

**THE FUNCTIONING OF CARE AND SUPPORT COMMITTEES IN SELECTED
SCHOOLS IN ESIKHAWINI, KWAZULU-NATAL**

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

by

MOSES PHILANI MATHONSI

STUDENT NUMBER: 215081637

SUPERVISOR: MAUD MTHEMBU (PhD)

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE: MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN SOCIAL WORK**

SCHOOL OF APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES

SOCIAL WORK DISCIPLINE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

DURBAN

SOUTH AFRICA

AUGUST 2023

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation titled Exploring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools at Esikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal Province is my own work. All the sources cited in the content of the study have been acknowledged.

Signed _____

Moses Philani Mathonsi

Statement by the supervisor

This dissertation has been submitted with ~~/without~~ my approval.

Signed _____

Maud Mthembu (PhD)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
List of Tables.....	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	8
DEDICATION.....	10
ACRONYMS.....	11
ABSTRACT.....	13
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 Background and orientation to the study.....	1
1.2 Description of the problem and rationale.....	2
1.3 Study objectives and research questions.....	2
1.3.1 Study aim and objectives.....	2
1.3.2 Study research questions.....	3
1.4 Theoretical framework of the study.....	3
1.4.1 Ecological Systems Theory.....	3
1.5 Methodology.....	5
1.5.1 Research paradigm.....	5
1.5.2 Research design.....	5
1.5.3 Selection.....	5
1.5.3.1 Selection criteria for the schools.....	6
1.5.3.2 Selection criteria for the teacher participants.....	6
1.5.3.3 School Management Team Sampling.....	6
1.6 Data collection methods.....	6
1.6.1 Focus group interviews.....	7
1.6.2 Semi-structured interviews.....	7
1.7 Data analysis.....	7
1.8 Trustworthiness.....	8
1.8.1 Credibility.....	8
1.8.2 The adoption of research method well established.....	8
1.8.3 The use of triangulation.....	8

1.8.4 Transferability.....	9
1.8.5 Dependability.....	9
1.8.6 Conformability.....	9
1.9 Definition of key concepts.....	10
1.9.1 Child.....	10
1.9.2 Orphan.....	10
1.9.3 Vulnerability.....	10
1.9.4 Learning barriers.....	10
1.9.5 Inclusive education.....	10
1.9.6 Care and support committees.....	11
1.10 Outline of the dissertation.....	11
1.11 Conclusion.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	13
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Theoretical considerations.....	13
2.2.1 Ecosystems Theory.....	13
2.2.2 Care and support committees in schools.....	18
2.3 The existing policies.....	20
2.3.1 UNESCO education policy frameworks for orphans and vulnerable children, 2006.....	20
2.3.2 International treaties for children’s rights, care and support.....	21
2.3.3 African Union Charter on the rights and welfare of the child.....	22
2.3.4 The policy context in South Africa.....	24
2.3.5 The National Policy on HIV and AIDS 1999.....	24
2.3.6 The National Education Act No 27 of 1996.....	26
2.4 National Curriculum Statement (NCS), Revised National Curriculum statement grade R -12 (RNCS) and Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS).....	26
2.4.1 Education White Paper 6, inclusive education, and training system DoE 2001.....	27
2.4.2 Children’s Act No 38 of 2005.....	27
2.4.3 The National School Health Policy and implementation guideline.....	28
2.4.4 The National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (DSD, 2001).....	28
2.4.5 The Tirisano Policy Plan of Action.....	29
2.5 The functioning of care and support committees in schools.....	29

2.6 Poverty in children.....	31
2.7 The roles of social workers.....	33
2.8 Social workers' specific functional roles in schools.....	34
2.9 Conclusion.....	35
CHAPTER THREE.....	36
METHODOLOGY.....	36
3.1 Introduction.....	36
3.2 Research paradigm.....	36
3.3 Research approach.....	38
3.4 Research design.....	39
3.5 Selection of participants.....	39
3.5.1 Selection criteria for the schools.....	40
3.5.2 Selection of individual participants.....	40
3.5.3 Sampling of School Management Team participants.....	40
3.6 Data collection methods.....	41
3.6.1 Focus group discussion.....	41
3.6.2 Semi structured interviews.....	43
3.6.3 Application of qualitative method.....	43
3.6.4 Semi-structured interviews.....	44
3.7 Data analysis.....	45
3.7.1 Data management.....	45
3.7.2 Analyzed, described, and classified data.....	46
3.7.3 Represented and visualized data.....	47
3.7.4 Validated and interpreted data.....	47
3.7.5 Overview of thematic data analysis.....	47
3.8 Trustworthiness.....	47
3.8.1 Credibility.....	48
3.8.2 The adoption of research method well established.....	48
3.8.3 The development of early familiarity with the culture of participating organizations.....	48
3.8.4 Use of triangulation.....	48
3.8.5 Transferability.....	49
3.8.6 Dependability.....	49

3.9 Ethical consideration.....	50
3.9.1 Autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons.....	51
3.9.2 Confidentiality and respect.....	51
3.9.3 Human dignity.....	51
3.9.4 Research tools.....	51
3.9.5 Non-maleficence.....	51
3.9.6 Beneficence.....	52
3.9.7 Justice.....	52
3.10 Conclusion.....	52
CHAPTER FOUR.....	53
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	53
4.1 Introduction.....	53
4.2 Demographic characteristics of participants.....	53
4.3 Age groups and gender.....	55
4.4 Focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews biographical profiles of participants.....	55
4.4.1 Focus group interviews.....	55
4.4.2 Professional profile.....	56
4.4.3 Work experience.....	57
4.5 Critical discussion of themes and participants' narratives.....	58
4.5.1 Theme One: Structure of care and support committees.....	58
4.5.2 Subtheme one: The composition of care and support committees.....	58
4.5.3 Textual analysis on the theme of structure.....	59
4.5.4 Subtheme two: Roles and responsibilities of care and support committees.....	60
4.5.5 Contextual analysis on the theme of roles and responsibilities of care and support committees.....	63
4.5.6 The main role of care and support committees.....	63
4.6 Theme Two: Functioning of care and support committees.....	64
4.6.1 Subtheme One: Lack of capacity and expertise to identify children in need of care and support.....	64
4.6.2 Textual analysis of subtheme one: lack of capacity and expertise to identify children in need of care and support.....	65
4.6.3 Subtheme two: Challenges in implementing care and support projects.....	66
4.6.4 Subtheme two: Challenges in implementing care and support projects.....	66
4.6.5 Textual analysis for subtheme two: Challenges in implementing care and support projects.....	71
4.6.6 The care and support committee.....	71
4.7 Theme three: Funding for care and support in schools.....	71

4.7.3 Subtheme one: Sources and utilization of funding.....	72
4.7.2 The DBE conditional grants.....	72
4.7.3 Subtheme three: Challenges related to funding.....	74
4.8 Theme four: Networking.....	75
4.8.1 Sub Theme one: Awareness of other organizations.....	76
4.8.2 Subtheme two: Challenges of networking.....	77
4.9 Theme five: The role of social workers.....	78
4.9.1 Subtheme one: Managing referrals for social work service.....	79
4.9 Conclusion.....	81
CHAPTER FIVE.....	82
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	82
5.1 Introduction.....	82
5.2 Summary.....	85
5.3 Recommendations.....	87
5.3.1 Recommendation to social workers.....	87
5.3.2 Recommendation to academia and areas of future research.....	88
5.3.3 Limitations of the study.....	88
REFERENCES.....	90
APPENDICES.....	94
APPENDIX ONE: LETTER TO GATEKEEPER.....	94
APPENDIX TWO: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW.....	95
APPENDIX THREE: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	98
APPENDIX FOUR: SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMT).....	101
APPENDIX FIVE: TURNITIN REPORT.....	103
APPENDIX SIX: EDITOR'S LETTER.....	104
APPENDIX SEVEN: ETHICAL CLEARANCE.....	105

List of Tables

Table 4.1: Table of participants at school A	50
Table 4.2: Table of participants at school B	51
Table 4.3: Table of participants at school C	51
Table 4.4 Outlined themes and subthemes that present participants' data	54

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The student is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is perfected shall be his teacher.

Luke 6:40

I firstly express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God, for the gift of life and wisdom I have been granted to live and be a solution to the dilemmas experienced in our society.

Secondly, to my both parents in their late age of life, I would like to thank them for the continuous encouragement and support that they have provided to me in this study and in my entire career as a social worker. Through their inspiring efforts, I am always reminded of the late South African President Nelson Mandela's message "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor; that the son of the mineworker can become the head of the mines; that a child of a farm worker can become president of a great nation". My parents are not educated, but in their broad-minded efforts, they have encouraged me to become an academic. May the Almighty God bless them abundantly.

Thirdly, to Maud Mthembu (PhD) for her expertise in this study, constant informative supervision and regular feedback, you have provided enlightenment to me. In addition, your patience with me has also enlightened me more broadly and I have realized your capability for treating each student individually as individualization is a principle of social work. I trust that I still have a prospect of collegiality with you in social work engagement. To my fellow brothers Julius Okello (PhD), Kemist Shumba (PhD) and my fellow sister Venencia Nyambhuya (PhD) I thank them for their valuable contribution in editing my dissertation and recommending the formatting of the dissertation structure as required to meet academic merit.

Retired Professor Matthias, for your expertise and scholarly supervision provided, may God bless you abundantly in your retirement. I trust that most of us who are your former students will be able to engage with you in your capacity as Social Work veterans in research and in other interventions.

To the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Education, for prompt response and granting me permission to conduct this study in selected schools.

To DoE district official, Mrs. Thoko Mnguni, thank you for assisting with the sampling of schools.

Lastly and most importantly, to all the participants of this study in all participating schools, this study could not have been possible without your involvement. Thank you for allowing me entry into your most challenging functional roles. I have broadly learned that you are not just concerned about the academic achievement in your schools, but you have also entered the life space of children who need care and protection, so you have performed many roles of guardianship and basic roles of other professionals in order to address children's vulnerability.

God bless you all!

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family members, my children and colleagues in the social work profession and colleagues in other professions who have made valuable contributions to this study. The children who have been identified as orphans and vulnerable. Thank you for all your continuous support.

To my employer, where I am currently employed as a social worker and a deputy manager at Blessed Gerard's Care Center at Mandeni, thank you for allowing me time off to complete my dissertation whenever at UKZN. Father Gerard, the founder, and director of Blessed Gerard's Care Center, thank you for ensuring my professional development by providing employees' study fees.

God bless all of you all!

ACRONYMS

AU	:	African Union
CAPS	:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CINDI	:	Children in Distress
CYCC	:	Child and Youth Care Center
DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
DHET	:	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	:	Department of Education
DoH	:	Department of Health
DSD	:	Department of Social Development
ECD	:	Effective Community Development
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
HAC	:	Health Advisory Committee
HoD	:	Head of Department
ILST	:	Institutional Learner Support Team
MIET	:	Media in Education Trust
NCS	:	National Curriculum Statement
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
NMT	:	Non-Motorized Transport
OVC	:	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
NSSF	:	National School Safety Framework
RCL	:	Representative Council of Learners
RNCS	:	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACE	:	South African Council of Educators
SBST	:	School-Based Support Team
SGB	:	School Government Body
SMT	:	School Management Team

UKZN	:	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UN	:	United Nations
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNCRC	:	United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child

ABSTRACT

The study explored the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools, within the context of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and poverty that are main detrimental factors causing children's vulnerability. Functioning of schools as centers of care and support is also an international policy mandate and pioneered by the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU). The Department of Basic Education in South Africa, has implemented various policies that aim to streamline schools as centers of care and support for orphans and vulnerable children. Schools are recognized as centers of care and support if they are able to provide safety nets and offer social relief services to the learners in need of care and protection as stipulated in section 150 of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005.

The reviewed literature indicated that teachers tasked with rendering care and support in schools are facing challenges of limited resources to address the ever-increasing number of learners who have been identified as orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The study was conducted at eSikhawini in three selected schools with focus groups participants who are members of care and support committees and the participants of in-depth interviews with members of school management teams (SMTs) in each school. This study used qualitative methods and its relevant methodological approaches to gather data from the participants and to address the research problem and rationale that investigate the challenges and factors that are detrimental to the functioning of care and support committees in schools. The findings revealed that there is a lack of funding for the learner care and support functionality, lack of capacity building workshops and the care and support committee members who are expected to perform the caring role to the orphans and vulnerable children. The none-changing roles and lack of participation by other teachers in schools was also found as hindrances in the functioning of care and support committees in schools.

The study has contributed to the domain of learner care and support, strategies of providing psychosocial support to learners and the understanding of the statutory roles of social workers in child protection organizations. In addition, the study has added value on strategies aiming to address the circumstances of the identified OVCs. Finally, the study has recommended policy

reviews pertinent to learner support at the Department of Basic Education, an increase of monitoring and evaluation functionality by the officials of the department of basic education at district level to address the systemic challenges faced by teachers positioned in frontline of rendering care and support to the OVCs.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Background and orientation to the study

Providing care and support programmes in schools is part of teachers' roles as articulated in school policies, and this significantly strengthens learner support services in schools. In ensuring this caring and support functionality, the then Department of Education (DoE) has formulated two distinctive policies. These are the National Education Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators (DoE, 1999) and the HIV/AIDS Emergency Plan: Department of Education Guidelines for Educators (DoE, 2000). These two policies give directives for initiating care and support committees to oversee the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in schools. The care and support committees are fundamental structures within the school system that streamline schools as centers of care and support.

Although the functioning of care and support committees is mandated by policy directives to coordinate learner support services within the school system, there are still gaps in teachers' performance of this added role. Some schools are able to provide learner support at their optimal level, while others are struggling to perform this role to the expected standard (Naidoo, 2010). These gaps seem to manifest from systemic challenges that include a shortage of professional personnel, a culture of disempowerment, particularly in schools situated in rural areas, and unidentified leadership within the DoE system (Ebberson and Eloff, 2006).

In some schools, teachers are divided by organizational functions, meaning that the teachers tasked with care and support often do not get cooperation from their colleagues. In most instances, the caring function is shifted to them as their sole responsibility, yet it is a huge responsibility for the entire school. This division of the schools' organizational functions leads to a hostile environment, overburdening of the frontline teachers, and power imbalances manifesting from the resistance of other teachers to accept the added responsibility of childcare and support (Parag, 2009). In addition, the overcrowding in classrooms demands intensive teaching and learning as core DoE functionality, and this learner overcrowding is another

hindrance and a systemic problem in performance of caring functionality (Giese, Meintjies and Monson, 2005).

1.2 Description of the problem and rationale

Care and support committees in schools seem to be functioning in a challenging environment when it comes to coordinating learner support services. This study therefore plans to explore these challenges and other social factors that may be detrimental to the functioning of care and support committees. The study will add value in the domain of learner support services by providing recommendations and solutions that will enhance the functioning of these committees. Research studies on the care and support of learners have been conducted in urban areas in Gauteng, the Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal (Williams, 2010). These studies were conducted on the topic of the whole school's functioning as nodes of care and support. No studies have been conducted specifically on exploring the functioning of care and support committees in schools.

1.3 Study objectives and research questions

While there is widespread agreement on the critical need to enhance the functioning of care and support committees in schools, little is being done to assess the functioning of care and support committees in schools. This study, therefore, sets out to explore the functioning of care and support committees in three selected schools as guided by the following objectives.

1.3.1 Study aim and objectives

Aim

To explore the functioning of care and support committees at selected schools in Esikhawini.

1. To determine the structure of care and support committees in schools.
2. To understand how the committees render care and support in schools and what programmes have developed.
3. To ascertain committee members' perceptions of their functions and experiences.
4. To determine whether children are included in the planning and implementation of care and support programmes in schools.

1.3.2 Study research questions

1. How are care and support committees structured in schools?
2. How do the committees render care and support in schools and what programmes have been developed?
3. What are committee members' perceptions of their functions and experiences?
4. Are children included in the planning and implementation of care and support programmes in schools?

1.4 Theoretical framework of the study

1.4.1 Ecological Systems Theory

The Ecological Systems Theory is concerned with the interaction and interdependence of individuals with their surrounding systems and encourages social workers to take a holistic view by assessing how individuals affect and are affected by such physical, social, political, and cultural systems. The ecological systems theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, he divided the environment into five different levels, which include microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, chronosystem, and microsystems. Bronfenbrenner (1979) states that the microsystem is the most influential and has a closest relationship to the person. It is where a direct contact occurs to create a conducive environment.

In relation to this theoretical description, the care and support committees are schools' microsystems that have a direct interaction with the children who are intended for help, the functioning of these committees in interaction with other schools' micro systems is the focus of this study (Healy, 2005). This study attempts to describe ecosystems as the social environment that encompasses a network of relationships for individuals and groups within a particular social environment. Ecosystem's perspectives allow for understanding of human behavior in the social context. This understanding of human behavior guarantees the person's holistic development within an organized whole environment (Miley, O'Melia and Dubois, 1995).

The ecosystems perspectives see people and environment as existing in on-going transactions with each other and provides a way of understanding that the environment affects the person, and the person affects the environment. Firstly, based on this theoretical description the focus of this study is the functioning of care and support committees that has been studied at micro level. Secondly, the establishment of these committees are managed by schools and supported by circuits and district offices at mezzo level. Thirdly and lastly, the international policies and treaties regulate the DoE national policy formulation at macro level, and these have a greater impact on the implementation of schools' notion of care and support for OVCs in the global trend.

Ecosystem's perspective maintains that there are many factors that determine who we become and that humans are complex biological, psychological, social and cultural human beings. The human life situations are dependent on various factors and similarly dependent on various interacting levels that involve intra-personal, interpersonal, cultural, economic, political factors, local, national and global factors (Miley et al., 1995). Teachers are the agents of change within the cycle of providing care and support to the OVC in schools. Learners are beneficiaries of the schools' care and support services, but in some instances of inspiring child participation, some of the learners are encouraged to be part of the agents of change when teachers alternatively need their help in providing information about basic family background of the identified OVCs. In this perspective, chances are very high that children can be the best informants of vulnerabilities affecting their peers because they live in the same villages with them. In addition, the certainty of ensuring care and support roles within the schools is that teachers interact with the learners' every day on the core functionality of teaching and learning and during this daily interaction they can identify issues and problems that affect them. In this role teachers are enablers of the schools' social environment to address children's vulnerability.

