethical cohort of school principals and educators to lead and teach in its schools. Ethical leaders create an environment of trust within the workplace. Putting ethics into action and making them visible across the institution requires practice and procedures. This study has shown that most of the school principals do not have goals to build their schools ethically and intellectually. They do not have dreams about their schools but just think selfishly about how these schools can benefit them personally. Therefore, it would be of great benefit to the Department of Education, society and the whole nation to make it a point that each school principal employed is a person of good character who is deemed fit to be a good and ethical leader who has a strong sense of character and humility.

Further, findings of this study indicate that poverty and negative early childhood experiences stripped some school principals and educators of their humanity and moral consciousness. Therefore, the Department of Education is struggling to have school leaders who lead their schools with integrity. Based on this reasoning, I therefore strongly recommend that the Department of Education, over and above the interview process when recruiting the school principal, must also design an assessment tool to assess the character and the integrity of the potential school principal. The DoE should also conduct background checks before any employment confirmation. Academic qualifications and experience are necessary but should not be taken as enough. The suggested assessment tool for the character of the potential school principal could be contextualised to assess, among other things, the inner character of the person, how he/she values *Ubuntu principles* such as humanness, interdependence, caring, sharing, fostering participation, service for the collective good, the leader's integrity, honesty, justice and accountability. Currently, the Department of Education, when conducting the recruitment process, especially at schools, tends to focus on educator adult achievements and not on educator early life history. As a result, character and the moral virtues of the individual get unduly neglected. It is a huge mistake to appoint potential criminals into school leadership. It is inconceivable that people who have bribed, killed or raped others become educational leaders in the current system. Ideally, ethical leadership requires an individual who has attained self-actualisation, transcendence and freedom, exemplified by leaders such as former president Nelson Mandela and retired Archbishop Tutu. Mandela's transcendence was illustrated by his

forgiveness of his oppressors after spending twenty-seven years in prison. Transcendence and self-actualisation are unachievable without rigorous self-reflection and emotional intelligence to overcome egoism, selfishness and greed (Mandela, 2006).

9.3.4 Role of School Governing Bodies in the recruitment process should be reviewed

The findings of this study also indicated that incompetency of the School Governing Bodies (SGB) contributed to unethical behaviour demonstrated by school principals and educators. Some principals took advantage of the incompetency of SGBs and embezzle school funds. In addition, the SGBs were easily duped to follow the principals' orders while some trusted school principals' decisions too much without using their own discretion. The majority of the participants believe that powers to recruit educators and other school personnel should be removed from the SGBs and that, instead, the District offices be responsible for recommendation and appointment of the school principals and educators. I believe that initially the idea of including the SGB in the recruitment process was a good idea to democratise schools but this has been massively abused.

Therefore, I recommend that all the members of the community must have a stake in the running of the school. The school is for the whole community not only the group of parents whose learners are at a school at a given time. Competent and reliable people in the community must be recruited to be members of the SGB, regardless of whether person has a child at school or not. The Department of Education must allocate a certain percentage to the ordinary members of the community. For instance, 60% must be allocated to the parents and 40% to the ordinary members of the community.

9.3.5 Rotation of officials within the Department of Education

Findings of this study revealed that there was a cascading chain of command concerning unethical practices at schools. The Department of Education officials were involved in unethical practices that were widely reported at schools such as nepotism and bribery. The officials who were supposed to curb the unacceptable/unethical behaviour in schools were themselves partners with school principals in embezzling school funds and engaged in other unethical practices. Based on these findings, I therefore recommend that circuit managers must

not be stationed in the same circuit for more than five years and should be rotated to minimise corrupt relationships with school principals. This is especially necessary since spending long periods of time at the same circuit or district office would give them enough time to build unhealthy relationships and corruption networks and to be involved in bribery and corruption.

9.4 Contribution to knowledge

There are a few research studies on ethical leadership in education (Trevino, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006; Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008; Trevino, Den Nieuwenboer & Kish-Gephart, 2014). In addition, research on ethical leadership in education or schooling contexts is relatively sparse (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes & Salvador, 2009; Brown & Trevino, 2009; Noonan, 2010; Olivier, 2012). However, none specifically focus on the ethical leadership in rural schools, most of the studies seemed to have been conducted in the business sector. This study not only affirmed that schools need an ethical school principal to thrive, but also highlighted the significance of interconnectedness, *Ubuntu* and religious upbringing in enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the school principals. These are some of the characteristics of ethical leaders. Since ethical leader's model good behaviour, walking the talk, beliefs in group solidarity, valuing the community and the well-being of every person. In addition, this study also contributes to the debates on ethical leadership and awareness and how the theory of ethical leadership could be utilised to enhance school leadership.