The district and circuit offices have predominant roles in supporting and monitoring the functionality of schools including the service component of learner support. At the school level, the school management teams (SMTs) in collaboration with care and support committees have the responsibility of ensuring that the other schools' micro systems function appropriately to activate the caring environment. These micro systems include school-based policies such as the

schools' master plans or strategic plans. These plans should be comprehensive and entail the scheduled activities of learner care and support services, curricular plans and other educational avenues that are curriculum-related (Parag, 2009). School policies will model the culture such as teamwork and building a community of care as the intended policy activities that must be coordinated by the entire school teams hence this will further activate progressive interactions of micro systems with the schools at the mezzo level.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Research paradigm

The study has used a qualitative research paradigm as discussed by the (Terre Blanche, Durheim and Painter, 2006:272) describe this paradigm as “researching people’s feelings and experiences in human terms rather than through quantification and measurement.” This paradigm was relevant to the study because it allowed for the expression of committee members’ feelings, opinions, and experiences, and it enabled the researcher to explore the functioning of care and support committees using semi-structured interview schedules.

1.5.2 Research design

The study used exploratory research design which became relevant to the main aim, objectives and critical questions of the study which explored the functioning of care and support committees. Exploratory research design is most appropriate for persistent phenomena and may include studying the history of such phenomena in the manner that seek to explore how people are affected by such phenomena and what are their experiences pertinent to the problem at hand (Babbie and Mouton, 2015).

1.5.3 Selection

Purposeful sampling has been used to select three primary schools with care and support committees at Esikhawini. The targeting of primary schools was motivated by the fact that the department of basic education (DBE) initially piloted care and support projects in primary schools because younger children were seen as more susceptible to problems than older children.

1.5.3.1 Selection criteria for the schools

The sampling process involved scheduling meetings with a Department of Education (DoE) official at uThungulu district office. Making telephone contacts with principals of sampled schools to submit the DoE research approval letters to conduct the study and to discuss the logistics of data collection.

- ❖ The selection of three schools from the database of the district department of education (DoE).
- ❖ Schools to be selected will be primary schools with care and support committees that have regularly sent progress reports to the DoE.
- ❖ Primary schools with care and support committees who have received DoE conditional grants for children identified in need of care and support.

1.5.3.2 Selection criteria for the teacher participants

Purposive sampling has been used to select 3 to 4 teachers in each of the three schools and one member of the school management team. The following sampling criteria have been used:

- ❖ Teachers who were currently participating in care and support committees.
- ❖ Teachers who have participated in these committees in the last three years.

1.5.3.3 School Management Team Sampling

I selected one member of the school management team at each of the three schools. This included the Head of Department (HoD) at school A, the Deputy Principal at school B, and the HoD at school C.

1.6 Data collection methods

Two methods of data collection were used in this study: one focus group interview with 3 to 4 participants in each of the three schools and semi-structured interviews with one member of the management team from each selected school. This amounted to three focus groups and three individual interviews. To facilitate the free flow of communication, isiZulu was used as the medium of communication-since all the participants were isiZulu language first speakers. This also limited any misinterpretations during the focus group interviews. A digital audio recorder was used to capture the contents of both the focus group discussions and individual interviews.

1.6.1 Focus group interviews

In each of the three selected schools, a focus group was held with 3-4 teachers who were or had previously served on care and support committees in the school. The advantage of a focus group discussion is the opportunity it will provide for a better understanding of how teachers collectively respond to the issue being explored (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont, 2002). It is anticipated that a focus group will work well because the teachers know each other well and have worked as a team on care and support committees.

1.6.2 Semi-structured interviews

At each of the schools, a semi-structured interview was conducted with one member of the school management team. The purpose of interviewing a member of the management staff was to obtain information on funding, policy directives, and collaboration with the district, provincial, and national DoE. These semi-structured interviews allowed participants to freely express themselves as they were not restricted in answering particular questions but the predetermined questions guided the interviews and getting of qualitative data.

1.7 Data analysis

The study used thematic data analysis because it provides a thick description of characteristics, processes, transactions, and context that constitute the phenomenon being studied (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). After the data has been translated into English, the following steps are followed: There are familiarization and immersion with data, inducing themes, coding,

elaboration, and interpretation and checking. The data analysis involves the induction of themes, meaning that once the data has been collected and familiarized, it will be carefully categorized into themes, and these themes will be analyzed based on the method of thematic content analysis.

1.8 Trustworthiness

The quality, authenticity, and sincerity of qualitative research findings are referred to as trustworthiness. It refers to the level of trust or confidence that readers have in the outcomes. Lincoln and Guba (2012) discuss four dimensions of trustworthiness pertinent to a qualitative study. These are credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 2012).

1.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to internal validity of the study and it seeks to ensure that the study enquires about what is intended (Shenton, 2004). This study ensured credibility as argued by (Lincoln and Guba 2002, cited in Shenton, 2004). In this study credibility has been ensured by application of the five methods that include, The adoption of research methods well established, the use of triangulation, transferability, dependability and conformability. A brief description of these methods is presented in subsequent paragraphs and a full description is presented in chapter three of this study.

1.8.2 The adoption of research method well established

This proposition refers to choosing a correct research method and procedures. This proposition has been ensured in the selection of a qualitative method and its coherent procedures. This qualitative method and its procedures were used in other studies on the functioning of care and support in schools (Williams, 2012).

1.8.3 The use of triangulation

Triangulation refers to the use of a mixed method of data collection, particularly the focus groups interviews and individual interviews (Shenton, 2004). This study used both individual

interviews to solicit data from the school management teams and the focus group interviews to solicit data from the teachers who are members of care and support committees. This triangulation enabled the researcher to gather more balanced data that ensured trustworthiness of the study. The selecting of teachers as the single source has been avoided because it would limit the researcher in exploring the rigid data that entail school management aspects as teachers had no prerogative to answer questions related to management issues and finance.

1.8.4 Transferability

This dimension refers to the external validity of data and stipulates a pattern that allows the research findings to be applicable to other similar situations (Shenton, 2004). In allowing transferability of this study a description of methodological procedures was illustrated based on suggestions made in Shenton (2004).

1.8.5 Dependability

Dependability refers to the reliability of the research findings, meaning that if the research study can be repeated using the same context, same participants, same methods, and procedures may yield similar results (Shenton, 2004). Dependability in this study has been ensured using the two methods of data collection that have assisted in obtaining and retaining a detailed result. This in-depth result ensured that the study used the correct research methods, and the reader developed a precise knowledge of these research methods and their effectiveness. Guba and Lincoln (2002) cited in Shenton (2004) suggest three aspects of the research on which dependability can be based. These are, firstly, the research design and its implementation procedures which described what was planned and executed on a strategic level. Secondly, the operational detail of data gathering addresses the intricacies of what transpired in the research field. Lastly, the reflective appraisal of the study evaluates the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken.

1.8.6 Conformability

Conformability refers to the qualitative investigator's comparable objectivity. It deals with choosing the correct steps in ensuring that the study's findings are the results of the participants' experiences and ideas gathered during data collection (Shenton, 2004). Conformability also makes use of triangulation which ensures that the study does not base its findings from one source of data. In line to this triangulation, this study used both individual interviews and focus group data collection methods. In addition, the key criterion for conformability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions by explaining the reason for favoring one approach when others could have been taken (Shenton, 2004). In line to this aspect, this study has provided a tick description of the selected methodological approach. The use of audit trail has also ensured conformability of this study, audit trail will be represented in data-oriented diagrams that have illustrated how data was processed leading to research recommendations.

1.9 Definition of key concepts

1.9.1 Child

Children's Act No 38, 2005 defines a child as a person from birth until the age of 18. Section 174 of this act substantiates this definition till the age of 21 provided the child is still a school learner. This provision is made to safeguard the continuity and fulfillment of the child's rights such as a foster care grant if the child has been identified in need of care and protection.

1.9.2 Orphan

Children's Act No 38, 2005 defines an orphan as a child who has no surviving parents caring for him or her.

1.9.3 Vulnerability

Vulnerability is a condition that decreases coping abilities on the individual or groups because of escalating personal or social problems (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwama, 2009).

1.9.4 Learning barriers

Learning barriers are any challenges that stand in a way of a child being able to learn effectively through his or her education. These learning barriers are both intrinsic meaning that they are personally inherent, and they are extrinsic meaning that they originate from social problems (Donald et al., 2009).

1.9.5 Inclusive education

The creation of long-term collaborative relationships among many participants within an inclusive education system appears to be an ongoing difficulty in South Africa as argued by (Donald et al., 2009) They define inclusive education as development intending towards developing an inclusive community and education systems. It is based on a value system that invites and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, cultural background and level of education achievement or disability. Hoardley (2007) further defines this inclusive education as the expression of the struggle to achieve universal human rights.

1.9.6 Care and support committees

These are schools' structures formed by educators to implement and facilitate learner support projects. There are different types of these committees in schools. They involve Institutional Learner Support Team (ILST), Health Advisory Committee (HAC) and School-Based Support Team (SBST) (White Paper 6, 2001).

1.10 Outline of the dissertation

Chapter One introduces the study by providing the important aspects that introduce the entire study. These aspects include the background of the study, an overview of the research methodology used, and a theoretical framework applicable to the nature of the study.

Chapter Two is dedicated to a review of the related literature on international treaties, DoE national policies, and the South African context of learning barriers.

Chapter Three of the study delves into the research methodology used and how these approaches were effective in data collection.

Chapter Four dives into theme interpretation, logical grouping of themes, and qualitative descriptive analysis of themes.

Chapter Five of the study provides the presentation and discussion of findings based on the thematic analysis, conclusion, challenges, and recommendation.

1.11 Conclusion

Children's vulnerability may increase learning barriers and ultimately hamper teaching and learning. The functioning of care and support committees therefore seems to be the important element in transforming schools as nodes of care and support to OVCs. Schools are the best alternative for children's safety nets when their families experience difficult situations. In this ideal, schools must be accessible to all children. The accessibility of schools will culminate additional vulnerability that could be incurred when children are subjected to walking long distances to schools or if they are in schools with poor infrastructures.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant literature to situate the study in the context of ongoing discourse. The first part deals with theoretical considerations, that is, the discourses, issues, and debates that surround the study, while the second part deals with practical considerations in the review of actual empirical studies that have been done and the findings and conclusions that have been reached. This chapter also highlights the legislative and theoretical framework that underpinned this study, reveals the progress that has been made so far, and identifies gaps that scholars have neglected that warranted this study.

2.2 Theoretical considerations

2.2.1 Ecosystems Theory

Ecosystems refer to the social environment that encompasses a network of relationships for individuals and groups within a particular social environment (Healy, 2005). Ecosystem's perspectives allow for understanding of human behavior in the social context. This understanding of human behavior guarantees the person's holistic development within an organized whole environment (Miley, O'Melia and Dubois, 1995). The ecosystems perspectives see people and environment as existing in on-going transactions with each other and provides a way of understanding that the environment affects the person, and the person affects the environment. Firstly, based on this theoretical description the focus of this study is the functioning of care and support committees to be studied at micro level. Secondly, the establishment of these committees are managed by schools and supported by circuits and district offices at mezzo level. Thirdly and lastly, the international policies and treaties regulate the DoE national policy formulation at macro level, and these have a greater impact on the implementation of international universal of schools' notion of care and support for OVCs in the global trend. Ecosystem's perspective maintains that there are many factors that determine who we become and that humans are complex biological, psychological, social and cultural humans.

beings. The human life situations are dependent on various factors and similarly dependent on various interacting levels that involve intra-personal, interpersonal, cultural, economic, political factors, local, national, and global factors (Miley et al., 1995).

Many research studies have shown that, programmes that take a holistic approach to address the challenges of care and support for OVCs are more likely to sustainable outcomes, however teachers in schools can feel overwhelmed by the challenges of designing holistic approaches due to realities on the ground of school's context pertinent to core functionality of the school (Naidoo, 2003, Ebberson and Eloff, 2006, Williams, 2010, Daniel, 2013 and Mbatha, 2015).

On the other hand, challenges regarding developing holistic approaches to OVC may be persistent if schools are not responding effectively on OVC issues as narrated by (Sanefeld and Perrin, 2014) "The child exists at the Centre of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Children's development is determined by the settings in which they spend time, as well as by interactions with the members of those settings. While children are most directly influenced by proximal systems, they will also be affected by seemingly more distal events and activities that take place in the outer circles of the model. For positive and sustainable developmental outcomes, the four layers of systems must be viewed and considered holistically when planning OVC interventions."

Microsystem

The microsystem refers to those people and the environment that directly interact with entities in the children's immediate environment and is called proximal process (Sanefeld and Perrin, 2014). In relation to children, including the OVCs the family is the closest, earliest and often the most double and influential microsystem. Parenting styles and parent's characteristics are considered as crucial components as a child's socialization. In circumstances of OVC, most of their microsystem are already hampered as they do not have parents or formal family setup. Schools' functioning as centers of care and support therefore substitute children's earliest microsystem.

Many social circumstances force the OVC to assume parental duties. This can adversely impact the development opportunities if statutory intervention regarding their care is delayed.

Mesosystem

Microsystems are a secondary level of a child's development, hence a microsystem does not exist in isolation and often interact with each other, for instance, when a parent interacts with a child's teacher, or when family members and peers maintain relations with a religious institution. This inter-relationship between two or more microsystems contributes in modeling the child's social wellbeing (Liverpool, Ete. Al, 2024)

A child experiencing violence or neglect in the family setting will often have difficulties in their school environment, demonstrating how experiences in one microsystem particularly the family are inherently connected with another like a family and a school. In this same example, the developmental impact of two-way communication and participation in decision-making by parents *and* teachers is correlated with receiving higher grades and with elementary students exhibiting greater initiative and independence after entering high school. Other relevant mesosystems in OVC settings may include interactions or community health care workers and primary caregivers, schools and the healthcare system, and religious groups and the family, among others (Sanefeld and Perrin, 2004)

Exosystems

Exosystem refers to the systems that are outside the child's interaction but have an influence on the child's developmental opportunities and life prospects (Sanefeld and Perrin, 2004). The example will be social norms encouraged by traditional leaders, government policies and local government systems.

The exosystem level describes linkages, conditions, or actions in which the child is not directly involved, but can still influence his or her development, including school boards, local governmental and non-governmental entities, a parent's employer, the mass media, the transportation system, and industry. Although, the exosystem demystifies that the children are affected by the structures where they have no direct interaction but through the principle of

child participation outlined in the (Children' act No 38, 2005). Children must participate in decisions concerning their development provided they have reached age appropriate. The South African

Government is encouraging various children's platforms such as the children's parliament, to take a girl child to work. where children's voices could be encouraged.

Macrosystem

While the macrosystem represents the larger cultural context in which microsystems, mesosystems, and Ecosystems are embedded. It becomes relevant to national and international policies that respond to the circumstances of OVC. It consists of the attitudes, ideologies, laws, norms, policies, and values of the particular system to promote sustainable livelihood. the development

(Sanefeld and Perrin, 2014: 4) state that "There are many components of the macrosystem that impact OVC, including the general socio-economic status and expectations, cultural beliefs about children and childrearing, racial dynamics, and economic policies. It also includes views about the nature of human beings at different points in the life span, about what children need to be taught, and about how adults should lead their lives. Because they both reflect and shape community values and practices, OVC- and HIV/AIDS-related government policies and programmes (for example, social protection schemes, housing policies, universal access to education and other educational policies, and government involvement in healthcare) also fall into the realm of the macrosystem."

OVC programmes that target other systems in areas where the macrosystem does not favor the intervention will likely encounter difficulty achieving programme goals. For instance, in areas where cultural beliefs promote early female marriage and childbearing, it is unlikely that parents and other caregivers will prioritise a girl's education (King and Hill, 1998, cited in Sanefeld and Perrin, 2014)

In response to all level of ecological systems theory, Teachers are the agents of change within the cycle of providing care and support to the OVC in schools. Learners are beneficiaries of the

schools' care and support services, but in some instances of facilitating child participation, some of the learners are encouraged to be part of the agents of change when teachers alternatively need their help in providing information about basic family background of the identified OVCs. In this perspective, chances are very high that children can be the best informants of vulnerabilities affecting their peers because they live in one village with them. In addition, the certainty of ensuring care and support roles within the schools is that teachers interact with the learners' every day on the core functionality of teaching and learning and during this daily interaction they can identify issues and problems that affect them. In this role teachers are enablers of the schools' social environment to address children's vulnerability. The district and circuit offices have predominant roles in supporting and monitoring the functionality of schools including the service component of learner support.

At the school level, the school management team (SMT) in collaboration with care and support committees have the responsibility of ensuring that other schools' micro systems function appropriately to activate the caring environment. These micro systems include school-based policies such as the schools' master or strategic plans. These plans should be comprehensive and entail the scheduled activities of learner care and support services, curricular plans and other educational avenues that are curriculum-related (Parag, 2009). School policies will model the culture such as teamwork and building a community of care as the intended policy activities that must be coordinated by the entire school teams hence this will further activate progressive interactions of micro systems with the schools at the mezzo level.

It can be argued in some context that schools' teachers are divided by organizational functions meaning that the teachers tasked with care and support often do not get cooperation from their colleagues. In most instances the caring functionality is shifted to them as their sole responsibility, yet it is a huge responsibility needing the entire school. This division of the schools' organizational functions leads to a hostile environment, overburdening of the frontline teachers and power imbalances manifesting from the resistance of other teachers to accept the added responsibility of childcare and support (Parag, 2009). In addition, the overcrowding in classrooms demand intensive teaching and learning as a core DoE functionality and this learner

overcrowding is another systemic problem preventing the schools' caring functionality (Giese, Meintjies and Monson, 2005), narrated in their study

“HIV and AIDS is one of the greatest threats to the fulfillment of child's rights in South Africa. The pandemic aggravates the ongoing and widespread effects of poverty which has already undermined child well-being. The impact in areas heavily affected by HIV and AIDS is severely straining communities' economic and social safety nets”.

In South African schools, the OVC often experience problems of poor academic performance, isolation and withdrawal from other children, poor self-esteem and school dropouts frequently followed by the assumption of early adult roles in child-headed households (Rudolf, 2009).

The epidemic of HIV and AIDS as well as poverty has shifted the education system from the traditional core function of teaching and learning towards an inclusive education approach that directs the educators' role to care for OVC as articulated in White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001). The care and support committees are therefore the structures that facilitate this inclusive education model in schools. This facilitation is also in line with HIV/AIDS policies that have similar directives of implementing the caring functionality within the school system.

The number of OVC is rapidly growing in South Africa due to poverty, HIV, and AIDS. In mid-2012, the total population of South Africa amounted to 52 million and 18.6 million constituted children under the age of 18 (Meintjies, Hall and Sambu, 2014). Poverty has caused vulnerability to 15% of these children in South Africa. The international poverty line used to track the United Nations' millennium development goals in 2012 reported that South Africa is estimated to have 2.8 children living below poverty line and this figure is based on income poverty that frequently place children at risk of destitute (Meintjies et al., 2014). In 2012, there were approximately 3.37 million orphans in South Africa and 85 000 of these orphans' constituted children from 61 000 child-headed households where children are exposed to many forms of risk factors (Meintjies et al., 2015). Children's vulnerability therefore extends the role of schools to include caring functionality in response to the goals of inclusive education as stipulated in White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) and (Giese et al., 2005).

2.2.2 Care and support committees in schools

The literature on schools as nodes of care and support reveals that children in many schools have been found to be highly affected by poverty, HIV and AIDS (Parag, 2009). Schools are therefore encouraged by the DoE to function as nodes of care and support and in these activities, they assume the roles of children's safety nets that have fallen (Williams, 2010). Children may be exposed to all forms of abuse after their safety nets have failed which in turn increases their vulnerability. The burden of care and support falls on schools once the children's safety nets have failed (Chikoko and Khanare, 2006; Hoadley, 2007; Rudolf, 2009; Tsheko, 2011).

Since children spend a considerable time in schools, the schools are therefore best positioned to identify and provide support to orphaned and vulnerable children (Giese et al., 2005). In compliance with DoE HIV/AIDS policies and the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education (DoE, 2001) care and support committees are assigned specific duties that promote schools as nodes of care and support to OVC. These duties include assisting in maintaining children's well-being while pursuing their academic studies, identifying the learning barriers causing vulnerability and, to advocate for children's rights.

In addition, schools are required to refer vulnerable children for social work services (Visser, Zungu and Magoro, 2010). In enabling the caring environment of schools, Naidoo (2010) highlights three important aspects essential for extending the teachers' roles towards the care and support functionality. Firstly, the broadening of policies aimed at redefining the role of classroom educators in respect of OVC care and support. In this aspect the teachers' performance of the care and support functionality need to be directed by a well-defined policy and this will assist teachers to know their specific roles on what is expected on co-coordinating learner care and support. Secondly, the teacher-training within the context of OVC care and support. In this aspect, many of the DoE trainings on OVC care and support have mostly focused on staff development training of life orientation teachers as articulated in HIV and AIDS policies (Hoadley, 2007),

On the other hand, Media in Education Trust (MIET, 2021), Africa's regional non governmental organization (NGO) operating within the Southern Africa African Development Community

(SADEC) have implemented various ground-breaking care and support projects in South African schools and in the entire SADEC. (MIET, 2021) present the categories of OVCs based on their field research report. These categories of OVCs include children living in poverty, children in rural areas, migrant and refugee children, Orphan, children with special education needs, children with gender differences, children exposed to substance abuse and at risk of other risky behaviors, children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, teen parents, children in conflict with the law and children who enter school later than the prescribed age.

According to MIET (2021) schools' notion of care and support need policy review and an emphasis to be made on the multifaceted endeavor from various stakeholders and the ongoing support for educators who deal with these children's issues every day. In my opinion the need for the teacher-training in this care and support functionality is not only subject related, but it is based on social factors of OVC that requires competent teachers. Lastly, curriculum reorientation is another important aspect that will enable educators to integrate their subjects in identifying the needs of the OVC as articulated in policies discussed in the next section of this dissertation.

2.3 The existing policies

2.3.1 UNESCO education policy frameworks for orphans and vulnerable children, 2006

The UNESCO policy reviewed in this study outlines strategic performance areas which are relevant to answering the research objective, questions, and the problem. The UNESCO policy entails the educational component of HIV and AIDS; Care and support of OVC that aim to strengthen the capacity of the education sector in fulfillment of schools' caring functionality. This policy contributes to skills development for education managers, school Inspectors, school principals and teachers to help them deal with care and support issues in their schools (UNESCO, 2006). Through this policy UNESCO has encouraged all affiliated UN member states to develop schools as nodes of care and support to benefit the OVC. In these efforts of encouraging schools, UNESCO made a pivotal role in facilitating the international funding partnerships to assist in provision of conditional grants to schools that are successful in functioning as nodes of care and support (UNESCO, 2006).

The UNESCO policy further, describes and defines concepts of orphans and vulnerability in the context of HIV and AIDS which allows the conceptualization of care and support functionality within the context of HIV and AIDS. In relation to schools' care and support functionality, schools will be able to describe the plight of children's vulnerability within the context of HIV and AIDS and teachers will develop sensitivity in issues pertinent to HIV and AIDS. It further, identifies the policy-level challenges that the education sector must face, particularly in African countries, that have higher implications for orphans and other vulnerable children. This policy objective increases policy awareness, teachers may be conversant with DoE policies pertinent to care and support functionality and they may be in a better position to identify policy gaps that impact negatively on schools' care and support functionality. The policy recognizes that education sector responses to OVC needs should not be confined to classrooms but should include psychological interventions and socio-economic contexts to fully address their educational needs.

In relation to this study, this objective confirms that teachers have the expanded role that is beyond teaching and learning. These expanded roles of teachers are part of inclusive education in alleviating children's vulnerability. Much as the UNESCO policy identifies and lists interventions that contribute to the care and support of OVC, the policy does not address and provide policy option in providing the care and support services that the committees may need at local levels in dealing with child protection organizations and other organization that encourage schools to function as nodes of care and support. In addition, the UNESCO proposed policy interventions and recommendations for action to address the challenges, improve the situations for OVC and to realize rights to education cannot work in the context of the selected schools in Esikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal because the care and support committees need to learn how to carryout advocacy work on behalf of OVCs.

2.3.2 International treaties for children's rights, care and support

Kaime (2009) states the international treaties on children's rights, care and protection are founded by the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). These treaties guarantee that all UN member states are accountable for policy development that implements projects

pertinent to child protection. Most UN and AU member states signed a five yearly treaty committing them to implement their countries' national programmes and policies aimed at children's rights. The two treaties pioneered by the UN and AU are the international charters that provide regulatory articles of children's rights, care, and protection. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) established on 24 November 1989 for the United Nations member states to comprehensively deliver child protection services (Kaime, 2009). Article 17 of the UNCRC regulates the rights to information as an important aspect to children's social well-being.

Information from all types of media, books, computers, and other sources. This UNCRC article also stipulates adults' role in assessing that the information is age-appropriate and that the children are not engaged in information which is harmful and helps children to understand the information needed. This article is in line with the educators' norms and standard stipulating teachers' roles as learning mediator, mentor, and assessor of the learning material. In relation to care and support functionality, the teacher is a life coach and has a responsibility to teach learners about HIV and AIDS and help them to make responsible life choices (DoE, 2002). Article 26 further, regulates rights to social security, the care of OVCs is a states' responsibility on conditions of poverty and meeting the basic needs.

In compliance with this article, the South African government provides child support grants to children from birth till the age of eighteen and foster care grants to orphans and vulnerable children. In addition, section 176 of the Children's Acts No 38 of 2005 in South Africa allows the extension of children's alternative care placement and payment of the children's grant till the age of 21 if the child is still in school. Article 27 of the UNCRC, regulates children's rights to food, clothing, and a safe place to live and that their basic needs are satisfied. Children should not be disadvantaged from enjoying their childhood and development. In compliance with this UNCRC article, schools in South Africa are progressively becoming the centers of care and support to assist the children in need of care and protection. Through this UNCRC article, schools are encouraged to function as centers of care and support. They provide daily meals to children and those that are in continuous difficult circumstances are referred to social workers.

2.3.3 African Union Charter on the rights and welfare of the child

The African Union Children's Charter (AUCRC) was developed in 1990 by the previously known, Organization of African Union now known as the African Union (AU). The Charter was adopted by 39 African states out of 54-member states of the AU (Kaime, 2009). The participating member states have lately increased and have reached the proportion of 48. This charter was adopted during the same year of the AU entering into force, but it was entered into force in 1999. Although the UNCRC promoted universal child protection, the African member states felt that there should be an increase in the legislative framework to protect children for African states, so this led to the formation of the African children's charter (Kaime, 2009).

This Charter provides articles regulating the children's rights, care, and protection. The rights to no discrimination (Article 3), freedom of expression (Article 7), rights to religion (Article 9), rights to privacy (Article 10) and rights to education (Article 11) (Kaime, 2009). The best interest of the child is stated as the primary consideration in all matters concerning the child (Article 4 [1]). The child's view is to be heard and considered in all matters of judicial and administrative proceedings. The functioning of care and support committees fundamentally promotes children's rights at schools' microsystems levels in line with the articulated articles of the AU Charter. It is because of the functioning of these schools' committees and the whole schools' functioning as nodes of care and support that the South African DoE can account internationally for OVC redress.

Article 17 and 19 of the AUCRC provide children's rights to parental care and protection. State parties are obliged to assist, if necessary, by ensuring that children that are orphans are placed in alternative care and those in child-headed households must benefit from community-based child care programs. Children must be provided with social relief services that may include nutrition, health, clothing, and housing. For instance, UNICEF in collaboration with the NGO's welfare sector in provision of the nutrition program known as feed the baby fund. This nutrition program benefited three million children in monthly supply of infant formula milk to alleviate children's malnutrition in South African rural provinces from 2001 till 2006 (UNICEF, 2006). This project was a significant progress in redress of children's vulnerability. Most schools functioning

as centers of care and support also benefited from this project to boost their nutrition program. Article 15 of the AUCRC articulate that the rights of the child is to be protected from all forms of torture, in human or degrading treatment, either of physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or any other maltreatment including sexual abuse, while in parental care, legal guardian or school authority or in any other legal alternative care where the child reside.

In the South African education policy context, teachers have a policy mandate to formally report all forms of suspicious signs of abuse and deliberate neglect of children which they have observed. This mandatory reporting is provided in section 110 of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (DSD, 2005). Articles 22 and 27 of the AUCRC stipulate protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. The member states of the African Union are also mandated to take appropriate measures to protect children from the use of psychotropic substances. The South African education school system is functioning incompliant to these articles in provision of life skills education for life orientation subject and other care and support programs that sensitize children to refrain from substance abuse and all forms of sexual exploitations (DoE, 2002).

2.3.4 The policy context in South Africa

The South African Education system is well positioned in policies regulating schools' care and support functionality. The national department of basic education is responsible for policy planning, research, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure that schools comprehensively respond to the needs of OVC. This argument is witnessed in Hoadley (2007:136)

“In the context of HIV/AIDS, a vast number of policies promoting and supporting an expanded role for schools, particularly in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the need for greater care and support for vulnerable children, have emerged over the past six years”.

In relation to this ideal, schools have the expanded roles that allow them to perform a caring functionality where teachers are enabled to focus on the pandemic of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), poverty, and other learning barriers. The performance of these

caring roles significantly provides a nurturing environment within the national education policy framework in South Africa.

2.3.5 The National Policy on HIV and AIDS 1999

The National Policy HIV and AIDS on education and training institutions of 1999 addresses all matters pertinent to HIV and AIDS of the learners, care, and support of orphans and vulnerable children within the schools' systems. It directs schools so that they may further develop their own policies on HIV and AIDS, care and support aligned to this policy. In relation to care and support, this policy describes psychosocial support that includes learner counseling and peer education. In addition, this policy promotes learner participation in taking care of their peers who are orphans and vulnerable. The DoE (1999) policy articulates HIV and AIDS universal precautions to ensure that schools have the first aid kits with adequate medical kit for children. The incidents demonstrate that the conditions under which teachers and students work and live in the implementation of the National Policy on HIV and AIDS 1999 are relevant to protecting teachers and learners while in school. The DBE expects both teachers and learners under the policy to be protected and excel in their work on the side of teachers and learners to move to the next levels of their education journeys.

HIV and AIDS education has been integrated in teaching and learning. The life orientation subject covers the HIV and AIDS education, and it raises awareness and sensitivity on fundamental issues of HIV and AIDS pertinent to children is also the responsibility of all schools, and it entails development of youth leadership and peer education life skills. Schools' life coaching activities enable learners to make well-informed decisions pertinent to their growth and development. Love Life is a national NGO with a school-based education programme that targets children and youths for life coaching. According to Van Deventer (2009), the life orientation subject in schools contributes to life coaching as it prepares young people about life issues and challenges.

Although some of the aspects of this subject such as sexuality education have been criticized by religious leaders in the National Council of Churches particularly the HIV and AIDS universal precautions that educate about condom use (Mnyiphika, 2014). Despite this criticism, the

department of education and the civil society maintained that the content of life orientation and youth sexuality education is necessary to prevent the future HIV infections and the increase of children's vulnerability. Ongoing Learner support: The care and support of learners within the schools is an ongoing effort and ensure that children are assisted to reach their potential in life. Teachers are front line observers and agents of change in cases of children needing care and support. The ongoing learner support will be ensured if schools' care and support systems are functional to transform the entire school as a center of care and support (Naidoo, 2010).

2.3.6 The National Education Act No 27 of 1996

The National Education Act No 27 of 1996 stipulates norms and standards for educators. These norms and standards outline important teachers' roles that have a link to care and support functionality. The role of community citizenship and pastoral care specify teachers' performance to the caring functionality and encourage schools to function as nodes of care and support. In addition, the important dimension of this role is HIV and AIDS education as well as the care and support of OVC within the schools. It is therefore evident that teachers have a policy mandate that encourages them to perform care and support in schools as part of their professional responsibilities aimed at redressing the learning barriers.

2.4 National Curriculum Statement (NCS), Revised National Curriculum statement grade R -12 (RNCS) and Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS)

Although schools are encouraged to function as nodes of care and support, their core functionality is teaching and learning. The DoE has made significant progress regarding policy formulation of this role in NCS, RNCS and CAPS that are pertinent to curriculum development. These policies commonly aimed to expedite the standardized teacher-performance on teaching, learning and management. The CAPS of 2005 states that it is not a new curriculum policy, but an amendment to the NCS for grades R-12 (2002) and the RNCS (2005). The amendment was made to improve teachers' performance in addressing both the learners' academic needs and the redress of learning bearers that need additional roles of care and support.

The principles linked to care and support as provided in CAPS are human rights that include a healthy environment, social justice, and inclusivity. These principles promote inclusive

education which in turn mobilizes schools to function as nodes of care and support. CAPS and NCS in all learning areas and grades have brought a paradigm shift from the traditional method of education which only focused on teaching and learning. This paradigm shift is fundamental for the integration of learning that promotes inclusive education, and this signifies efforts of enabling all teachers to perform the learner care and support functionality. However, the role of care and support is a huge task that requires the entire school's systems and the community support from other systems outside schools, so the caring and support functionality therefore needs a well-structured committee in schools.

2.4.1 Education White Paper 6, inclusive education, and training system DoE 2001

This policy addresses issues of educational imbalances created by the apartheid regimes. It aims to transform schools towards inclusive education that progressively cater for the needs of children living with disabilities, children with special educational needs and children with vulnerabilities within the context of HIV and AIDS, poverty, and poor family background. The schools' care and support functionality are central to this policy. The ministry of education has a comprehensive plan to strengthen education support services by reducing all forms of barriers to learning (DoE, 2001).

According to DoE (2001), the ministry will, on an on-going basis, analyze the effects of HIV and AIDS as well as the other infectious diseases hindering the education system, and develop appropriate and timely programs. The programmes will include special measures such as strengthening information systems, establishing a system to identify orphans, coordinate care and support programmes for such learners, put in place referral procedures for educators and develop teaching guidelines on how to support orphans and other children in distress. In this regard, the ministry will work closely with the provincial department of education, department of health, department of social development and the public administration. It is therefore evident that this policy encourages schools' systems to plan, network and advocate on behalf of the OVC. In these care and support roles teachers use their leadership initiatives in implementing the learner-support projects which in turn optimize the entire school to function as a site of care and support.

2.4.2 Children's Act No 38 of 2005

This Act regulates statutory roles of social workers in protecting children and in upholding their best interest. The DoE recognizes this legislation in the component of school social work services. This component's key function is the management of child abuse and other vulnerabilities placing children at risk in schools. School Social Workers facilitate the process of learner support within the schools and mobilizing protocols in managing issues of child abuse and other forms of children's vulnerability. The Children's Act legislation does not entirely regulate the teachers' performance of care and support, but Section 110 of this legislation stipulates the reporting procedure of child abuse cases and teachers are implicated in this procedure.

2.4.3 The National School Health Policy and implementation guideline

The National School Health Policy and implementation policy guideline is in line with section 28(1)(c) of the South African constitution that regulates children's rights to basic nutrition and basic health care services (DoH, 2002). It guarantees that schools have the nutrition program of daily feeding schemes to address poverty as the most vulnerable to children. In addition, this policy stipulates the initiative of a school-based support team (SBST) and Institutional learner support teams which are part of schools' caring functionality as stated in (Hoadley, 2010). Through these policy directives the national school nutrition program reached 5.2 million children in 16 000 schools in 2002 (DoE 2002), hence this move alleviated poverty to most children and this figure has grown dramatically during the project's scale up over the years and in 2013, there are 8.6 million reached in schools' nutrition program (Hall, Meintjies and Sambu, 2014).

2.4.4 The National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (DSD, 2001)

This policy was formulated to streamline the core activities of child protection with national development priorities. Its importance is to provide protocols for child protection and learner caring functionality within the schools and none-welfare structures offering care and support to children. In addition, this policy is a response to the UN millennium goal for child protection which South Africa is signatory to. It is therefore within this policy framework that schools are

recognized as nodes of care and support. Hence, schools have become the important partners in integrated child protection services because of the added teachers' responsibility in performance of care and support to learners (Pinnock, 2012). With this teachers' responsibility for care and support, it is therefore evident that schools have the best comparative advantage, and they are positioned as better community structures when it comes to the caring functions (Giese et al., 2005). Schools are well positioned to perform the caring and support functionality because of the available social capital encompassed within the school systems meaning that schools have the structure of professional and support personnel that are competent to tackle children's problems holistically.

Although the policy directives and previous research findings exist in the domain of learner care and support functionality, there are still persistent challenges in coordinating this functionality. Naidoo (2010) states several challenges pertinent to teachers' functional role of care and support, these include learner overcrowding in classrooms that demand intensive teaching and learning as a core DoE functionality, lack of community support in advocating for children's rights and protection and the inadequate schools' resources to cater for the needs of the OVC particularly in schools situated in rural areas. The care and support committees are therefore the important structures to bring change to these problems within the schools.

2.4.5 The Tirisano Policy Plan of Action

In integrating the caring functionality in schools, the department of education realized that the problem of OVC is huge and needs many role players from the society. The department of education then formulated the Tirasano Plan of Action (DoE 2003-2005) that allows schools to network with other relevant role players in eradication of barriers that cause vulnerability to children in schools. This plan of action further allowed schools to be the indispensable centers of wider community's educational, social, and cultural interest where other sectors can rally their development initiatives to benefit the OVC and the larger community.