9.5 Research limitations

The major limitation of this study and of any qualitative case study is that it is context-bound, which which limits generalisation to other contexts. In addition, there were also several limitations to this study. First, as in any self-report method, the interview approach relied upon participants being able and willing to give accurate and complete answers to questions. To overcome this challenge, I tried to create a rapport and suggested that interviewee may ask questions at the end. In cases where I suspected that the interviewee was not telling the truth, I summarised the contradicting statements, and presented these to the interviewee or rephrased the question later in the interview to see if I get the same response/s. Secondly, there was researcher's bias: since I am working in the same district in which the study was conducted and also a victim of the unethical behaviour of teachers during my school years, my own

personal experiences would have influenced and shaped the way this research was organised, written, generated and interpreted. Special caution was taken to avoid adversely influencing the course of this study, with procedures implemented to curtail personal biases and assumptions by making use of a reflective journal and field notes. In order to guard against researcher bias resulting from personal life experiences, and in order to improve the credibility of this study, I documented any and all assumptions and biases in a reflective journal before each interview was conducted. Additionally, field notes were annotated in the journal to facilitate critical reflections when comparing the findings to the theoretical framework. According to Patton (2002), field notes and reflexivity enhance the integrity of the research process by making the researcher accountable for decisions derived from the data generation phase of the study.

9.6 Implications of the study and for further research

9.6.1 Implications for Department of Basic Education

Having looked at the findings of this study in tandem with the policies and the pieces of legislations that promote ethics and ethical practices in schools, it is reasonable to suggest that if the Department of Basic Education and SACE want to manage ethical issues in schools, they should forge a closer and stronger working relationship that promotes ethical standards in schools and in the Department of Education in general. It should not take that long for them (Department of Basic Education and SACE) to address unethical issues reported because the DBE is an employer on the SACE is the body that is responsible for an ethical practice within the DBE. In contrast, findings of this study implicate that there is a very tenuous working relationship between SACE and the Department of Basic Education. That causes number of cases to take time to be resolved while other cases reported end up unresolved.

9.6.2 Implications for SACE

Based on the findings of this study, SACE is perceived as “captured” by the Teacher Unions. For example, they also investigated the sale of teaching and management posts and found no wrong doing while the Volmink investigation found incriminating evidence against certain teacher unions. This is seen as failure on the part of SACE as its senior people are former teacher union officials (politicisation). The failure of teachers and the teacher unions officials

to engage with SACE has implication on the trust relationship between these people and SACE. In other words, they do not trust SACE that is why they did not want to share the information with SACE. But they have entrusted Volmink and his team to share information with them. That explains why Volmink managed to get all the information they found while conducting the investigation. SACE must de-politicised and SACE must discharge its responsibilities without any favour.

9.6.3 Implications for school principals

The findings suggest that most school principals were running schools as their own property, causing educators to be rebellious. In addition, some spent most of the time absent from work or attending to their own personal errands because they have got unchecked and untrammelled powers. If the school principals are not trusted, honest, do not walk the talk, it becomes very difficult for teachers to trust them. So, the implications with these will be that, in schools, there will be always the problems stemming from the issue of trust. The above statement implicates that school principals must be trusted. For now, the findings of this study indicate that there is a deficit of trust in school principals.

9.6.4 Implications for educators

The findings of this study reveal that some educators were bunking lessons, sleeping with the learners and drinking alcohol during teaching and learning time. Therefore, these findings suggest that some educators were not ethical, and that is going to negatively impact on learners. The implication will be a plethora of problems faced by the school, such as: behaviour of the learners and the poor performance of the learners. If the school principals fail to lead and manage schools accordingly (trustworthiness, walk the talk etc.) and educators continue to behave unethically (being absent from school, sleeping with the learners, consuming alcohol during teaching and learning time and displaying an “I don’t care attitude”) teaching and learning did not take place school becoming a mess/dys-functioning school. As a result, the schools will continue to have problems. So, the implications are that the school will remain in a situation where there continues to persist serious teaching and management problems.

9.6.5 Implications for higher education

Many participants claimed that while training to become educators in Universities they were hardly exposed to ethics education, if at all. Implications for this are that higher education institutions that offer training and development to school principals and educators must ensure that they have offer modules that speak to ethics and ethical leadership as they relate to teaching in schools.

9.6.6 Implications for further research

This study was a very small-scale study which involved only four schools. In other words, its findings cannot be generalised. There is, therefore, a need for replication studies in other rural and urban contexts and settings to establish if the findings of this study are robust, and to identify any differences between urban and rural contexts. Moreover, this study only scratched the surface on the unethical behaviour/practices of the officials of the Department of Basic Education. Therefore, there is a need for further magnitudinally scalabale quantitative research on the conceptualisation of ethics and ethical leadership at other levels of the Department of Basic Education. The findings of this research may also be consolidated or further developed through any future study that will focus on the character and the background of school principals in relationship with their behaviour.

9.6 Chapter summary

There is no doubt that unethical behaviour of school principals and educators remains a stumbling block to efforts to improve the teaching and learning environment of rural schools. It stands in the way of enhancing general academic achievement. However, to root-out the unethical practices that are widely observed and reported at schools, SACE and the Department of Education must take an effective lead and make examples of those who are caught out. Further, it is the time to go beyond teaching and learning when we think about education. There is an urgent need to include ethical awareness for all those involved in teaching and school leadership. All the stakeholders must emphasise education that speaks to ethics and ethical awareness including the Department of Higher Education. Therefore, the above recommendations are meant to help both the Department of Basic Education and SACE overcome the unethical practices of school principals and educators at schools.

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APPENDICES

- A. Permission letter to the KZN Department of Education to conduct the study in their schools
- B. Permission letter from the KZN Department of Education permitting me to conduct the study in their schools
- C. Permission letter to school principals
- D. Individual Interview Schedule for school principals
- E. Individual Interview Schedule for SMT members and PL1 educators
- F. Questionnaire for school principals
- G. Questionnaire for SMT members
- H. Questionnaire for PL1 educators
- I. Language clearance certificate

APPENDICE A

(Permission letter to the KZN Department of Education)

(PERMISSION LETTER TO THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

P.O. Box 91

Nongoma

3950

17 June 2015

Attention: The Head of Department (Dr N. S. P. Sishi)

Department of Basic Education

Province of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X9137

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Nozibusiso Nomvula Mthembu, a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research in four schools (two Primary Schools and two Secondary Schools) under your jurisdiction in and around Nongoma. The schools are: [REDACTED] Primary School, [REDACTED] Primary School, [REDACTED] Secondary School and [REDACTED] Secondary School. The title of my study is: **Exploring Ethical Leadership in schools: A Case of four rural schools in the Zululand District.**

This study aims to explore the conceptualisations, practices and experiences of the school principals and teachers about ethical leadership and its implications on school leadership in four rural schools at Zululand District. The planned study will focus on school principals and teachers. The study will use semi-structured interviews and documents review. Semi-structured

interviews will be conducted with the school principal and three teachers. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-45 minutes and each interview will be voice-recorded.

In addition, I will review some documents such as; school policy, code of conduct for educators, log book, and other relevant reports such as minutes of the meetings. The aim of reviewing such documents will be to check the school policies on how does it addresses the issue of behaviour in school for both teachers and learners, but more focus will be on the teachers because they are subject of discussion. Other important aspect that will be taken in to consideration while reviewing the documents are; to look at the availability of documents, to try to find out whether teachers are contextualised with the relevant information on the documents such as Batho Pele principles.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of the actual names. Participants will be contacted well in advance for interviews, and they will be purposively selected to participate in this study. Participation will always remain voluntary which means that participants may withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish without incurring any penalties.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact **my supervisor**, Dr S.E. Mthiyane; Tel: 031-260 1870. E-mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za.

You may also contact the **Research Office** through: P. Mohun, HSSREC Research Office, Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

In addition, should you have any queries please feel free to **contact me** directly using the following contact details: Nozibusiso Nomvula Mthembu; Tel: 035 8310229; Cell: 082 703 7045 E-mail: nozibusisonomvula@gmail.com

Research tools are attached herewith for your perusal.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Mrs NN Mthembu

APPENDICE B

(Permission letter from the KZN Department of Education)



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/499

Mrs NN Mthembu
PO Box 91
NONGOMA
3950

Dear Mrs Mthembu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS: A CASE OF FOUR RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 August 2015 to 31 August 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.

Zululand District

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 22 July 2015

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 / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: www.kzneducation.gov.za

APPENDICE C

(Permission letter to school principals)

Informed Consent letter

P O Box 91

Nongoma

3950

17 June 2015

Attention: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Secondary School

Nongoma

3950

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Nozibusiso Nomvula Mthembu. I am a PhD student studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I have identified you as one of my potential research participants. I therefore kindly seek your permission to be part of my research project. My study title is: **Exploring Ethical Leadership in schools: A Case of four rural schools in the Zululand District.**

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.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.

- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing the challenges of your community relating to resource scarcity, peoples' movement, and effects on peace.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable with an X) whether you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		

I Nozibusiso Nomvula Mthembu) can be contacted at:

Email: nozibusisonomvula@gmail.com

Cell: 082 703 7045

My supervisor is Dr S.E. Mthiyane who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

His contact details: e-mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za ; Phone number: 031 260 1870.

For additional information, you may also contact the UKZN Research Office through:

Mr P. Mohun (HSSREC Research Office)

Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of participant) hereby 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. In addition, I consent/not consent to the interview being voice-recorded.

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

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

APPENDICE D

(Individual Interview Schedule for school principals)

Appendix A: Interview schedule for School Principal

Biographical information of each participant

Background

Introduce myself and thank the participants for participating in the interview process. I will also emphasise the issue of anonymous and confidential as I discussed about it in our plenary meetings.

A. Understanding of ethics and ethical leadership

(1) In your own view as a school leader, what is your understanding of ethics and ethical leadership in schools?

PROBE...

(2) Do you think ethics and ethical leaders are necessary in schools/education? Why?

B. Practices and experiences on ethical leadership

(1) Please share with me, when a problem/issue surfaces to your attention or somebody brings it your attention, what steps do you normal take to address the problem?

PROBE; I will probe more to find out what ethical dimensions determine the final decision.