2.5 The functioning of care and support committees in schools

Williams (2010) states that the caring functionality in schools started because children's safety nets have failed so schools have become the important social structures providing the caring

functionality. In fulfilling this caring role within the developmental welfare context, Patel (2005) describes three welfare developmental models pertinent to the care and support notion. These are residual models, institutional models, and social developmental models. The residual model refers to the universal provision of the welfare needs to the vulnerable citizens. This welfare model regulates the provision of welfare needs when people experience the fall of their safety nets that meet their basic needs. These safety nets are capitalist market economy and family systems. When these two systems break down and fail to meet the individual's needs, the state welfare institutions or charity organizations or other formal structures like schools have a responsibility to intervene as a third mechanism in betterment of the individual's life. In this regard schools assume the caring functionality because the children's safety nets have failed hence schools become the immediate formal structures assisting in enhancement of children's situation (Parag, 2009).

The second mechanism in ensuring schools' care and support functionality is the institutional model. This welfare model ensures the provision of welfare needs to people who are unable to provide for themselves due to circumstances beyond their control. This study has a link to this welfare model because it explores how schools' care and support committees' function in ensuring the social well-being of children when they face difficult circumstances. The third mechanism is the social development model, this model has a link to the functioning of the entire schools as nodes of care and support. Patel (2005) demystifies this model as social investments in social programmes. This model aims to enhance the provision of people's welfare and promotion of their participation in productive economic development. Anderson (2001) also reflects this model in describing social capital which refers to the collection of skills and people's potential and these are regarded as social investment in social development. The care and support committees are schools' micro systems that are similarly regarded as social capital because of educators' potential, skills and talents that could be utilized to address learners' vulnerability.

The White Paper on Social Welfare (2007) is the influential policy that introduced the social development model in South Africa. Its national goals introduced a paradigm shift from the traditional method of social welfare services towards a developmental approach. Section eight

of this policy describes social enhancement with aims to implement the national development goals to recognize the role of the civil societies in bringing the needed development. In relation to this study, schools are social structures that have a pivotal role in addressing the learners' vulnerability. The child protection organizations recognize schools as important role players in networking to address children's vulnerability. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwama (2009) point out that the barriers in education have three basic origins that include contextual disadvantages, social problems, disabilities, and difficulties in learning. These categories of learning barriers are either intrinsic meaning that they prevail in form of problems affecting the personal well-being of children or extrinsic meaning that the prevalence of social problems like poverty, HIV and AIDS may cause serious vulnerability to children.

The contextual disadvantages are the result of commonly extrinsic factors that are relating to the socio-economic and social environment of society. Donald et al. (2009:23) further point out that the conditions of poverty are a primary cause of many learning barriers; hence a disadvantaged educational environment can cause poor teaching, inadequate resources, or inappropriate educational policies. The disabilities and learning difficulties are detrimental in the manner that most children have learning difficulties because of both extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Although most children are exposed to extrinsic conditions that contribute to the disadvantaged educational environment, there are also children that are exposed to intrinsic conditions of vulnerability. Disabilities and learning difficulties are mostly intrinsic, meaning that children have "special educational needs" because of the conditions that are inherent to their personal aspect that include the physical, emotional, cognitive and psychological aspects (Donald et al., 2009).

2.6 Poverty in children

Poverty has a greater influence on children's vulnerability, it has caused a big proportion of children living in income poverty and this has compromised their rights to nutrition, education and health care as argued by (Christine, 2011 and Hall, 2014). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 27 stipulates that "Every child has a right to a standard of living adequate for his or her development and obliges the state in "case of need" to provide material assistance

“and article 26 guarantees the child’s right to benefit from social security” (Kaime, 2009: 58). These two articles are the international mandate to all member states that are signatory to the UN children’s charter. Nannan, Hall and Sambu (2014) argue that, despite the fact that the government in South Africa has introduced a number of programmes to alleviate income poverty of children these include, DSD child support grant, DSD care dependency grants and foster care grants, but the proportion of poverty is still increasing because these grants are the main family income supporting the entire family members. Poverty has become a prominent learning bearer to most children and leading to school dropouts because most children become its victim.

The apartheid era in South Africa positioned most Black African populations to severe situations of structural poverty and social exclusions which left them with a long-term negative effect of inequality on aspects of education, health, and economic attainment (Christine, 2011). The South African Human Rights Commission (2011:66) pointed out that “The legacy of weak education stands as a clear poverty trap mechanism and the quality gap and educational resources between former white schools and black schools still remain”. Most Black schools are still rated at the bottom of poverty quintiles, which positions most schools in contextual disadvantages while former white schools are in the top poverty quintile in terms of DoE schools’ poverty scales.

These contextual disadvantages also exacerbate difficult access to schools as many children are subjected to walking long distances to schools (Naidoo, 2010). Children often come to schools in desperate conditions and mostly needing care and support services. They arrive in schools, very tired, hungry and lacking motivation to learn. In some worse situations most children in rural areas walk bare-footed and do not have proper uniforms dignifying them as learners so these result in poor self- esteem and poor academic performance. One of the government integrated development plans in addressing children’s vulnerability is the initiative of non-motorized transport (NMT) pioneered by the Department of Transport (DoT, 2014). According to DoE (2014) there are about 17, 5 million children attending schools and half of this number are children subjected to long walking to access schools. The DoT launched a national bicycle project to alleviate this problem (Shova Kalula-Cycling is Easy) in 2001. In 2014, there were 395

000 bicycles distributed to qualifying schools, but this project has its own challenges based on gender discrepancies. Most beneficiaries of the project are boys, but most vulnerable children are girls that become victims of rape and abduction during the long distances to schools, so this project does not offer relief to girls that are exposed to attacks on their long distances to schools.

The Eastern Cape has much needed amenities than other provinces in South Africa. Nkanywa (2014) has extensively described the state of Eastern Cape Schools to have a need for infrastructural development to benefit the masses of children. There are about 99.9% of Eastern Cape schools situated in the former Transkei region which in terms of DoE institutional planning and demarcations falls under cluster A and B. These schools have a very poor infrastructure or no infrastructure at all where children are overcrowded in informal settlements of mud schools. In addition, most of these learners have a difficult family background (Nkanywa, 2014). These conditions have optimized school dropouts and in turn increased children's vulnerability when they are left unattended at homes during the day.

2.7 The roles of social workers

Although schools are encouraged to function as centers of care and support to assist orphans and vulnerable children, teachers have no legal obligation to perform the caring functions needing statutory intervention. In fact, the notion of schools' care and support promote the integrated approach of child protection organizations and other relevant partners to support schools' notion of care and support to OVC. South Africa's Department of Education has prioritized the psychosocial support of children within the service component of school social work. All DoE district offices employ a social worker to oversee the delivery of psychosocial support services to learners. These social workers' roles have been further strengthened by the appointment of school counselors based at circuit offices.

Ntombela (2004) states that school social work is a specialist branch of general social work that entails specific knowledge of psychosocial support where a social worker uses professional skills to address learners' emotional and family problems. The roles of school social workers are positioned at the interface of enabling coping patterns between the pupil, parents, school

system to enhance the entire school environment. This ideal role of social workers is also substantiated by (Kemp, 2013) where school social work is regarded as a field within social work that aims to provide social service to learners, parents and the school where there are psychosocial barriers within the context of the learning environment. Learners are provided with opportunities that will develop them to their full potential. The school social worker significantly contributes to the development of a healthy, safe, and caring environment such an environment is achieved by advancing the understanding of the emotional and social development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences on learner success along with the implementation of effective intervention strategies. The role of social workers has the significant link to care and support committees because of cases referred to address the plight of OVCs.

2.8 Social workers' specific functional roles in schools

The prominent role of social workers in schools is based on psychosocial support of learners and developmental social work to strengthen schools' systems to effectively function as centers of care and support. Nkosi (2010) states that the role of a social worker in the schools is multifaceted. It entails assessment and consultation with the teachers and the entire schools' systems to ensure enhancement of learners' situations. Social workers are also responsible for teacher training to increase performance and sensitivity in caring for the OVCs. I cite Mearns (2000) cited in (Nkosi, 2010:34) who outlines five functional job dimensions for school social workers. These include;

- Creating helping relationships with children and their families.
- Facilitating collaborative relationships between service providers in fields of child protection and the schools' systems.
- Leadership development for the school management team and other personnel.
- Strengthening communities to recognize schools as centers of care and support.
- Administration, professional tasks that include facilitating referral for statutory intervention when children need alternative care.

Reporting of OVC to designated social workers is an important aspect of teachers' care and support functionality and this is part of teachers' role of mandatory reporting as aforementioned. The mandatory reporting of child abuse and deliberate neglect is provided in a prescribed form 22 in terms of section 110 of the Children's Act. This form is completed by teachers and sent to child protection organizations or school social workers. Teachers can be held as accomplices of child abuse if they neglect their duty to report cases of child abuse (Williams, 2010). Some learners may need statutory intervention of social workers because of the nature of their problems requiring a prolonged engagement of intensive therapeutic help or a need for removal from a family environment to alternative care. In this regard, the roles of care and support committees seem to be the important schools' micro systems because of their core functionality which they initially perform as preliminary services leading to statutory intervention. The role of social workers in schools also offers relief to educators who are already overburdened in their core functionality of teaching.

Ntombela (2004: 10) states that "the child can benefit from a developmental perspective of social work services as this perspective would discourage dependency and promote parental involvement and other sections of the community that have vested interest in the school". Perumal (2010) agrees with this view and further states that children's vulnerability is embedded in major aspects of social and psychological factors and teachers are not professionally trained to address these problems because most of these problems are beyond the level of their pedagogic labor. Children's vulnerability may demand a prolonged engagement on a comprehensive continuum of care. Teachers are unable to intervene effectively at this level so a culture of care and support should therefore be created in relation to the central purpose of teaching and learning (Hoadley, 2008). In my view, successful reporting of OVC cases will lead to effective networking where government departments and NGOs collaborate to render the needed learner services. This networking can increase the efforts of enabling the whole schools' systems to embark on care and support initiatives. Although school social workers respond appropriately to the needs of vulnerable children, there is a service demarcation because a school social worker mostly functions as a consultant and has no legal obligation to perform statutory social work functions. The direct services of

statutory intervention often needed by schools remain the core functionality of designated social workers in child protection organizations. These service demarcations often cause delays in providing the helping process because of the high caseload experienced by the Department of Social Development.

2.9 Conclusion

The functioning of care and support committees is a significant effort that provides alternative safety nets to needy children. Learners get the opportunity to report their needs and concerns to teachers tasked with care and support functionality. These teachers are the immediate authorities. Schools progressively participate in child protection services, and they have an important role and responsibility to inform social workers about the children's needs.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools in Esikhwini, KwaZulu-Natal. This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in data collection and analysis. Specifically, it describes the research paradigm, approach and design of the study. The chapter also presents a description of data collection methods used in this study and how data was analyzed. Lastly, the chapter presents a brief account of the procedures followed to meet the requirements of ethical considerations.

3.2 Research paradigm

Terre Blanche and Durkheim (2006) describe the term paradigm as the research process with three major dimensions that include ontology, epistemology, and methodology. It is these major dimensions that position a research paradigm as an inclusive system of unified practice and thinking that characterizes the nature of inquiry in line with the three major dimensions that is an all-encompassing system. The term paradigm originated from the Greek word *paradieigma* meaning a pattern. Further, Terre Blanche and Durkheim (2006) describe the scientific community that provided a convenient model exploring problems and recommending solutions. They define a paradigm as an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools. For example, Terre Blanche and Durkheim (2006) further argue that a paradigm also refers to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values and assumptions that the scientific community has in common regarding the nature and conduct of research

The research paradigm underlying this study is interpretivism. This is used to conceptualize meanings of participants' subjective experiences. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) explain this paradigm as an important component that entails contextual understanding and use of the self as an instrument. Interpretivism or the interpretive paradigm deals with the meaning that people attach to such facts. There are other two important paradigms used in social science

research studies, each paradigm has its own theoretical characteristics and purposes that suit the research problem and methodology. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) list these paradigms as positivism that deals with objective facts and social constructionism that deals with people's concern about how the social world is constructed. Depending on the nature of the research problem, some studies may be underpinned by two paradigms. I used one paradigm in this study. Willis (1995) states that the interpretive paradigm is not a single correct route or a particular method to knowledge, while Walsham (1993) argues that in the interpretive paradigm, there is no correct or wrong theories. Instead, theories should be judged according to their applicability to the theoretical framework of the study on hand. Therefore, in my view an interpretive paradigm demystifies access to reality in the manner that engages participants in exploring the meaning of such reality.

The contextual understanding in the interpretive paradigm refers to the manner that the researcher attempts to explore the research problem in line with the predicted themes. This contextual understanding as described in Terre Blanche et al. (2006) illustrates three categories that entail, firstly the researcher's writing context, which is often observed in the literature review. In this study, the writing context provided the focus and it assisted in predicting themes that were explored with the participants during data collection. Secondly, the understanding in context was applicable to research participants' personal experiences that I also explored during data gathering. These personal experiences specify how participants expressed their feelings, opinions, and concerns regarding the problem at hand.

Thirdly, the understanding in context specifies how the participants were affected by the problem being explored and the contribution that this study will make in addressing these problems. In this study, I was able to explore the research problem sufficiently and within the explained categories of the interpretive paradigm. The participants' utterances and actual words were recorded during interviews using an audio recorder. The self as an instrument for the qualitative research method described in Terre Blanche et al. (2006:276) was considered in this study. This key component states that a researcher must use personal and professional empathetic skills to gather data from the research participants. These may include listening, communication, and interpreting skills. These skills may sometimes be difficult to describe so

the researcher needs to use “the self” as the instrument because these skills are intrinsic. Several authors in social research and community development practices have proposed the application of these skills as “the skills use of self” meaning that the researcher or a practitioner uses his or her personal skills to interact with the people in enabling the conducive environment where participants can freely express their views. In this study, I was able to use the self as the instrument to interact with the participants during all field visits.

3.3 Research approach

I used the qualitative research approach to explore the research problem. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:272) describe this method as “researching people’s feelings and experiences in human terms rather than through quantification and measurement.” Qualitative data collection methods allowed for the expression of committee members’ perceptions, feelings, views, and experiences during data collection. The qualitative approach also enabled me to explore the functioning of care and support committees using the semi-structured-interviews that allowed participants free expression of their views on the problem being explored. Mayer (2009) explains the qualitative approach as a strategy of inquiry that moves from the underlying assumptions to research design and data collection. In my view, qualitative research is not a single method focusing on one discourse, but it entails the way in which data is collected and analyzed within the paradigm underlying the study. Qualitative methods were originally developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena, while quantitative methods were developed for the natural sciences to study numerical phenomena. Both these methods may be used in one study if the study fixtures both their characteristics, in that discourse the study takes a mixed methods approach.

Qualitative research is naturalistic meaning that it attempts to explore the everyday life of different populations in their own natural setting (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). Its nature of strategic inquiry attempts to make sense or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning that participants provide in their interaction with the researcher during data collection. It is therefore evident that the people’s subjective experiences and feelings about the problem being explored is the focus of qualitative research. Domegan and Fleming (2007) share a similar

view that qualitative methods aim to explore and discover issues about the problem at hand, because very little may be known about the problem if that problem has not been scientifically investigated by soliciting the affected people's opinions, views and experiences. In my view, qualitative research methods provide a meaningful platform for people to express their views, feelings, and experiences on how they have been affected by a problem at hand. As part of beneficence, people get the opportunity to suggest problem-solving strategies that will represent the entire population in a service discourse.

Strydom (2013) suggests three basic purposes of qualitative methods that include describing, to compare and to contribute to casualty. These purposes were proposed to ensure an accurate outcome of qualitative research in that it provides a true reflection of the subjective experiences of the population that were targeted to explore the problem and ensure that the researcher's possible biases are tactfully avoided.

3.4 Research design

The study used exploratory research design as suggested by (Babbie and Mouton, 2015). This research design is typically linked to reasons that include satisfying the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding, to test the feasibility of understanding a more extensive study, to develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent study and to determine priorities for the future research (Mouton and Babbie, 2015). The study's, aim and critical questions are linked to these suggested reasons because exploratory design lead to insight and comprehension rather than the mere collection of detailed and accurate data (Mouton and Babbie, 2015)

3.5 Selection of participants

I used purposeful sampling to select three primary schools with care and support committees at Esikhawini. This sampling is determined by the judgment of the researcher to intentionally select participants with characteristics, representativeness and attributes needed for the study as argued by (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport, 2002) This type of sampling enabled me to intentionally select schools that were needed for data collection. The targeting of primary

schools was motivated by the fact that the DoE initially piloted care and support projects in primary schools because younger children were considered to be more susceptible to problems than older children in secondary schools. In addition, the primary schools have longer milestones of functioning as nodes of care and support for OVCs than the secondary schools.

3.5.1 Selection criteria for the schools

1. The selection of three schools from the database of the district Department of Education (DoE).
2. The selected schools were primary schools with care and support committees that have regularly sent progress reports to the DoE.
3. Primary schools with care and support committees who were receiving DoE conditional grants for children identified in need of care and support.

The sampling process firstly involved submitting the research approval letter to the DoE district office at Empangeni. Secondly, meetings with principals of selected schools at Esikhawini to further submit research approval letters from the DoE provincial office. These meetings were scheduled to also introduce the study and discuss the logistics of data collection.

3.5.2 Selection of individual participants

I used purposive sampling to select three (3) teachers in each of the three schools and one member of the school management team. It was therefore anticipated that there will be four participants at each school which would amount to twelve (12) participants from all three selected schools, however, at school A, an additional participant was selected, this selection was based on her relevant roles as a School Counsellor solely responsible for psychosocial support of learners as a result I ended up with 13 participants.

The following sampling criteria were used:

1. Teachers who were participating in care and support committees when the study was conducted.
2. Teachers who had participated in these committees in the last three years.

3.5.3 Sampling of School Management Team participants

I selected one member of the school management team at each of the three schools. This included the principal at school A, and the Heads of Department (HoDs) at school B and C.

3.6 Data collection methods

To collect the relevant data, I used two data collection methods. These methods were semi-structured interviews conducted with one member of the SMT in each selected school and a focus group discussion (FGD) with the educators participating in care and support committees in each selected school. The FGDs included three participants at school A, 3 at school B and 4 at school C. This amounted to three FGDs and three individual interviews. The total participants amounted to 13. To facilitate the free flow of communication, I used isiZulu as the medium of communication since all the participants were isiZulu first language speakers. This has also prevented misinterpretations during the FGDs.