(2) What is it in your teaching experience that you regard as unethical practice?

(3) There is a crisis of water in the area and one of the service-providers offers to sponsor your school with boreholes in exchange for providing services to your school. What could you do?

PROBE...

(4) How are you going to ensure that ethical standards are being adhered to in financial administration/management in your school?

PROBE...

(5) How are you going to ensure that ethical standards are being adhered to in leave management in your school?

PROBE...

(6) What is it that you regard as unethical practices in the educator recruitment system in schools?

PROBE...

- (7) Which values do you emphasise in your school and do you think those values promote ethical behaviour? Why? (Please elaborate).
- (8) Is there any strategy you used to instil ethical behaviour among staff members? Please elaborate.
- (9) On a daily basis when you faced by the situation which demands you to act unethically, do you think you can manage to be ethical? Why? Please elaborate.
- (10) What do you think are the most unethical about conduct demonstrated by principals?
- (11) What do you think are the most unethical about conduct demonstrated by teachers?

C. Unethical practices

- (1) Could you share with me any practices (share as many as you can remember) that could be termed as unethical at the school by:
 - (a) The teachers at the school?
 - (b) The HODs at the school?
 - (c) By the School principal?
- (2) What do those in charge at the Department of Education do about the unethical practices you have shared above? Please elaborate.
- (3) Do you believe the Department of Education and SACE have sufficient mechanism to uproot unethical behaviour among teachers and school principals? Why? Please elaborate.
- (4) In your own opinion, do you think ethics is central to school leadership? If yes, why? If no, why not?

D. Reason for unethical conduct

- (1) In your opinion, why do some of the principals, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, do they continue to be unethical? Please elaborate.
- (2) In your opinion, why do some teachers, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, do they continue to be unethical? Please elaborate.

PROBE...

E. Training on ethics

- (1) While training as a teacher at teacher colleges or University, were you ever exposed to ethical education in any of the courses you took? Please share with me.
- (2) In your service as a teacher for a number of years now, have you ever attended an in-service training course/workshop on Ethics? If yes, please elaborate.
PROBE. Was it sufficient (yes/no), why? Please elaborate.
- (3) If your answers to the above questions have been to the negative – do you think it is necessary to undergo training on ethics in education and why?
- (4) As a teacher, are you aware of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics? Have you ever attended any of their training courses? Please elaborate.
- (5) What are your views regarding the SACE Code of Professional Ethics? Please elaborate.
PROBE ...

F. Addressing unethical behaviour

- (1) In conclusion, what do you think should be done to arrest the tide of unethical behaviour among school principals and teachers at schools? Please elaborate
PROBE...
- (2) Is there any question that is relevant to this study that I have not asked you but you feel it could enhance my study? Please, now is your chance to share with me.

Conclusion

Thank you very much for participating in this study. If you have any comment regard to this interview please feel free to comment, otherwise we have come to the end of the interview session.

APPENDICE E

(Individual Interview Schedule for SMT members and PL1 educators)

Appendix A: Interview schedule for SMT/ PL1 educator

Biographical information of each participant

Background

Introduce myself and thank the participants for participating in the interview process. I will also emphasise the issue of anonymous and confidential as I discussed about it in our plenary meetings.

G. Understanding of ethics and ethical leadership

(2) In your own view as a teacher, what is your understanding of ethics and ethical leadership in schools?

PROBE...

(2) Do you think ethics and ethical leaders are necessary in schools/education? Why?

H. Practices and experiences on ethical leadership

(12) Please share with me, when a problem/issue surfaces to your principal or somebody brings it to her/his attention, what steps does your principal normal take to address the problem?

PROBE; I will probe more to find out what ethical dimensions determine the final decision.

(13) What is it in your teaching experience that you regard as unethical practice?

(14) There is a crisis of water in the area and one of the service-providers offers to sponsor your school with boreholes in exchange for providing services to your school. What do you think your school principal could do?

PROBE... why do you think so?

(15) Please tell me, do you think your school principal ensure that ethical standards are being adhered to in leave management in your school?

PROBE...

(16) Which values do your principal emphasise in your school and do you think those values promote ethical behaviour? Why? (Please elaborate).

(17) Is there any strategy used by your school principal to instil ethical behaviour among staff members? Please elaborate.

- (18) On a daily basis when your school principal is faced by the situation which demands him/her to act unethically, do you think he/she can manage to be ethical? Why? Please elaborate.
- (19) What do you think are the most unethical about conduct demonstrated by principals?
- (20) What do you think are the most unethical about conduct demonstrated by teachers?

I. Unethical practices

- (5) Could you share with me any practices (share as many as you can remember) that could be termed as unethical at the school by:
- (a) The teachers at the school?
 - (b) The HODs at the school?
 - (c) By the School principal?
- (6) What do those in charge at the school do about the unethical practices you have shared above? Please elaborate.
- (7) Do you believe the Department of Education and SACE have sufficient mechanism to uproot unethical behaviour among teachers and school principals? Why? Please elaborate.
- (8) In your own opinion, do you think ethics is central to school leadership? If yes, why? If no, why not?

J. Reason for unethical conduct

- (3) In your opinion, why do some of the principals, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, do they continue to be unethical? Please elaborate.
- (4) In your opinion, why do some teachers, despite the plethora of legislation against unethical conduct, do they continue to be unethical? Please elaborate.

PROBE...

K. Training on ethics

- (6) While training as a teacher at teacher colleges or University, were you ever exposed to ethical education in any of the courses you took? Please share with me.
- (7) In your service as a teacher for a number of years now, have you ever attended an in-service training course/workshop on Ethics? If yes, please elaborate.
- PROBE. Was it sufficient (yes/no), why? Please elaborate.

(8) If your answers to the above questions have been to the negative – do you think it is necessary to undergo training on ethics in education and why?

(9) As a teacher, are you aware of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics? Have you ever attended any of their training courses? Please elaborate.

(10) What are your views regarding the SACE Code of Professional Ethics? Please elaborate.

PROBE ...

L. Addressing unethical behaviour

(3) In conclusion, what do you think should be done to arrest the tide of unethical behaviour among school principals and teachers at schools? Please elaborate

PROBE...

(4) Is there any question that is relevant to this study that I have not asked you but you feel it could enhance my study? Please, now is your chance to share with me.

Conclusion

Thank you very much for participating in this study. If you have any comment regard to this interview please feel free to comment, otherwise we have come to the end of the interview session.

APPENDICE F
(Questionnaire for school principals)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

***EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
IN
SCHOOLS***

Mrs NN Mthembu

April 2016

Dear colleague

QUESTIONNAIRE: EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

At present, I am doing PhD in Educational Leadership, Management & Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. One of the course requirements is the completion of Research project. My supervisor in this research project is Dr SE Mthiyane.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected participants, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experience/s relating to the research topic.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be regarded as **ANONYMOUS**,
and no personal details of any participants will be mentioned in the findings.

Your co-operation in this research is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

.....

Mrs NN Mthembu

nozibusisonomvula@gmail.com

0827037045

Date: 11th April 2016

INSTRUCTION TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.
2. Please make sure that you do not **omit** a question or **skip** a page.
3. Please be totally **frank** when giving your opinion.
4. Please **do not** discuss statements with anyone.
5. Please **return** the questionnaire after completion.

Kindly answer **all the questions** by supplying the requested information in writing, or by making a cross(x) in the appropriate block.

Questionnaire (Ethics and School Leadership)

Section A: Biographical Information

Place a CROSS (X) in the appropriate/relevant box

School type:

Primary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---------	--------------------------	-----------	-------------------------------------

Section B

How do you demonstrate the following in your daily leadership practices at school? Please elaborate.

1.1.Trust:

One tries by all means when a staff member divulges or disclosed personal or sensitive information that requires confidentiality from my side, the member remains assured that everything is in safe hands. It is critically important that such concerns/ anxieties are shown a sympathetic hedge of protection.

1.2.Fairness:

As a leader it is important to always search for a middle ground from which to move/ get an amicable solutions to confrontational sides. One tries to first get each one's point of view then sail along with everybody.

1.3.Humility:

In dealing with any matter, I first make everybody understand that no one is perfect. We strive for successes or breakthroughs amid our shortcomings. I do not lose sight of my/ our set objectives.

2. To serve the best interests of the learner:

The interest of the learner needs to be preached time and again. I make sure that the learner's maximum benefits are at the centre no matter the angle from which we as a team approach the problems in their complex nature.

3. Make sure that everybody knows what the goal is and how to get there:

It is important that everybody understands the vision of their institution. The way to ensure we are able to achieve the set goals should be phenomenal or gradable changes we are able to boldly identify in a learner.

4. Transparent and engages in open communication:

I always set a standard that in all our deliberations and intentions, we should not aim at achieving below expectation. Excellent results/ outcomes will never come from average effort. All of us should openly agree whether we are making it or not.

5. Genuinely caring:

Caring stems from understanding. It is important for me as a leader to listen to one's condition(s) that vary with time. Understanding times and seasons that are ever-changing is essential.

Section C

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

1. To act in accordance with ethical values:

The emerging phenomenal focus or emphasis on individual rights than on the rights of a group is taking a stage. Institutions that focus on individual rights (e.g. Unions) are much closer watchdogs than those that are observers of a productive system (e.g. SACE). The latter are becoming toothless.

2. To influence ethical conduct on to teachers:

The standards of professionalism are rapidly falling. There are new emerging trends that make you unable to differentiate between an exemplary noble character and a layman on the streets. This is observable in terms of alcohol abuse, formality and pride in the calling, distinction between a learner and a teacher, varying forms of upbringing, etc.

3. Create an environment where teachers feel comfortable and safe to talk to their leaders and peers about ethics-related matters:

There is a tendency for the team to develop groupings according to their fields of interest (e.g. “committed believer”, a “drinking camp”, the partying, etc). Each group would not like to be seen as imposing on the other.