In both forms of interviews, I used my professional interviewing skills as a social worker. The professional interviewing skills in research are like empathetic exploration used in person-centered therapy (Morgan, 1997). Although the researcher's role is not to provide therapy during data collection, it was very important to be tactful and mindful about the participants' feelings of the problem being explored. This consideration helped in allowing a free expression of the participants' views, Morgan (1997:125) states a similar view on empathetic exploration, arguing that,

“Whenever we conduct research on people, the well-being of research participants must be our top priority. The research question is always of secondary importance. This means that if a choice must be made between doing harm to the participant and doing research, it is research that is sacrificed”.

3.6.1 Focus group discussion

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a method for gathering qualitative data that involves a small group of individuals in a structured discussion about a certain topic or collection of information in each topic (Omwuegbuzie, 2009; Wilkinson, 2004). FGDs are a structured approach of

interviewing a group of selected individuals or participants on a certain issue. They are beneficial when several perspectives or reactions on a certain topic or issue are required. The participants were chosen based on the criteria established with the expectation that they would have something valuable to say on the given issue (Gina, 2013; Ntuli, 2014; Wong, 2008).

The focus group interview method used in this study was advantageous. It offered the opportunity for better understanding of how participants collectively respond to the issue being explored as described in De Vos, Delport, Fouche and Strydom (2002). Although there were some disadvantages that limited me during the focus group interviews, it worked well because the participants knew each other and had worked as a team in tackling problems in care and support committees. For example, A focus group method originally developed as a basis decision made of social context and has often resulted in exploring a problem with participants who are directly affected by the problem (Robinson, 1999). This means that the decision makers in human service discourse often base their inferences on findings derived from the focus groups interviews so that human services can be appropriate and humane. The focus group method uses an interviewing technique. However, this technique does not focus on a problem-solving effort during the data collection phase, nor a decision-making body, but it allows the researcher to explore the problem at hand with the people who are affected by that problem. Participants in this study were successfully engaged in reflecting on a series of questions that I posed to explore the problem at hand. I explained to the participants that it was not necessary to reach any consensus or disagreement as the goal was to find the reality of the problem being explored once the data has been analyzed.

Focus group interviews were conducted using a focus group guide. These interviews were audio recorded and documented to be transcribed and analyzed afterwards (Mgijim, 2014; Mncube and Harber, 2012). Focus group interviews are diverse in character, with members hailing from different settings with varying skills and backgrounds and disclosing a variety of experiences. For monitoring and regulating interviews, the size of each focus group is important. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) discovered that the optimal size of a focus group is between 3 and 14 participants. Focus groups reveal parallels and variations in the thoughts and experiences of the participants (Morgan, 1997). Each school's interview focus group comprised six members. There

were 12 members because three schools were selected. I used position-based criteria to select all the participants from the three schools.

3.6.2 Semi structured interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with selected individuals comprising school management teams (SMTs) from the schools that were purposively selected. According to Robinson (1999), there are two important roles of the researcher during the data collection phase in a semi structured interview. The first role is to guide the discussion to fulfill the purpose of data collection. In this first role, I introduced myself to the participants and explained the purpose of the study and how it sought to contribute to the domain of schools' functioning as nodes of care and support. I further introduced the research assistant and explained that her role was to help with the writing of notes and to operate the digital audio recorder to capture participants' voices to ensure that the collected data is a true reflection of what the participants have uttered as their own subjective experiences and feelings concerning the problem being explored.

The second role of the researcher is to ascertain that all the participants make an effective contribution to the discussion. In this study, I ensured that there was a conducive environment where people felt free to express themselves. I made note and appreciation of the participants' contribution and simultaneously tried to solicit more data from the quieter participants. The group dynamics were well manageable when it comes to communication in exploring the research problem.

3.6.3 Application of qualitative method

Although qualitative research methods have its own weaknesses such as excluding of appropriate means for arriving at statistical descriptions of large populations which may describe the number of populations affected by social problems as argued by Babbie (2016) but this study benefited from the distinctive strengths of qualitative method that include:

- **Depth of understanding qualitative permits**

Qualitative research provides permits to the researcher to become an active observer of social processes and in the practice field whereas in quantitative research a researcher is subjected to experiments and calculations as argued by Babbie (2016). Field research is especially effective in studying subtle nuances in attitudes and behaviors and for examining social processes over time.

Therefore, with a use of qualitative methods, I was able to explore issues of care and support committees as this method permitted me to solicit more information by exploring cases with the participant during both focus groups and semi structured interviews.

- **Flexibility**

I have benefited from the flexibility of qualitative methods. This benefit allowed me to make changes in my selected data collection methods such as a use of interview schedules that targeted the key informant participants. During the data collection phase with participants of focus groups I realized that none of the participants should be regarded as key informants' participants as they are all part of the schools' systems that are directly affected by the challenges and issues of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). The whole school functionality is affected by the plight of the OVCs therefore flexibility in this phase allowed me to regard the school management team in semi structured interviews as participants that are also affected by the problem at a school management level.

- **Low in cost**

Qualitative research is relatively inexpensive compared to quantitative research that may require expensive staff and costly equipment. Field research can be undertaken by one researcher with a notebook and an audio tape recorder. Therefore, I have benefited from this strength of qualitative research as my field research has not incurred high cost.

- **Professional observations**

Although researchers are limited and restricted and even restrained from providing solutions of problems being explored, professional observation cannot be restrained. In

a semi structured interview schedule, my professional observation of nonverbal cues with members of school management teams (SMTs) helped in further probing and soliciting more information, hence this led to more in-depth exploring of the problem.

3.6.4 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview of this study allowed the researcher an individual in-depth as it is called an in-depth individual interview meaning that it delves deeply into social and personal matters of the problem, whereas the focus groups delve deeply on the wider range of participants' experiences (Covey, 2009). The semi-structured interviews with the members of school management teams (SMTs) assisted in triangulation of data. The SMTs provided valuable information based on the schools' functionality regarding funding, policy directives and collaboration with the district, provincial and national DoE. In addition, these were one-on-one interviews that assisted in exploring the in-depth questions related to school management aspects.

The semi-structured interview process involved scheduling of interviews with members of the school management teams. At school A, I interviewed the Head of Department (HoD), at school B, I interviewed the school principal, and at school C, I interviewed the HoD. Through all the three interviews, I was able to critically explore the problem at hand. All the participants of semi-structured interviews also signed the consent forms, and they signed a separate consent form for the use of an audio recorder to record participants' voices. The semi-structured interviews have also been noted to have some advantages that are of benefit to both participants and the researcher, despite the disadvantages that are noted as limitations in using this data collection method.

3.7 Data analysis

The study used thematic data analysis because it provided a thick description of the characteristics, processes, transactions, and context that constituted the phenomenon being studied (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The researcher started data analysis after the completion of focus groups and the individual interviews. The researcher analyzed data with reference to processes proposed (Nxumalo and Scheerhout, 2007). These suggested processes are:

3.7.1 Data management

In this process, I firstly read the raw data that was initially recorded as field notes. I then translated it from isiZulu to English and formatted it to easily read transcripts to make it understandable, retrievable, manageable, and answerable. The first stage of data management entailed tabulation of data, that is organizing it in a readable format and making it ready for analysis (Creswell, 2009). In this study I organized the data in readable table format to make it easy to identify themes and sub-themes emerging from the analysis. The researcher should read data at least twice in order to effectively get a hint of it and hunt for emerging themes (Creswell, 2009).

The second stage entailed highlighting sentences stated by the participants. This can be used to relate to the study's research questions in line with what the participants have uttered (Creswell, 2009). It is highly recommended that the researcher goes through texts, marking them up with colored highlighter pens. In that way all the essential data will be easily identifiable and be prepared for the next step. Finally, the third stage involves chunking the highlighted sentences into smaller parts or further themes (Creswell, 2009). This establishes the first themes from the data and the data should be developed further under the level of themes. In this study, the sequential of themes was accurately followed. The procedure in this phase is to make the themes clearer under the researcher's focus and to further provide coding and prepare themes for the next level of analysis (Creswell, 2009).

3.7.2 Analyzed, described, and classified data

In this process, I organized data into categories of themes that were explored with participants. The intention for this process was to create a pattern of structuring data and produce good interpretation. Transcripts were also analyzed for accuracy and linked to interview schedules, and finally the interview schedules were included annexures of this study. A conclusion is drawn after having managed data. During this phase, the researcher reviews previous engagement in creating meaning in analyzing data. The grounds of the researcher's review include four steps. Firstly, the notion of any pattern or themes from the data and the relevance of any statement especially if similar or contrasting (Robbins, Chatterjee and Canada, 2006).

Secondly, grouping or establishing categories of information that can be unified. Thirdly, identifying interrelations among factors. Finally, building conceptual coherence and consistency, which at the end should be used to determine credibility of the findings so that they fit the theoretical framework of the study.

3.7.3 Represented and visualized data

Data was categorized into themes. Themes were further discussed inline with the participant's narratives. It was interpreted to provide meanings. This process involved the researcher's analytical skills.

3.7.4 Validated and interpreted data

In this process, I thoroughly checked the quality of data, analyzed its content and I used my own reasoning to make sense in organizing data. The identified patterns created a data bank of themes and statements that informed formulation of relevant structure.

3.7.5 Overview of thematic data analysis

The thematic data analysis method has been described as the method applied in identifying and reporting patterns of themes generated from qualitative data (Nxumalo and Scheerhout, 2007). Thematic analysis organizes data sets in a rich detailed form that often goes beyond the point of just interpreting it. Researchers regard this method as flexible in analyzing thematic data because it describes patterns and coding of data already immersed by the researcher. For example, "thematic analysis moves beyond explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing implicit and explicit ideas" (Ntuli, 2013). This consensus movement means that codes are a group of participant's narratives which may be categorized into themes. Thematic analysis is best describing any study that seeks to discover interpretive approaches and studies that allow the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of themes with one of the whole contents. Thematic analysis provides opportunity for an understanding of any potential issue more widely (Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan, 2011). The choice of this thematic analysis method has been justified in line with these sources where the data has been generated as described in (Patto, 2002).

3.8 Trustworthiness

The quality, authenticity, and sincerity of qualitative research findings are referred to as trustworthiness. It refers to the level of trust or confidence that readers have in the outcomes. The four dimensions of trustworthiness that are pertinent to qualitative research are credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990).

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to internal validity of the study and it seeks to ensure that the study enquires what is intended (Shenton, 2004). This study has ensured credibility as described in five following propositions (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.2 The adoption of research method well established

This proposition refers to choosing a correct research method and procedures. In this study, I have ensured this proposition in my choice of the qualitative method and its coherent procedures that were relevant to this study. This qualitative method and its procedures have also been used in studies like the functioning of care and support in schools. Williams (2012) conducted a qualitative study entitled "Can schools function as sites of care and support for children". Naidoo (2010) also conducted a similar study titled "The role of Educators in addressing the needs of orphans and vulnerable children".

3.8.3 The development of early familiarity with the culture of participating organizations

The proposition as an approach that aims to familiarize the researcher and the participating organization and in ensuring this proposition, the fieldwork of this study included preliminary consultation meetings with the DoE officials at uThungulu District and the briefing meetings with the principals of selected schools (Department of Education, 2001). These meetings assisted the participating schools to understand their roles and the overall aim and objectives of the research. Trustworthiness of the study was therefore ensured because of proper buy- in received during consultation meetings.

3.8.4 Use of triangulation

Triangulation refers to the use of a mixed method of data collection, particularly the focus groups interviews and individual's interviews (Shenton, 2004). This study used individual's interviews to solicit data from the school management teams and the focus group interviews to solicit data from the teachers. The triangulation enabled the researcher to gather more balanced data that ensured trustworthiness of the study. One source of data collection would have limited the researcher in exploring the rigid data that entail school management aspects, as teachers have no prerogative to answer questions related to management issues and finance.

3.8.5 Transferability

This dimension refers to the external validity of data and stipulates a pattern that allows the research findings to be applicable to other similar situations (Shenton, 2004). Transferability in this study described methodological procedures that were illustrated based on suggestions made by Cole and Gardner (1979) cited in Shenton (2004:67). These suggestions include a description of the number of organizations taking part in the study and where they are based, any restrictions in the type of people who contributed data, the number of people involved in the fieldwork, the data collection method that were employed, the number and length of data collection sessions, and the period over which the data was collected. These suggestions were therefore the basis that determined transferability of this study for future studies in the aspect of yielding similar results.

As part of transferability, it is acknowledged the research findings may also yield results that reflect multiple realities, hence this does not mean a lack of trustworthiness, but it means that the findings have the variety of issues from the bigger context that have contributed to the phenomenon being investigated (Shenton, 2004). Multiple realities may apply, for instance if this study can be conducted in another environment such as the child and youth care center (CYCC). The CYCC provides a secured residential care environment and therapeutic services to children, while the schools being explored in this study also provides a care and support functionality, but this caring functionality may often be disrupted after school when a child returns to a family with difficult circumstances. Transferability in this study has therefore been

considered to reflect multiple realities compared if it could be conducted to another environment.

3.8.6 Dependability

Dependability refers to the reliability of the research findings, meaning that if the research study can be repeated using the same context, same participants, same methods, and procedures the similar result will be obtained (Shenton, 2004). In ensuring dependability, this study ensured the used correct research practices for the reader to develop a precise knowledge of research methods and their effectiveness. The three aspects of the research on which dependability can be based. These are, firstly the research design and its implementation procedures that describe what was planned and executed at strategic level. Secondly, the operational details of data gathering in addressing the intricacies of what transpired in the research field. Lastly, the reflective appraisal of the study that evaluates the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken (Babbie and Mouton, 2002). This study, therefore, followed all these suggestions in ensuring trustworthiness at this dimension (Babbie and Mouton, 2002).

3.9 Ethical consideration

There are two categories of ethical issues in research: these include the professional ethics that deal with issues such as collaborative relationships among researchers, mentoring relationships, intellectual property, fabrication of data and plagiarism (Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan, 2001). These ethical issues have been covered in a supervision contract that I signed with the Supervisor at University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The second category of ethics include the convenience issues between the researcher, the gatekeepers, and the participants. In ensuring this category of research ethics, I have taken into cognizance that the participants' well-being, ability, eligibility to participate and informed consent were the primary priority in this study.

Firstly, the study received ethical clearance and an approval letter from the UKZN, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. Secondly, the approval of gatekeepers was received from the KZN Provincial Department of Education that gave me permission to conduct this study in selected schools as proposed. In further compliance with research ethics, I

subscribed to philosophical principles guiding ethical research as described in Terre Blanche et al. (2006). These principles are elaborated in subsequent paragraphs.

3.9.1 Autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons

In relation to this principle, I firstly introduced the study to the participants and explained reasons for selecting their schools as a sample of this study and I explained how I envisage the value of this study after data collection. I tactfully explained to the participants how issues of confidentiality, respect and dignity would apply to this study.

3.9.2 Confidentiality and respect

The participants' names and the names of their schools have not been mentioned in this dissertation, instead symbols have been used such as school A, School B. Participants will remain anonymous and in referring to their statements, they have cited as participant in school A and another participant from school B said participants' views were highly respected and valued as rigor of this study.

3.9.3 Human dignity

The participants were asked to sign a voluntary informed consent for participation in this study and consent for the use of a tape recorder. However, signing of informed consent did not mean that participants would not quit if they felt they cannot continue with the research. The participants were therefore allowed to quit if they realized that the research questions are causing vicarious trauma to them.

3.9.4 Research tools

The research tools of this study included, semi-structured questions for an in-depth interview with the SMTs, Structured interview questions with focus groups participants, an audio tape to record participants' voices, a pen, and an exercise book to take note during data collection and an assistant that took notes during data collection and myself as a student researcher I solicited data from the participants.

3.9.5 non-maleficence

None of the participants were found to be personally affected by the research problem being explored. The participants were the activists in mobilizing schools as nodes of care and support so they have freely agreed to participate in the research as they envisaged it to result in amicable remedies that will improve their engagement in schools' care and support functionality. In this view, the study therefore did not cause any vicarious trauma in engagement with the participants. There is no other harm that has affected the participants' engagement in this study as the participants' autonomy and dignity were carefully protected.

3.9.6 Beneficence

This ethical principle has been ensured in line with increasing new knowledge and skills concerning the schools' care and support functionality. In compliance with this principle, the researcher is required to furnish the DoE provincial office with the research report that provides findings and recommendations on the problem that have been explored in schools. The research findings and recommendations add value in the domain of care and support for OVCs in schools and further provide strategies that encourage schools to function as nodes of care and support.

3.9.7 Justice

The ethical principle of justice has been ensured in fairness and equity of participants in all stages of the study. Although this is an academic study, the researcher has also maximized its value for mutual benefits that also involves the participants and the researcher as equal beneficiaries. Therefore, this study also increases social justice when it comes to care and support of children in selected schools.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have described all the methodological approaches used during field work of this study. The paradigm selected for the study enabled the researcher to interact effectively with the participants. Although there are noted disadvantages in some of the methods used in this

study, these disadvantages did not prevent continuity of the study at, so they are a lesson for future research studies.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analyzed through thematic method. This method has been selected because of its relevance to qualitative data and it has also been found applicable to stages of data analysis (Khanare, 2009). The intention of thematic analysis is to maintain a rich data by means of categorizing it into themes and subthemes that report participants' actual utterances and reducing the data that may be excessive from the data corpus. In this chapter, I present the participant's biographical profile and thereafter the themes and sub-themes that emerged from data are presented which are divided into four subsections.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of participants

While the study doesn't assess the impact of descriptive information regarding teacher views, such personal information provided a good indicator of different age groups of participants. Some policies, such as affirmative action, demand the promotion of the historically underrepresented. The main target respondents were teachers, heads of schools and school management teams within the three schools selected from Esikhwini province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Tables below present participant' demographic information

Table 4.1: Table of participants at school A

Participant numbering	Age group and Work experience	Gender	Qualifications	Types of interview
Participant 1	20- 30 Three years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview

Participant 2	30- 40 10 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Psychology	Focus group interview
Participant 3	40- 50 13 Years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview
Participant 4	40- 50 15 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview
Participant 5	50- 60 28 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Semi structured Interview

Table 4.2: Table of participants at school B

Participant numbering	Age group and Work experience	Gender	Qualification	Types of interview
Participant 1	20- 30 8 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education Advance Diploma in inclusive education	Focus group interview
Participant 2	30- 40 12 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview
Participant 3	40- 50	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview

	22 years' experience			
Participant 4	50- 60 25 years' experience	Male	Bachelor of Education	Semi structured interview

Table 4.3: Table of participants at school C

Participant numbering	Age group and Work experience	Gender	Qualification	Types of interview
Participant 1	30- 40 9 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group interview
Participant 2	30-40 16 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Focus group Interview
Participant 3	40- 50 21 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education Honors Bachelor of Psychology	Focus group interview
Participant 4	50- 60 26 years' experience	Female	Bachelor of Education	Semi-structured interview

4.3 Age groups and gender

Age is significant in identifying educators' views based on age groups as well as assessing how the system has failed to appreciate and promote the contributions of individuals who have done so much to meet the demands of the education system in providing education and ensuring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools at Esikhawini. Participants' age groups varied from 20- 30, 30 to 40, 40 to 50 and 50 to 60.