4. Being trustworthiness to staff:

My “weakness” would be not allowing the expected understanding to compromise goals that are set before us as a team. No understanding intended for underperformance – no.

5. Develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff:

Putting much emphasis on promoting ethical values tends to appear encroaching on someone else’s private life. This is not the understanding that it lays a solid foundation for being exemplary. Seemingly, the value is on “What I deliver that’s what I am”. It is actually a package.

Section E

In your own understanding, experience and observation:

1. What do you think is ethical in your behaviour as the principal of the school?

Please elaborate.

As a devout believer, I am scripturally bound to express ethical values like love, humility, joy, being at peace, self-control (to mention a few). Against them there is no law – Gal 5: 22-23. These are my “constitution”.

2. What do you think is not ethical in your behaviour as the principal of the school? Please elaborate.

Patience – specifically accessible tolerance – simply because it opens opportunities to compromise desired goals or outcomes. It’s the fear of danger with regard to time factor. We can’t be sitting for an issue for too long.

3. Do you think staff prefers a school principal who is ethical or not ethical, why? Please elaborate.

Unethical outlook on life promises and embraces poor performance at the expense of desired results. Though unethical attitudes are generally preferred, there is also a desire to be associated with outstanding work. The outstanding work is the crown of the team of hard workers, not the “lawless”.

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDICE G

(Questionnaire for SMT members)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

***EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
IN
SCHOOLS***

Mrs NN Mthembu

April 2016

Dear colleague

QUESTIONNAIRE: EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

At present, I am doing PhD in Educational Leadership, Management & Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. One of the course requirements is the completion of Research project. My supervisor in this research project is Dr SE Mthiyane.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected participants, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experience/s relating to the research topic.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be regarded as **ANONYMOUS**,
and no personal details of any participants will be mentioned in the findings.

Your co-operation in this research is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

.....

Mrs NN Mthembu

nozibusisonomvula@gmail.com

0827037045

Date: 11th April 2016

INSTRUCTION TO THE RESPONDENT

6. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.
7. Please make sure that you do not **omit** a question or **skip** a page.
8. Please be totally **frank** when giving your opinion.
9. Please **do not** discuss statements with anyone.
10. Please **return** the questionnaire after completion.

Kindly answer **all the questions** by supplying the requested information in writing, or by making a cross(x) in the appropriate block.

Questionnaire (Ethics and School Leadership)

Section A: Biographical Information

Place a CROSS (X) in the appropriate/relevant box

Position:

PL1 Teacher		Head of Department	X	Deputy Principal	
----------------	--	-----------------------	---	---------------------	--

School type:

Primary	X	Secondary	
---------	---	-----------	--

Section B

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

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

I believe that my school principal:		4	3	2	1
1	is capable of engaging followers (teachers) fully in the institution's strategies		X		
2	directs his/her energies and the energies of followers to the achievement of school's vision/goals together		X		
3	makes fair and consistent decisions with no discrimination against others		X		
4	rewards positive and helpful behaviours	X			
5	exhibits ethical behaviour in her/his dealings with others		X		
6	allows subordinates (teachers and learners) a say in decision-making and listens to their ideas		X		
7	has high levels of stamina and can work effectively over long periods	X			
8	able to think relatively calmly in crisis situations and communicates that calmness and confidence to others		X		
9	aware of her own strengths, weaknesses and typical reactions to situations		X		
10	keeps promises to staff and tends not to use their leadership primarily out of self-interest	X			

Section C

How do you think school principals can demonstrate the following in their daily leadership practices at school? Please elaborate.

5.1.Trust:

There is a need for a principal to show trust to teachers who show commitment to the school, not to wrap disciplined and undisciplined members in one boat. A person who is trustworthy naturally needs to feel that trust in return, so that s/he will work harder.

5.2.Fairness:

Fairness goes in the same way as trust. A person who practises fairness is trustworthy. A good leader always knows the importance of fairness, especially when dealing with people. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. Fair is fair, it cannot be diluted.

5.3.Humility:

A good leader has to take into account the element of humanity when dealing with people, when implementing fairness and trust to his/her people. Rules are rules, though sometimes a need to consider people as humans differs drastically.

6. To serve the best interests of the learner:

A leader must have a strong “backbone”. S/he must be someone who holds on the principles of fairness, discipline and humility. Learners scan for these principles in a teacher/ leader.

7. Make sure that everybody knows what the goal is and how to get there:

Fairness goes hand-in-hand with unbiased communication. Goals are pretty straight forward to understand, only if the people led believe in the leader.

8. Transparent and engages in open communication:

Transparency and fairness are important, like water and air at opening a healthy communication channel. A fair leader would know how to handle different views, even purposefully negative ones.

9. Genuinely caring:

Genuine care is fair, honest and unbiased, meaning that a leader has to acknowledge the element of humanity. Expectations to be realistic take into account different characteristics of humans.

Section D

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

6. To act in accordance with ethical values:

Manipulated politics seem to be the greatest enemy of ethical values, meaning that people manipulate values using political stances to suit their interests.

Expectations disguised in hidden agendas for personal/ political glory. This hype (overrated) on Matric and ANA.

7. To influence ethical conduct on to teachers:

Resistance from teachers is caused by a number of reasons, e.g. lack of trust trusting the teachers, lack of fairness, etc. a lack of some of these aspects makes it difficult for the leader to implement or for the people at ground level to absorb if the leader lacks them.

8. Create an environment where teachers feel comfortable and safe to talk to their leaders and peers about ethics-related matters:

If the leaders themselves lack leadership skills, sufficient qualities of leadership will create that environment. Truthfully speaking, there are times when people do all it takes to mess up a good environment intentionally. A good leader must take this into account. Expect it.

9. Being trustworthiness to staff:

As mentioned earlier, trustworthy, fairness and strong “backboned” principled person must expect to be challenged fairly and unfairly. Trusting people occurs at different levels and different contexts, in accordance with different maturity of people and their backgrounds.

10. Develop and implement a plan of action for promoting ethical conduct on the part of his or her staff:

Teachers are not fans of paperwork. Team-building activities may help a lot in terms of bringing cohesion among staff members. Yes, team-building may be expensive but sometimes simple activities away from paperwork and learners may help.

Section E

In your own understanding, experience and observation:

4. What do you think is ethical in your principal’s behaviour? Please elaborate.

- Time-keeping. A lot of emphasis is placed on the proper regulation of time, as well as utilisation of time.
- Regulation of teacher-parent interaction. A lot of care is placed on this aspect to ensure a healthy relationship.

5. What do you think is not ethical in your principal’s behaviour? Please elaborate.

Like any other human being, most of her flaws cannot be classified as “unethical”. Therefore, not much can be thus openly defined as unethical.

6. Would you prefer a school principal who is ethical or not ethical, why? Please elaborate.

Ethical obviously. The primary reason is the belief in fairness, unbiased decision-making principles. Ethics regulate the different characteristics of people in a place.

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDICE H
(Questionnaire for PL1 educators)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

***EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
IN
SCHOOLS***

Mrs NN Mthembu

April 2016

Dear colleague

QUESTIONNAIRE: EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

At present, I am doing PhD in Educational Leadership, Management & Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. One of the course requirements is the completion of Research project. My supervisor in this research project is Dr SE Mthiyane.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected participants, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experience/s relating to the research topic.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be regarded as **ANONYMOUS**,
and no personal details of any participants will be mentioned in the findings.

Your co-operation in this research is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

.....

Mrs NN Mthembu

nozibusisonomvula@gmail.com

0827037045

Date: 11th April 2016

INSTRUCTION TO THE RESPONDENT

11. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.
12. Please make sure that you do not **omit** a question or **skip** a page.
13. Please be totally **frank** when giving your opinion.
14. Please **do not** discuss statements with anyone.
15. Please **return** the questionnaire after completion.

Kindly answer **all the questions** by supplying the requested information in writing, or by making a cross(x) in the appropriate block.

Questionnaire (Ethics and School Leadership)

Section A: Biographical Information

Place a CROSS (X) in the appropriate/relevant box

Position:

PL1 Teacher	X	Head of Department		Deputy Principal	
----------------	---	-----------------------	--	---------------------	--

School type:

Primary	X	Secondary	
---------	---	-----------	--

Section B

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

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

I believe that my school principal:		4	3	2	1
1	is capable of engaging followers (teachers) fully in the institution's strategies		X		
2	directs his/her energies and the energies of followers to the achievement of school's vision/goals together	X			
3	makes fair and consistent decisions with no discrimination against others	X			
4	rewards positive and helpful behaviours		X		
5	exhibits ethical behaviour in her/his dealings with others	X			
6	allows subordinates (teachers and learners) a say in decision-making and listens to their ideas	X			
7	has high levels of stamina and can work effectively over long periods	X			
8	able to think relatively calmly in crisis situations and communicates that calmness and confidence to others	X			
9	aware of her own strengths, weaknesses and typical reactions to situations	X			
10	keeps promises to staff and tends not to use their leadership primarily out of self-interest		X		

Section C

How do you think school principals can demonstrate the following in their daily leadership practices at school? Please elaborate.

9.1.Trust:

Principals are heads of schools so they need to give attention to every single detail. They should hand out other responsibilities to other colleagues and trust them with their ideas to make learning fun and achieve excellent results.

9.2.Fairness:

Being fair to every colleague may be a challenge because people behave differently towards their bosses (principals) so principals should make their decisions based on the amount of work educators put in their students and on the work.

9.3.Humility:

In Africa, we always preach humanity so being ruthless is no excuse. It's a natural characteristic and they should show this in family emergencies. The educators should be given permission because at the end of the day we are all a family.

10. To serve the best interests of the learner:

Learners like people who pay attention to them and praise them according to their hard work. Look for book donations, stationery and games that improve the learners' thinking capacity.

11. Make sure that everybody knows what the goal is and how to get there:

The place to do that is at the assembly point when everyone is there. Put competitions and award prizes to motivate the learners.