4.4 Focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews biographical profiles of participants

4.4.1 Focus group interviews

Several different types of contextual elements that impact care and support committee members were discussed during focus group interviews based on the school functionality, care and support roles and responsibilities. Economic variables, capacity-building factors, collaborative or partnership factors, and education-related factors are among them. Economic issues affect or influence most educational and ordinary public or private institutions. Without adequate financial resources, no institution can function effectively. Financial status, such as no-fee paying students, quintile ranking orders, and being Section 21 or non-Section 21 schools, might have a detrimental impact on the schools. During focus group interview one participant from school B stated:

"We lack funds to purchase mental and drugs to provide care and support the functionality of the school, testing facilities in order to prevent pupils and educators from carrying dangerous substances on school premises" (FG B).

The above comment demonstrated that if schools had the money to purchase such equipment, school functionality on care and support would improve. It is evident that the lack of funding for care and support functionality has hindered implementation of this functionality.

It is also evident that educators tasked with learner support are mostly females from age groups ranging from 30 to 50. It is also common societal roles and expectations for females of these

age groups to initiate caring functions and be concerned about the vulnerability of children in society. King (2013) supports this observation and authenticates facts about women's emotional connections. Women have emotional connections with their babies from pregnancy till birth and from birth till grave (King, 2013). These emotional connections are psychological referred to as a journey "from cradle to grave" and they dominate a women's affections to children as narrated by participant

"Caring for children is unavoidable, when we see vulnerability in learners, we think of our own children and feel pain and those pains encourage us to take actions".

4.4.2 Professional profile

The entry level of educator's qualifications in primary schools is a Bachelor of Education in various school phases that include foundation phase (Grade R-Grade 3). Intermediate phase (Grade 4 to Grade 6) and Senior phase (Grade 7-Grade 9). In addition, educators must be registered with the South African Council of Educators in terms of SACE Act No 31 of 2000. All participants meet qualification requirements as per their roles as educators. Two participants had additional qualifications, one had an Honors Bachelor of Psychology and the one had an advanced diploma in inclusive education. These qualifications are quite relevant in rendering psychosocial support to OVCs as narrated by two participants in school A

"Although we only received a once off training, in our school, we are fortunate to have an educator with a postgraduate qualification in inclusive education. She is very helpful sharing enlightenment regarding learner's social and special needs".

Participant 1 from school C also stated that:

'With regard to learner counseling, we are fortunate to have a colleague with a degree in Psychology, so she is able to help us with needed counseling to OVCs'.

4.4.3 Work experience

Participants in the age group of 30 to 40 have work experience ranging from 5 years to 15, while age group from between 41 to 50 had work experience ranging from 11 years to 20 years and

lastly age group from 51 to 60 had work experience ranging from 21 to 30 years. Educators tasked with care and support are well experienced and will be able to lead and perform a role of community and pastoral care effectively to support learners as narrated by a participant in school B

“We have formed a bond with our children, our many years of experience in our school have a link with what we are doing for our OVCs, these children are our family members”.

This narrative provides evidence that, although there are challenges in implementing schools’ care and support functionality, teachers are happy with their roles of caring for learners in their psychosocial needs.

Table 4.4 Outlined themes and subthemes that present participants’ data

Themes	Subthemes
Structure of care and support committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Composition of care and support the committee ✓ Roles and responsibilities of care and support committee
Functioning of care and support committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Challenges in implementing care and support projects ✓ Identification of children in need of care and support
Funding of care and support committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sources and utilization of funding ✓ Challenges related to funding
Networking of care and support committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Awareness of other organization ✓ Challenges of networking

Role of social workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Key functions of school social workers ✓ Managing referral for social work services
------------------------	--

Source: Own conceptualization

4.5 Critical discussion of themes and participants' narratives

4.5.1 Theme One: Structure of care and support committees

In this theme, the discussion is on the structure of care and support committees in public schools. The participants of this study described the structure of care and support committees in schools in accordance with two sub-themes listed as, the composition of care and support committees and the role and responsibilities of care and support committees.

4.5.2 Subtheme one: The composition of care and support committees

Participant 2 from school A articulated that:

“Composition of care and support committee is formed by teachers from each phase in this way teachers from all phases are fully represented.”

In addition, Participant 3 from B school also stated that

“The schools’ care and support functionality is organized by divisional structures formed by various compositions such as peer education, institutional learner support team, Soul Buddyz, OVC committee”.

Data from the participants indicated that all the schools had similarities in their composition and representation. Teachers representing various learner committees are members of care and support committee, but none of the schools had mentioned learner representatives, therefore learners are not part of the structure and composition of the committees as narrated by participant 1 from School B

“Learners are not part of care and support committees, there are no policy directives specifying that learners should form part of care and support committees. Most policies

outline teachers' role of providing care and support, there is nothing about learner participation, capacity building workshops on care and support did not establish the role of learners regarding participating in care and support committees."

Section 9 of the Children's Act No 38 of (DSD, 2005) stipulates the child's best interest, the child's best interest is of paramount importance in matters concerning the care, protection, and wellbeing of that child. This right is also covered as children's constitutional rights stipulated in section 28 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA Parliament, 1996). Although the Department of Basic Education complies with legislations pertinent to child participation in establishment of Representative Council of Learners (RCL) as stipulated in section 11 of the South African School Act No 84 of (1996), but learners in primary schools are still considered too young to make appropriate decisions regarding their care and support initiatives, hence RCL does not exist in primary schools. Teachers and the governing body representing parents are entrusted with deciding the welfare of the learners. Child participation as a guiding principle stated in section 10 of the children's Act No 38 of 2005 supports the view that the child must have reached appropriate age, maturity, and development to be able to participate in any matter concerning that child.

4.5.3 Textual analysis on the theme of structure

In view of the research objectives on determining the structure of care and support committees, care and support committees seem to be loose if there are no representatives from learners, it is understood that most learners in primary schools are still young to participate in decision making, however grade 7 learners have already reached adolescent stage which is regarded as an appropriate stage of human development for making a consent on matters concerning them, therefore learners must be included and be conceptualized in the activities of schools' care and support services. Some of the children are from child headed families and they are already fully capacitated to represent other children in addressing problems affecting them.

Excluding learners in schools' care and support structures may be viewed as social deprivation and this may have a far-reaching result Kuhn (1962) adolescent stage is a profound human

development stage from 10 to 19 years that represents social interaction, if children are not recognized at this stage, this will result in damaging effects of brain, increased aggression and negative behavioral development. In this study, schools are reflected as microsystem in terms of ecological systems theory, care and support committee members must therefore develop actions that have direct contact with the OVCs because a school is a child's immediate environment for interactions intended towards fulfillment of the child's holistic needs as stated by (Kuhn, 1962). Furthermore, the child's reaction to individuals in their microsystem often contributes to personal development that are fostering and supporting the child's development.

4.5.4 Subtheme two: Roles and responsibilities of care and support committees

The findings indicated that care and support committees perform various tasks which aim to support children who need care and support such as children who are orphans and those who are vulnerable because of poverty, substance abuse and other social ills. Rendering social relief to learners who are orphans and vulnerable was one of the primary responsibilities of the committees. Social Assistance Act No 13 of 2004 defines social relief as the provision of material assistance to people who are unable to meet their basic needs such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Participant 1 from school B narrated causes of children's vulnerability

"Poverty, substance abuse and parent's negligence have positioned our children to vulnerable conditions" We see our role mainly in providing social relief to these children, we give them extra food to take home, we bring clothes for them from our home, lot of help is needed to assist the children."

Participant 2 from school A witnessed this role and narrates as

"We have decided to prioritize the OVC for the remaining meals of the school feeding scheme, we have also asked the principal to allow us to make food parcels with groceries that have remained from the feeding scheme. This supply of meals makes a difference as children are ensured of nutritious meals even at home."

In a school environment, these problems manifest as extrinsic learning barriers which often harm academic performance. The highlights extrinsic learning barriers such as poverty, HIV and AIDS and other forms of social problems (Wilkinson, 2004). These problems often position learners in a long-term traumatic experience if their circumstances are not attended holistically. In addressing these problems teachers have a minimum practice mandate outlined in Section 3(4) (f) and (1) of the National Education Act No 27 of 1996. This practice mandate is referred to as community citizenship and pastoral care where teachers are expected to address learners' social problems and make appropriate referrals. It is often difficult to perform teaching functional roles if learners are in vulnerable conditions as narrated by participant 2 from school B.

“The OVCs mostly come to school in awkward conditions of hunger, tired, untidy, withdrawn and lacking interest to learn but once their circumstances have been individually attended, they improve even in academic performance, and they start interacting with other children confidently”.

Participants from all three schools articulated similar roles in rendering care and support to the OVCs. In executing this role, the participants facilitated access resources to help children meet their basic needs such as food and clothing as mentioned below:

Participant 1 narrated as

“We have started providing Soup kitchens in our school, children are provided with bread and soup before they start their day. Food parcel are also arranged for learners to take home if food groceries is left from the school nutrition programme.”

Participant 3 from school A also narrated as

A school garden assists us to make nutritious food for the OVCs to take home. This has made improvement as the OVCs would come to school hungry and fall asleep during the classroom.

Other participants provided basic counseling to children as indicated below:

Participants embarked on One-on-one lay counseling to assist children receive emotional support and be referred for further therapeutic help where necessary.

Participant 2 school B indicated that

“Lay counseling has shown good results where children feel loved and protected when receiving one on one attention. Schools become safety nets for children needing care and protection”.

One on one lay counseling has assisted OVCs to talk freely about their circumstances and showed interest to be assisted from schools’ social relief initiatives as narrated by participant 3 at school A:

“We have initiated a social relief programme called uniform banks, Grade 7 learners who are completing and leaving our school are encouraged to donate their uniform to benefit the OVCs. This project has benefited about 80 OVCs.”

Linking children with relevant resources was one of the critical roles. They would refer children to social workers for further interventions as the participant indicated.

“We have realized that most of our learners need statutory intervention from social workers as most of them are orphaned and are exposed to incidents of neglect and abuse.”

Participant 3 also witnessed this and stated that:

“In all our case referred cases, children were legally attended and with sensitivity by social workers. Children are ensured of alternative care when their families have broken.”

Erickson (1963), as cited in Newman and Newman (2006), describes psychosocial as the approach that embraces both the individuals’ psychological and social context. Psychosocial approach describes the factors surrounding social environment and the psychological aspects that have an influence on the physical and mental wellness in the person’s ability to function. Psychosocial approach focuses on a person’s totality, meaning that the social functioning of the individual is dependent on his or her ability to cope psychologically, socially, emotionally, physically, and economically. If one of these personal aspects deteriorates, it can cause harm to the other aspects, for instance, a learner experiencing difficulties in coping because of poverty

at home, may be distressed and have poor self-esteem. As the poverty rate increases at home, this learner will be positioned in a psychosocial crisis because of the other affected personal development aspects. Schools' care and support functional roles are being shared effectively with the participating organization where civil society groups such as the childcare forums and child protection organizations play a significant role in providing and facilitating on-going psychosocial support to the learners concerned. These organizations support schools' notion of care and support, and they simultaneously benefit in attaining social capital from schools while schools are significantly benefiting services and in increasing the notion of care and support for their learners.

4.5.5 Contextual analysis on the theme of roles and responsibilities of care and support committees

4.5.6 The main role of care and support committees

The main role of care and support committees is providing social relief services to OVCs and making referral to Social Workers for possible placement in alternative care. On the other hand, schools seem to have little resources to account for the large number of OVCs when it comes to providing social relief. Naidoo (2010) supports the fact that the department of education has less budget for OVCs, School funds provided by the DOE are earmarked for core functions that include maintenance, school stationery, school furniture and other administrative functions. The plight of OVCs is often demonstrated by impoverished background as a result, the OVC turn to have low attention span due to hunger and fear of being stigmatized by the other learners because of inadequate and poor condition uniform and learning material (Willis, 1995). To address these conditions, Educators' focus is shifted towards spending more time on procurement of the basic provision for OVC than performing the academic roles (Willis, 1995).

In terms of the ecological systems theory as argued by Wong (2008) and stated in the United Nations (1999) report. the OVCs and their educators in the schools' environment in which they are exposed are considered part of the microsystem. The interaction of these subsystems is referred to as proximal process, meaning that the OVCs are viewed as having a direct link to the environment and their experiences and participation, activities and roles make up the entire

microsystem. This is also referred to as the development processes of systemic interaction between person and environment. Care and support committees must be in the best position to influence the entire schools' system to perform the caring function, caring functions must be integrated within all educator's roles to influence the schools' notion of care and support for the OVC (Wood and Goba, 2011).

4.6 Theme Two: Functioning of care and support committees

The functioning of care and support committees is critical since it influences the nature and type of support that is offered to children. The findings indicated that, although care and support committees play a critical role to support children who are vulnerable, however they are riddled with challenges which hamper their functioning. Under this theme, two sub-themes are discussed: Lack of capacity and expertise to identify children in need of care and support and challenges in implementing care and support projects (Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, 2016).

4.6.1 Subtheme One: Lack of capacity and expertise to identify children in need of care and support

Participants who participated in the interviews reported difficulties in sustaining the projects of these committees.

Participant 2 in focus group at school C stated.

"We feel as if we are just deserted to find our own way in resolving the complex issues of OVCs in school, our colleagues are not interested to listen to our feedback from committee meetings and trainings we have attended, everything just become our own projects and all OVCs cases are referred to us without any attempt made, it is very difficult as no one seem to have sensitivity on the issues we are tasked with as a committee".

All committees seemed to have similar challenges concerning members' willingness for specifying term of office as articulated by participant 3 from school B.

Participant 3 from school B.

“Although the structure of care and support is well composed of educators, there has been no change on committee members as other educators are reluctant to commit themselves in learner support initiatives, they see this as additional responsibilities.”

All three participating schools had a school policy that gives directives on the composition and functioning of care and support committees as well as the term for office bearers. Two schools had a three-year term of office whilst the other school had a two-year term. Although this policy exists in schools, participants still complain about the non-changing membership in the structure of care and support committees, and this exacerbates lack of productivity when the same members are tasked with the bigger functions of OVCs over an extended period. This non-rotation of membership is necessitated by teachers’ reluctance to participate in care and support roles, lack of motivation, lack of orientation and training in childcare functional roles, inadequate community support from organizations dealing with childcare issues are some of the reasons which contribute to this reluctance to join the committees as participant 3 in school C indicates the reasons.

Participant 3 in school C:

“The other educators are reluctant to join the committee, they state reasons of over-commitment in their core functions of teaching” they also complained that they have not been trained in performing care and support functional roles”.

Participant 3 from school A also supports this gap as he narrated.

“It is difficult to win educators on this functional role, as they complain about lack of capacity building, they also state that they are not subject specialists of Life orientation as most of care and support initiatives are inline to life orientation.”

There is no sufficient capacity building for functional roles of learner care and support. One educator per school normally receives. Doe training on HIV and AIDS and child abuse or lay counselling but there is no training particularly structured for all committee members and the

entire school personnel (Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, 2016). According to the participants, this limits educator's motivation to participate in learner caring functional roles.

4.6.2 Textual analysis of subtheme one: lack of capacity and expertise to identify children in need of care and support

4.6.3 Effective community development (ECD)

The need for effective community development (ECD) cannot be overemphasized if social capital is to be prioritized and made meaningful. In their writing, Mncube and Harber (2012) recommended that an effective community development begins with prioritizing of social capital whereby the agents of change receive capacity building as front-line incumbents and catalysts that are expected to take leadership initiatives. Similarly, Patel (2005) also argues that where there is a shortfall in prioritizing social capital, people may develop a feeling of social exclusion and lack of ownership for a proposed development. Schools' care and support committees seem to function as loosely coupled structures, meaning that they are no co-ordination or linkages with the other units or personnel of the school, other educators simply refuse to participate and there are no repercussions for their refusal as they seem to have autonomy not to take the roles of care and support, one group of educators will therefore continue functioning under stressful environment as there is no enforcement of rotations with other educators.

In terms of ecological systems theory, a concept of loosely coupled structures refers to the separateness of the units or sub-systems of one organization as suggested by (Van der Westhuizen, et al., 2000). In a loosely coupled structure, personnel of different units seem to work inaccessible from each other, in a school environment and develop different identities the school management team may seem to work independently from a school counselor. The studied schools have systems such as teacher system, school management team system, support services system and learner system. In this study, the roles and responsibilities of care and support are entrusted to the teacher system, however, the teacher component of studied schools seem to be a loosely coupled structure on their own, there is no collegiality on roles and responsibilities of care and support. With this concluding analysis, it is therefore evident that

the department of basic education must evaluate the program of care and support in schools and ensure a multifaceted endeavor within a school environment. This will facilitate a sense of ownership as all educators and the SMT will be sensitized about the roles of care and support.

4.6.4 Subtheme two: Challenges in implementing care and support projects

Observation is one of the methods used by teachers to identify children who need care and support in schools. Van Shaik et al. (1991) refers to this observation as pedagogical observation. This involves purposeful systematic observation and discussion with the aim to comprehend the child's situation and to understand it as it is. This implies subjective experience of the child's situation". A participant 1 at school C identified some of the factors they observe which indicate that the child may be requiring intervention as articulated by the participant.

"Learners needing care and support are those identified in need of care and protection based on signs that include poorly dressed, under malnutrition, poor academic performance and withdrawn from others".

Despite making these general observations from teachers, the participants raised concerns about the lack of skills to efficiently conduct child assessment. In addition, they were concerned about moving beyond their scope of practice as teachers when engaging with children as the participant two indicated participant 3 at school A

"There is sometimes a challenge in assessing whether the child is needy because we don't have a service mandate to do individual assessment on children, and we are not fully trained for that kind of one-on-one intervention. Children are vulnerable in their appearance because of parental negligence, and it is sometimes not because there is poverty at home, the problem may originate from lack of parental roles and lack of cooperation with the schools."

The process of helping the OVCs starts with a referral from class teachers. Learners are referred for various problems as stated by participant 1 at school B.

"Children often demonstrate anger and start bullying other children, they normally have very low self-esteem, these children normally need one-on-one intervention as they look very vulnerable".

Depending on the nature of the problem, once the committee has received internal referral, a meeting may be held to discuss a way forward. All three participating schools have mentioned that the nature of cases referred for are for basic therapeutic help where participants are expected to do counseling on one on one, request for social workers' statutory intervention, bullying cases, extra meal to take home, and extra lessons. Many participants reported difficulties in sustaining the projects of these committees. Participant 2 in focus group at school C stated.

"We feel as if we are just deserted to find our own way in resolving the complex issues of OVCs in school, our colleagues are not interested to listen to our feedback from committee meetings and trainings we have attended, everything just become our own projects and all OVCs cases are referred to us without any attempt made, it is very difficult as no one seem to have sensitivity on the issues we are tasked with as a committee".

Sometimes the teachers present short talks for the school assembly to raise awareness about the psycho-social issues children present with as Participant 3 at school C reported.

"Talking about OVCs and circumstances that affect them raises awareness to other learners and this may increase sensitivity, sometimes this may seem like exposing them to other children in school, but we have no choice, we must talk about their circumstances in general, without specifying individuals' cases. Talking about them is an awareness and education to other children. It is the only way to stop further abuse."

Through interacting with various organizations supporting the OVCs in schools, participants reported that they have learned to formalize referral of cases to social workers and to other professionals. In cases of reporting child abuse and deliberate neglect of the child as stipulated in Section 110 of the Children's Act, teachers have managed to report these cases in a prescribed form 22 as required and mandated by the act. In addition, participants have also reported that their role is to report suspicious signs of abuse based on what they have observed as vulnerability on children. Participants raised multiple challenges associated with implementing care and support projects in schools. Inadequate funding was reported as the fundamental challenge as these two participants noted.

Participant 1 at school B narrated as:

“Our challenge is funding for the project, the number of OVCs in our database is 255 this year alone we have assisted 150 learners in various projects of learner support, a once off funding of R12 000 from DOE is not sufficient to address the situation faced by learners.”

Participant 2 at school B from the same focus group interview confirms this

“We have done a lot to assist the OVCs, but we feel we have not reached success as the number is huge, the school has a database of 450 OVCs so this year we have not even reached half of them because there are no sufficient funds”.

Learner support is a huge responsibility needing more financial support from the department of basic education.

Participant 1 from school C narrated that:

“Our core functions are concerned with teaching and learning and are based on subject streams offered in schools. In the curriculum of educators, there are theories capacitating educators to deal with learners’ social problems, these are in the domain such as Sociology of Education, Special Education and Educational Psychology. These are once off courses in various level of teacher tertiary education to prepare teachers’ intervention in the complexity of the problems experienced by learners.”

Although teachers are academically prepared to address the plight of children with extrinsic learning barriers, when it comes to practicality of implementing learner support initiatives, teachers are challenged by lack of financial resources and lack of schools’ personnel to execute these deliverables. Naidoo (2003) extensively authenticates this view that the roles of teachers within the context of learner support are a huge task, these roles and responsibilities exist and mandated by legislative framework of the DBE but, the main functional roles of teachers are to perform academic duties that entail teaching and learning, teacher as the life-long learner, learning mediator, learning facilitator, and many more.

The education policies outline community citizenship and pastoral care as fundamental roles that ensure teachers’ caring responsibility, but teachers are still limited in performing this role

because their core function is mainly concerned with academic performance hence, they get limited time to focus on the caring functionality. The ever-increasing teacher-workload makes it impossible to perform the caring responsibility effectively. Participant 3 from school 2 narrated that.

Participant 3 from school B narrated that:

“There is Insufficient community participation when it comes to care and support functions of OVCS, we used to appreciate childcare and be encouraged by societal norms such as, it takes the entire village to raise the child, meaning that, my neighbor’s child is also my child, but this has changed because of poverty and unemployment, people now mind their personal and family affairs.”

All escalating problems could easily be addressed by communities themselves in line with ensuring a culture of “Ukwenanelana” meaning humanitarian aid. Organizations such as Child Alliance in South Africa, Children in Distress (CINDI) render humanitarian aid and early prevention services to children confirm that children’s humanitarian aid spans a wide range of services including assisting with food parcels, shelter when families have broken, educational support, health care and protection from abuse and neglect. Many of these services are in form in-kind good donations. Mncube and Harber (2012). preserving that neighborhood's work is the essential foundation for effective community development.

Participant 2 from school B

“Neighborhood work is fundamentally about enabling ordinary people to become active in their neighborhoods. Accepting the enabling role as a key principle puts an emphasis on the neighborhood worker’s ability to motivate people who are demotivated and only just managing to survive”.

Due to lack of community participation, it is therefore evident that schools are tasked with a huge responsibility of care and support for the OVCS. faced by schools in deliverables of learner support. This will be managed through enabling local people to take initiatives, although schools are seen as immediate humanitarian aid and safety nets to needy children, but community participation is necessary to address the plight of vulnerable children.

Participant 1 from school B narrated as

“Care and support committees in schools strive for the welfare of children within the schools and the community structures are expected to take over the caring functional roles once children are out of schools”.

It is evident that social mobilization of local people is necessary to address challenges that schools face regarding the plight of OVCs.

4.6.5 Textual analysis for subtheme two: Challenges in implementing care and support projects

4.6.6 The care and support committee

The care and support committees are functioning in a challenging environment as articulated by all participant from the studies school (Media in Education Trust, 2010). Care and support for teaching and learning. Research report published by media in education trust states that challenges originate from a lack of proper counseling structures and services in schools, lack of professionals to providing psychosocial support, a paucity of teachers trained in life orientation, care, and support for OVC and basic counseling skills and lack of cooperation and support from parents or guardians for OVC. There are several sources of school-based support that include school management team, educators, social workers and health department, these personnel work as a team to identify learners with barriers in learning and they must assist to adapt in a school environment (Media in Education Trust, 2010). The existing literature and DoE policies are very clear on the concept of schools as centers of care and support, however on the field of practice, implementation is a challenging effort as there is paucity of monitoring and evaluation.

In terms of the ecological systems theory as developed and presented by Mayer (2009), the interaction of units within the system may produce a challenging environment as each unit may influence one another either positive or negative. Several research studies have focused on the impact of social interaction on child development, Bronfenbrenner believed that a person’s development was influenced by everything in the surrounding environment and social interactions within it. It is therefore evident that the challenges experienced in implementing care and support are schools’ environmental challenges that first need resolution from the

schools before moving to the department of education for a broader view of systematic problems.

4.7 Theme three: Funding for care and support in schools

All participants from individual interviews narrated that they receive R12000 from DoE annually to support their OVC projects. This funding is a conditional grant which is separate. During the FGD, one of the participants has been a teacher for 22 years. She has contributed to many developing initiatives regarding learner care and support that include assisting learners to obtain birth certificates and assisting liaising with social workers on matters pertinent to placement of children in alternative care. Consequently, SMT and other sister departments as well as government and non-governmental organizations are expected to extend funding for care and support school functionality as provided for in the DBE (2013). One of the participants stated that:

“We are all eager and anxious to absorb work with other community structures and other government’s structures such as tribal authorities, community-based organizations to care for the learners but social workers from the Health Departments need to be around to support us educators regardless of the availability of funding.”

The school should develop a comprehensive school management plan with parents in partnership with DBE for improved school progress.

4.9.1 Subtheme one: Sources and utilization of funding

The schools’ funding of norms and standards. This amount is utilized to buy uniforms for the OVC that have been identified. Participants of individual interviews from school A stated that.

Participant 1 of individual interview from school A

“Schools are required to use the funding within a year and submit a financial report with cash receipts of funding spent. The funding should benefit the OVC only and schools may reapply if they have utilized the allocated funding correctly.”

Participant 2 of individual interview at school C also confirms that:

“Although there is financial administration which entailed frequent purchasing of OVC’s material, it became an added administrative responsibility, but the school was able to utilize all the allocated funding successfully”.

Participants from all three schools stated that there were no challenges with regard to financial accountability of the allocated funding, during the year of funding the schools received a clean audit report (unqualified audit report) that made them qualify for the following year of funding. The only concerns that all participants indicated was that the funding is insufficient to cater for the needs of the OVCs for the entire year. Most significantly, participants understand that the conditional grant for OVC aims to retain disadvantaged children in school and to sustain the schools’ notion of care and support (Department of Social Development, 2005).

The allocation of the conditional grants for schools enables them to provide school-based care and to meet material needs of their learners appropriately. Public schools funding is ministered by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which emerged in 2009 when the former department of education was split into two departments, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) as well the DBE. The DBE have developed an extensive legislative and policy framework to ensure effective distribution of funds to public schools and this is a state constitutional obligation to ensure the rights of learner’s access to quality basic education.

Participant 4 from semi-structured interview at school A shared light about government school funding

“The DBE national level is responsible for formulation of policies and laws governing basic education while the distribution of funds and services to schools is the responsibility of the provincial DBE. There are three legislative mandates that regulate funding of public schools”.

Firstly, the National Education Policy Act No 27 of 1996 that empowers the National Minister of basic education to determine strategies for policy planning, service delivery to schools, financing, staffing, coordination, management, governance, monitoring, and evaluation of the well-being of the basic education system. In addition, school funding is regulated by this legislation where the National Minister of Basic Education collaborates with the Provincial Ministers of BED to determine norms and standards for the education system in relation to

school funding which the provincial Minister of DBE is responsible to implement. Secondly, the South African Schools' Act No 84 of (1996), stipulates a uniformed system within the DBE coordination of services, governance, and funding of schools. Schools' Act establishes, among other things, school government bodies (SGBs) and determines their role in school funding as well as the principles regulating school fees. Thirdly, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSF) as amended in 2006 is provided in Section 39(7) of the Schools Act (Department of Social Development, 2005). It outlines procedures to be adopted by the provincial DBE in determining resource allocation to their schools. All research participants agreed that schools have received funding according to the quintile procedure and norms and standard of education.

4.7.2 The DBE conditional grants

Participant of individual interviews from school 3 narrated as

“The DBE provides conditional grants under different programmes. Care and support functional roles are covered under programme five: Education enrichment services. This program’s key focus area is to promote the overall well-being of learners by improving their physical and psychological well-being that is crucial for learners to be able to study effectively.”

The DBE also provides funding for the national nutrition program under this key focus area of learner support and the HIV and AIDS life skills to support learners who are affected and infected by the pandemic. This grant exists to support South African HIV and AIDS prevention strategy in schools by increasing knowledge about sexual and reproductive health among learners and educators and to ensure that schools have a nondiscriminatory environment, free of stigma, sexual harassment, and all forms of abuse. Schools that are promoting the notion of care and support for OVCs comply with this practice norm and standard and in these efforts, they can be streamlined centers of care and support. The funds are used specifically for and support to the OVC (United Nations, 1999). The three schools used their funding in purchasing of school uniform as narrated bellow by participant of individual interview from school C. The provincial DBE transfer funds to the DBE districts and the districts are responsible to pay schools in their service jurisdictions based on the set fiscal procedure of equitable share outlined by the

provincial spheres of government. This equitable share is determined by the schools' quintile rating and the number of learners enrolled.

Participants 4 from school C confirmed that:

"All participated schools received the same amount of R12 000,00 conditional grants as they are all rated in same quintiles rating".

4.7.3 Subtheme two: Challenges related to funding

All participants of individual interviews presented some changes regarding funding for learner care and support. Participant 4 from school B in semi-structured interview

"Challenges with regard to funding are based on quintile rating, schools situated in townships are often rated in quintile three while those in rural areas are rated in quintile two and one and they receive more funding from the DBE."

Township schools have most learners that are from the areas outside townships whose parents cannot afford, therefore rating schools by observing the economic situation of the surrounding communities is often not realistic. There are delays in processing the funding at the DBE, The OVCs often do not have a decent school uniform at the beginning of the year, and this is the most needed support that can dignify them, but if school receive this support late during the year their vulnerability have already been exposed to other children.

4.10 Theme four: Networking

This theme presents data related to schools' networking with the organizations rendering services to OVCs in schools. The notion of schools as centers of care and support for OVCs requires frequent networking with child protection organizations and social mobilization organizations, particularly those advocating children's rights and empowerment programs. The ultimate objective of care and support as stated by participant 2 from school B.

Participant 2 from school B.

“There were various local and national organizations that have made a fundamental impact in supporting schools to become centers of care and support. These organizations have offered technical support to committees of care and support and rendered social relief services”.

In their writings, Billboardesque, Rardell and Winkler (2012) state that networking is a critical effort of the school’s action plan. For example, “Few schools can manage to do everything on their own without outside help”. Therefore, setting up networks of support is a key component that school principals and SMTs should strive to develop. However, it remains the responsibility of the principals and the SMTs to manage services and support that has been elicited from outside of the school. This is where a clear contract that specifies what will be done by whom and when, are crucial to avoid overburden of teachers.

Help from the local NGOs has assisted in a huge way. For example, some organizations have contributed to buying school uniforms, food parcels, and provided ongoing support. Participant 5 from school 3 stated that:

“The only concern with allowing many organizations to rally their services is school is time consuming. As the SMT, we need to guide and advise how this should happen without harming teaching and learning”.

Principal and the SMTs should further take full responsibility for ensuring that the outside assistance is relevant in supporting the school’s vision for enabling the caring environment and that the outside help does not interfere with teaching and learning as the core business of the school.

4.8.1 Sub Theme one: Awareness of other organizations

All researched schools have engaged with the NGOs in ensuring empowerment and social mobilization of children to address their vulnerability. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involvement in schools is a call from the department of basic education through the Tirisano campaign that aims to streamline schools as centers of care and support to the OVCs. All participants mentioned various local and national NGOs that assist them with child development programmes that tackle social problems. Love Life, a national NGO focusing on children and youth empowerment within the context of HIV and AIDS education. DRAMAIDE,

the NGO focusing on increasing an awareness of HIV and AIDS and sexuality education in primary and secondary schools. Educational programmes are in form of drama performance. Soul City Health and Development Institute, a national NGO focusing on social mobilization of children in primary schools, children are engaged in Soul Buddyz clubs. These clubs aim to increase child participation in addressing social problems such as substance abuse, HIV and AIDS, bullying in schools, child abuse.

Media in Education Trust (MIET), this is another popular NGO addressing the plight of orphans and vulnerable children within the school context. MIET also provides funding of conditional grants to support schools' notion of care and support for the OVCs. Thandanani, this is the local NGO at Esikhawini, they render social relief services such as school uniforms and food parcels targeting the OVCs. Bender (2002) states that most children in South Africa miss opportunities to learn life skills in their families because of family disintegration caused by poverty, migratory labor, poverty or lack of housing. These problems seem to have caused serious impediments on adults' role modeling, expected parental role, and teaching children important life skills. Schools have therefore taken over the role of child rearing and are continuously providing safety nets to children. Life skills are the important personal development component that enables children to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life. Children benefit from life skill education. Care and support committees have allowed intervention of other partners to support schools in functioning as nodes of care and support.

4.8.2 Subtheme two: Challenges of networking

Networking is often time consuming, teachers' engagement with learners may be interrupted when they have to host outside organizations during their business day as narrated participant of semi structured interview at school B

Participant 4 of semi-structured interview in school B:

“When it comes to networking with outside organizations, care and support for OVCs becomes a full engagement on its own. Childcare forum meetings, capacity building training and other administrative duties become a burden on its own”.

Participant one from the same group also mentioned that “care and support initiatives in schools requires a full-time person to engage in the activities to support children”. Participants from the three researched schools further stated networking challenges as listed below.

- There is more support on explaining the technicality and conceptualization of schools’ functioning as canters rather than providing funding or social relief service to benefit the OVCs.

Most NGOs are focusing on child development programs, but they don’t have financial resources to assist the OVCs who are experiencing poverty trap.

- Capacity building workshops from NGO is still targeting the same educators who were initially trained by the department of basic education.
- There is a duplication of services as the different NGO address similar problems of OVCs and child development programs, organizations just present different tags but they address similar problems.

4.11 Theme five: The role of social workers

Social workers’ roles in schools enhance learning barriers emanating from psychosocial crises experienced by most learners. In these roles, social workers’ therapeutic help contribute intensely in increasing the efforts of inclusive education by providing individual counselling to learners who cannot cope because of difficult family circumstances. In addressing these conditions, Social Workers in schools broadly provide a wide range of services that include crisis intervention, case management, academic counseling, grief counseling and violence prevention as recommended by (Sittered, 2016).

Participant 2 from school C witness this role

“We have referred many cases to social workers, and we have received positive response and co-operation, particularly for cases of abuse and deliberate neglect of children from school B.

“Social Work has a purpose to support and guide individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to better their quality of life and problem-solving skills. In these efforts, social

workers seek problem-solving skills in individuals and communities to enable them to solve their own problems.”

Participant 2 of individual interview from school C narrated as

“Sometimes we are left with no clarity on the protocols regarding service jurisdictions of social workers visiting schools, there are different organizations focusing on OVCs programmes, but when we approach these organizations for foster care, they said they are not doing foster care so we must refer cases to the Department of Social Development”.

School social workers have a responsibility to share information and add value to programmes that can assist the strategic goals of psychosocial support services. Social workers can provide a wide range of services in schools that include among other things, crisis intervention, case management, grief counselling and the prevention of violence. The highlights the following areas where social workers can contribute towards the academic goals of the child: the improvement of system dynamics, the coordination of information, helping learners gain insight into their functioning in their social environment, assessment of the individual’s strengths and the development of strengths-based interventions for the family, school, individual and community providing a brief background of social workers’ roles in schools in South Africa. In 1958, the Transvaal province created posts for school counselors with a degree in teaching. The goal was that they would address behavioral and emotional problems in schools, but the fact that they only had a teaching background, this did not work. Thereafter, a school counseling course was introduced, and school counselors were appointed.

Participant 1 of individual interview from school A also stated that,

“Although we get support from the NGO social workers, but there are still lot of cases to be attended that the DSD need to attend, children placed in foster care still come to poorly school dress and walk bare footed yet there is a foster care grant,”

School social workers have a responsibility to share information and add value to programmes that can assist the strategic goals of psychosocial support services to learners agree that social workers can provide a wide range of services in schools that include among other things, crisis

intervention, case management, grief counseling and the prevention of violence which highlights the following areas where social workers can contribute towards the academic goals of the child: the improvement of system dynamics, the coordination of information, helping learners gain insight into their functioning in their social environment, assessment of the individual's strengths and the development of strengths-based interventions for the family, school, individual and community.