12. Transparent and engages in open communication:

They must always put smiles on everyone's face and knowing their responsibilities and by making the environment friendly.

13. Genuinely caring:

The head of the school should have humanity and be approachable. Staff members should be able to rely on the head to always put a hearty smile on their faces.

APPENDICE I
(Turnitin certificate)

The screenshot shows a Turnitin Match Overview report in a Mozilla Firefox browser. The document title is "EXPLORING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS: A CASE OF FOUR RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT, KWAZULU-NATAL". The report shows a total match percentage of 9%. The matches are listed as follows:

Match Number	Source	Match Percentage
1	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1%
2	ro.ecu.edu.au Internet Source	<1%
3	www.ajol.info Internet Source	<1%
4	www.scielo.org.za Internet Source	<1%
5	scholarship.claremont... Internet Source	<1%
6	jlukewood.com Internet Source	<1%
7	www.inyathelo.org.za Internet Source	<1%

The document content visible includes the title, "CHAPTER ONE", "INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY", and the start of section "1.1 Introduction". The text in the introduction states: "There is a general view among many South Africans, judging by negative print media comments and radio talk shows, that there is ethical/moral malaise at most schools. The following examples and many others provide evidence of this perception: (1) teachers who have been reported as having sexual relationships with learners (Corruption Watch, 2013/2014); (2) lack of quality teachers and quality education in public schools (Department of".

Page: 1 of 272 Word Count: 97382 Return to Turnitin Classic

APPENDICE J

(Language clearance certificate)

**KGM
MASINCOME
PRESS**

PROFESSOR KM MASEMOLA

PhD(Sheffield, UK), MA (Natal, Pmb), BAHons(WITS), BA(WITS)
PROFESSIONAL EDITOR, NRF-RATED ENGLISH PROFESSOR
& QUALITY ASSURANCE CHAMPION

OBJECTIVE

To assess (and subsequently establish) the readability and coherence of the UKZN Doctoral thesis on Ethical Leadership submitted for review.

STRENGTHS

The Thesis by Mrs Mthembu (PhD Candidate) goes to the heart of oft-neglected problems arising out of the ethics deficit that renders learning, teaching and school management dysfunctional. In its insistence on ethical leadership in the northern KwaZulu District school milieu, it reveals how the rural setting— together with complicity of DoE district officials—obviate the ethical imperatives that are set down by SACE. As an innovation, the Doctorate recommends an infusion of not only ethics into the Educator training curricula. Further to that, the thesis insists on an admixture of ethical leadership with a uniquely Attuned Leadership model of *Ubuntu* such as it is propounded by Khoza (2011). This is a timely intervention and a sine qua non for School Principals, SGBs and SMTs.

SHORTCOMINGS

THESIS TITLE

Since the thesis in its entirety—and indeed in its doctoral originality—yokes together ethical leadership with Attuned Leadership, this must be reflected in the title. Of course this will take overcoming bureaucratic red tape in order to reframe the correct title at Senate Research level.

CONTENT

There was an unevenness in the narrative style and density of writing: from an unimpeachable methodology section, complete with current references, to a Literature Review that so general as to eschew engaging reference to whole school management and school principals, the thesis was seemingly veering off the rails set by the Research Questions of the study. It creates an undue sense of bifurcation. Why else would the Doctoral candidate use “I” at some point to highlight their presence in data and proceed elsewhere to use “the researcher”?

Of grave concern is the repetitive, if unvaried, use of the same quotations many times over. This especially applies to the quotations by Maxwell (2014), Shapiro & Stepkovich (2005), Waggoner (2010) as well as Khoza(2011). This near-obsessive bandying about of these authorities cannot be a panacea (or even alternative) to thoroughgoing analysis. The author (Doctoral candidate) would do well to cite other parts of the article to sustain the argument and also domesticate their contextual use from their original business orientation to the rural school ethics matrix. Their contextual extrapolation will thus become convincing.

Similarly, though often quoted at will, the reference entry for Alqhatani and Alkrdem (2015) is not included in the Bibliography section of the thesis, as if to suggest that they were not actually read but lifted off another text. Ditto for Salawu (2012). Please insert the reference, as appropriate. Speaking of References, article titles—unlike book titles—ought not to be italicized. This stands out like an oddity, though possibly a minor academic infraction.

INTERVENTIONS

At the behest of the Supervisor, Dr SM Mthiyane, this reviewer and editor exercised due diligence in sprucing up the document such that it is readable and maintains a sense of both cohesion and continuity throughout, as the case for ethical education and practice was cumulatively built from one Chapter to the next, shaped on the anvil of findings from P1 Educators, SMTs, SGBs and School



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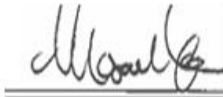


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Principals. Herein lies the requisite originality of the Doctoral study. As it now stands, the thesis is ready for examination.

Signature:

Date: 11 August 2017 **Place:** 202 SAVUTI, 200 Harvard Ave.
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