4.9.1 Subtheme one: Managing referrals to for social work service

Given a complex nature of children's vulnerability, case referral to social workers assists teachers to access professional help to address children's psychosocial needs as narrated by participant 1 from school 2.

Participant 1 from school 2

"Care and support committees are unable to address all types of problems presented to them. Most of these problems manifest from difficult family background so as teachers, we don't have practice mandate to intervene at family level."

At this level teachers are the immediate and accessible professionals who deal with children's problems, they listen to children's problems, report suspicious signs of child abuse incidents and showing sensitivity on children's vulnerability. Teachers make referrals to social workers after preliminary engagement with the child. During this preliminary engagement, the educator listens to the needs, concerns, and aspirations of the child and this enables a relevant referral and some action of providing social relief service rather than just informing the child to see a social worker. With regard to referrals made to social workers, participants from all research sites confirmed that they have made a successful case referral.

Participant 1 from school C narrated as

"Children were referred for foster care placement in circumstances where they are in child headed households, or if they were deliberately neglected, abused, raped or sexually molested. Referrals were made in prescribed form 22 provided by the DoE social worker."

Participant one from school B also stated that

“The formal referral speeds up the helping process because they provide the full description of the problems and identifying details of the child concerned”.

All participants in three focus groups confirmed that case referral decreases caseload on schools as schools are often plagued by children who are facing vulnerability because of unattended personal, family or social problems. The ecological system theory dwells deeply on the reciprocal nature of problems meaning that problems may escalate from one system to another. A child from an abusive family environment is often found bullying other children in schools because of escalating violent behavior from that child’s family environment and this will affect relationships with other children. Similarly, educators are addressing problems escalating from families, society and many of these problems need intervention of social workers and other social partners.

The Department of Basic Education employs one social worker per district, this social worker functions as a consultant and responsible to oversee that schools are supported in understanding child protection protocols. The school social worker’s role as part of a multi-disciplinary team of the department of basic education render services to children and their immediate families to find solutions to educational and problem of behavior that directly affects a child’s performance at school that school social work interventions can play a vital role in supporting the learner academically. Another important role of the school social worker, specifically within inclusive education, is outlined by the DBE (2014a:9), which states that social workers are obliged to see to it that educators report cases of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect (which implies that the emotional and physical needs of the child are not met at home). Therefore, school social workers should facilitate the process of reporting a case as described in the Children’s Act, No 38 of 2005. If teachers fail to report child abuse cases, they can be held as accomplices to those incidences of child abuse.

4.12 Conclusion

The findings presented have gaps to be addressed by presenting recommendations in the last chapter of this study, participants were able to articulate both positive and negative impact of their engagements with the OVCs in their schools. Although participants articulated some

weaknesses in their engagement functioning of care and support committees, they are happy about making a difference and entering the life space of their learners who need care and protection. There is no doubt that this engagement will bring a prospect of joy even when they have retired from the field of practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study. The study explored the functioning of care and support committees at Esikhawini, a township previously known as Esikhawini. The study was conducted at three primary schools situated in J2 Section and the two schools situated at Mandla Nkala and Gobandlovu in the outskirts of Esikhawini township. The study's objectives are presented with concluding statements.

Objective one: To determine the structure of care and support committees in schools

The structure of care and support committees in schools has been proven to be functioning with the same membership over the years, this none changing of membership has caused the overburden of educators tasked with this functionality of care and support. It was also established in addition that being overburden by several cases of OVCs, the same educators were tasked with hosting NGOs that conduct social mobilization of the issues of OVCs which, thus affected their performance as they were overwhelmed swamped by the high caseloads of OVCs cases.

Care and support committees in schools seem to be functioning in a challenging environment when it comes to coordinating learner support services. This study therefore explored these challenges and other social factors that may be detrimental to the functioning of care and support committees. The study added value in the domain of learner support services by exploring teachers' experiences and concerns regarding the care and support functionality. The study provides recommendations and solutions that will enhance the functioning of these committees.

It was further established that the NGO engagement in schools were expected to be a sign of relief to educators tasked with care and support functionality. However, this was proven not to be the case during the FGD as these NGOs mainly provided educational programmes of

HIV/AIDS life skills to OVC but the main needs of addressing the OVCs poverty remained a challenge for frontline educators.

The above finding confirms the existing study findings of other scholars. For instance, the multisectoral approach supports the proposition of the Tirasano strategy which identified various priorities aimed at offering relief in schools which thus increases structurally (Hoardley, 2007).

Objective two: To understand how the committees render the care and support and services in schools and what programmes developed

In this objective, the study established that care and support committees were struggling to provide the needed resources to the OVCs in various schools. This struggle manifest from the lack of funding for the programme in which educators were tasked to perform yet do they not have adequate funding. Despite the reported financial struggles faced by most schools, the study was able to understand how the care and support committees were able to render services to the OVC through psychosocial program initiatives of social relief such as uniform banks, providing of food parcels and soup kitchens, despite the existing challenges. Although teachers tasked with caring functionality seemed to be overburdened by high case load of OVC cases, they were still determined to assist learners who are mostly OVCs. Participants appreciated the role of local NGOs networking with schools to execute care and support functionality. This finding therefore concludes that care and support committees are existing in schools and responding to learners' needs beside the articulated challenges. The above findings correlate to the study findings on how care and support committees render their support to schools that support OVC (Thabethe, Mbatha and Matapuri, 2016). They further found that schools were able to respond to the needs of OVC within the limit of the available resources as supported by schools in addition to the responsibilities of families during crisis (Thabethe et al., 2016).

Objective three: To ascertain committee member's perceptions of their functions and experiences

This objective aimed at ascertaining and examining the role of the school management and support committee members by establishing in detail their functions and experiences. From the analysis, it was established that while members of care and support committees were determined to assist the OVCs, they however, were disadvantaged by the existing systemic challenges within the school. Specifically, the lack of collegiality from other educators in schools were found to hinder the functionality of schools in providing care and support committees to those who needed it. Teachers for example and perceived their roles as a remedy to the OVC crisis, they have been positioned to provide supportive care to the learners which eventually supported the functionality and operations of the schools.

Although the research participants perceived the department of basic education as the custodian of the policies mandating the care and support functionality, it was established that officials tasked with these responsibilities have been observed not fulfilling tasks of the policy directives on the part of the district offices of the department of basic education. Experiences of all studied schools are that the department of education provided initial training to one educator per school and provided funding from year 2009 till year 2012 and nothing transpired yet the formulated policies still exist. It is therefore concluded that the department of basic education district offices do not sufficiently support schools' notion of care and support.

Objective four: To determine whether children are included in planning and implementation of care and support services

In this objective, the study aimed at determining whether children were included in the planning and implementation of the care and support within the school structures. It was therefore established that all programs intending to assist children, must respond to the principle of child participation as of paramount importance. Although learners were successfully assisted by the care and support committees, their participation in decision making was noticed to be excluded.

The composition of care and support committees does not include children, children participate in soul Buddyz clubs' initiatives a project for child participation pioneered by children and facilitated by Soul City, excluding of children in care and support committees' limits child participation where children can voice out their views about issues affecting them and the needed intervention.

5.2 Summary

Chapter one introduced the study with its objectives and critical questions. This chapter significantly presented an outlined theoretical framework. An ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1970). This theory is one of the most applicable clarifications regarding the social environment and human development. This study applied ecological systems theory because it focuses on the context and quality of the child's environment. The interaction between these two aspects may cause complex issues that often hinder most aspects of a child's holistic development. Exploring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools was therefore an attempt in response to environmental and complex issues affecting children such as poverty, HIV and AIDS.

Profoundly, the ecological systems theory significantly looked at how does the care and support committees functioned within a school system, how did these committees managed to respond to complex issues of OVCs, how did they also managed to interact with the other subsystems of the schools and finally the upper systems within the education system such the circuits and district offices who are managing schools.

Chapter two presented literature review, it was significant to know other existing studies and their findings regarding this similar issue. The reviewed literature helped in identifying the gaps to be addressed by this study and by further studies in the domain of schools' functioning as centers of care and support. The reviewed literature also outlined a legislative framework endorsing schools to perform the task of care and support.

The legislative framework gives mandate not only to the schools, but it is also a mandate to the state to provide budget and capacity building as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation of

this functionality. Through provincial and national policies, the state, particularly the department of social development as a custodian to child protection policies and a department of basic education as a custodian to policies of inclusive education pertinent to OVCs has a responsibility for spearheading the program of action for the schools' functionality of care and support for OVCs.

The international treaties such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1992) requires all member state including South Africa to lead a disciplined and collaborative approach for child protection in all spheres of life, in civil society communities, schools are the central focus as community structures where children spend most of their childhood in schools.

Chapter three presented research methodology that became an important strategic approach used to collect data from the participants. The study used a qualitative method which became applicable in the nature of the issue being explored. This method allowed the researcher to solicit data from the participants in the manner that allowed them to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about the issue being explored. Two methods of data collection were used, namely, focus group interviews with members of care and support committees and one-on-one interviews with members of schools' management teams. Finally, the research paradigm underlying the study is an interpretive approach. This paradigm is used to conceptualize meanings of participants' subjective experiences.

Chapter four presented data findings and analysis, data was received from the participants during focus groups and individual interviews. The first step analysis was to read data corpus and categorized data into themes and subthemes that emerged. Findings from the data indicated that the care and support committees are well structured as it is composed of teachers representing different learner support committees, however participants expressed concerns that there is no change in membership of these committees. Other educators are unenthusiastic to take over the responsibilities of care and support functionality. Learner care and support functionality becomes the responsibility of the same educators who have been

tasked with these roles since the inception of the project in 2005. This makes it a burden as they could not simply abandon the caring responsibilities needed by the OVCs.

Capacity building training in concept of schools' notion of care and support targeted one educator and it was a once off training during the inception of the project, participants articulated concerns regarding this and mentioned this as another factor for educator's reluctance to take over the responsibility of care and support. Funding for the care and support was also found to be another limitation as it was available at the amount of R12 000 since the inception of the project till year 2009. Since then, schools have not been receiving any financial support from the state.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for social work

1. It can therefore be said that the care and support committees should be restructured to include teenage children whose age and development is appropriate for making decisions.
2. Social workers are the fundamental part of care and support in schools as most of the roles of psychosocial support requires therapeutic intervention and this often result to statutory intervention where social workers must remove children and place them in alternative care. It is therefore recommended that social workers must educate schools about different social work services and organization responsible, schools must be furnished with database of social work services to ensure appropriate referral.
3. Data revealed that many learners face circumstances of abuse and deliberate neglect by parents or care givers, it is therefore recommended that educators must be informed and be familiarized with mandatory reporting procedures of child abuse and deliberate neglect as stipulated in section 110 of the Children's Act, No 38 of 2005
4. It is recommended that the schools' notion of care and support should promote collaborative engagement of government departments, NGOs, civil society, parents, and local forums to mitigate children's vulnerability and embark on one program of action to assist the OVCs.

5. The functionality of care and support is addressed partially in White paper 6 of 2001 that deals with children with special needs and in HIV and AIDS policies, but there is outstanding policy on schools' functionality of care and support, a distinctive policy reform and formulation is recommended to address complex issues related to educators' role disposition and annual funding need to be reviewed.
6. The Department of Basic Education must re-establish protocols in programme implementation with clear policy directives, capacity building of educators and SMTs on the concepts of schools' functioning as nodes of care and support. A database of OVCs needs to be reinstated as part of schools' administrative requirements.
7. Quarterly monitoring and evaluation must be performed in school by the official of the district office at DBE, this will show accountability and compliance to policy directives.

5.3.2 Recommendation to academia and areas of future research

1. Data has revealed that schools are making fundamental efforts to function as centers of care and support, however there is still a gap on the roles expected from the department of basic education to support schools, it is therefore recommended that future research be focused on the government response (Department of Basic Education) to support schools.
2. Future research should also focus on policy reforms regarding care and support functionality.
3. Exploring a scope of practice of school social workers and evaluating current educators in learner caring functionality is recommended for further study as this will respond to complex issues as articulated in findings' chapter.

5.3.3 Limitations of the study

1. The absence of voluntary engagement by SMT members was a hurdle. One participant, the principal of School A, opted out of the focus group. The member expressed concern regarding year-end obligations to education department responsibilities such as exams. As a result, instead of six SSSC members, I was compelled to stick with only five.

2. The principal school C repeatedly postponed appointments until I replaced it with another SMT member. Another issue was budgetary limits which hindered the researcher during the traveling when several appointments were missed. Despite these limitations, the research study was carried out successfully.
3. Despite the study's shortcomings, it is important to note that the significant contributions of the study enhanced general school management nationally on matters of educator's role disposition in pastoral care. The research intends to provide certain alert signals to authorities at the Ministry of Education in exploring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools within Esikhawini.

REFERENCES

- African Union (1999). The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Children.
www.umn.edu
- Babbie, E and Mouton, J. (2002). The practice of social research. United States of America USA: Oxford University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1990). Discovering what families do. In Rebuilding the Nest: A New Commitment to the American Family. Family Service America [web site].
- Chikoko, V and Khanare, F. (2006). 'School Management Teams: Conceptualization of School Assets in addressing the needs of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV AND AIDS: Evidence from South Africa', *South Journal of Education* 32(1): 23-36.
- Covey, S. (2009). Seven Habits of effective people, United State of American USA, Franklin Covey Co.
- Creswell, J. (2009) Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. London. SAGE Publishers.
- Daniels, D.(2013).The roles of school counselors in supporting teaching and learning in schools of skills in the Western Cape. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Western Cape.
- De Vos, A, Strydom, H, Fouche' B, Delpont L (2002). Research at Grassroots for the social sciences and human service professional, Pretoria, Van Schaik Publishers.
- Denzin, K and Lincoln, Y. (2003). The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues, Second Edition, London, Sage Publishers
- Department of Education. (1996). *National Education Act No 27 of 1996*, Government Gazette, www.gov.za, accessed on 10 September 2015.
- Department of Education. (1999). *Emergency plans and guidelines for educators*, Government Gazette, www.gov.za.
- Department of Education.(2001). *White paper Six, Inclusive Education and Training System*, Government Gazette, www.gov.za
- Department of Education.(2002). Revised *National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)*, Government Gazette, www.gov.za
- Department of Social Development. (2005). *Children's Act No 35 of 2005*, Government Gazette, www.gov.za
- Dicicco-Bloom, B and Crabtree B. (2000). 'The qualitative research interview', *Medical Education Journal* Volume 46(4): 314-321
- Domegan, C and Fleming, D. (2007). Marketing research in Ireland: Theory and Practice, Third Edition, Gill and MacMillan Publishers
- Donald, D, Lazarus, S, Lolwama, P. (2009). Educational Psychology in social context. Third Edition, Oxford South Africa.
- Ebberson, L and Eloff, I. (2006). 'Identifying Asset-Based trends in sustainable programs which support vulnerable children', *South African Journal of Education*.26(3) 457-472
- Giese, S, Meinjies, H and Monson, J. (2005). 'Schools as Nodes of Care and Support for children affected by HIV, AIDS and Poverty'. Mathews S, Jamieson, L, Lake, L, and Smith, C. *South African Child Gauge* 2005: 37-42.

- Gina, M. J. (2013). Safety and security in schools: Case of KwaZulu-Natal province. Hatfield: University of Tshwane.
- Healy, K. (2005). Social Work theories in context, creating framework for practice, New York: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers.
- Hoadley, U. (2007). 'The boundaries of care in Education policy interventions for vulnerable children', African Journal of AIDS Res 6(3): 251-9.
- Hall K & Meintjes H (2014) Demography – Orphan hood. Children Count website, Children's Institute, UCT. Accessed September 2014: www.childrencount.ci.org.za
- Kaime, T. (2009). The African charter on the rights and welfare of the child, Pretoria, University Law Press.
- Khanare, F. (2009). School management team's response to learners who are orphaned and vulnerable in the context of HIV and AIDS: A study of two rural secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Unpublished Masters dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Kemp, M. 2013. School social work: addressing the social barriers to learning and development in order to ensure educational achievement. www.icon.org.za/current/content/uploads/.../Kemp Date of access: 18 May 2021. [PowerPoint Presentation].
- King, A. (2013). Exploring the experiences of the primary school educators of the primary school education of teaching AIDS orphans and vulnerable children. Unpublished master's Thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Kuhn, T. (1962). The structure of scientific Revolution, International Encyclopedia of unified sciences Volume 11(2), USA, University of Chicago.
- Liverpool, J., R. Alexander, M. Johnson, E. K. Ebba, S. Francis, and C. Liverpool. 2004. "Western Medicine and Traditional Healers: Partners in the Fight Against
- Mayer, U. (2009). New Direction in life course, Annual Review of Sociology, Journal Volume 35: 413- 433.
- Mbatha, Z. (2015). An investigation of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) Programme in Primary schools: A case of Primary School at Ntuzuma G-Section, Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Media in Education Trust. (2010). Care and support for teaching and learning. Research report published by media in education trust.
- Media in Education Trust. (2016). Care and support for teaching and learning. Research report published by media in education trust.
- Mgijima, M. N. (2014). Multi campus college in South Africa: Challenging capabilities of principals in managing institutional transformation. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 5(14)394
- Miley, K, O'Melia, D and DuBois, B. (1995). The ecological perspective and Social Work Practice, London, Green Wood Publishing Group.
- Mncube, V. & Harber, C. (2012). The dynamics of violence in South African Schools: Report. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). Focus groups Discussions as qualitative research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Naidoo, R. (2010). The role of the educator in addressing the needs of orphans and vulnerable children, South Africa, Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Zululand.
- Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. (2016). Evaluation of the Goelama Project, Published by the

NMCF.

- Nkosi, N. (2010). The effectiveness of social work services on the behavioral modification of learners in eSikhaleni in KwaZulu-Natal. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Zululand.
- Nkwi, P, Nyamongo, T and Ryan, G. (2011). Field research into socio cultural issues: Methodology Guidelines, Cameroon, Applied Social Sciences Research and Training.
- Ntombela, H. (2004). Revitalizing school social work services in a global economy: A developmental perspective, unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Zululand.
- Ntuli, L. T. (2013). Managing discipline in a post corporal punishment era in secondary schools in the Sekhukhune School District, Limpopo (Unpublished master's/doctoral thesis). Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Nxumalo, N, Scheerhout, N. (2007). An analysis on the lessons learned in addressing the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) situation in Southern Africa. Johannesburg, Health, and Development Africa.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A qualitative framework for collecting and analyzing data in focus group research. Retrieved from <http://creativecommons.org/licence/by/2.0>
- Parag, A. (2009). Educators' Perception of teaching learners about HIV/AIDS and of schools as caregiving centers for orphaned and vulnerable children: The case of an urban secondary school in Durban. Pretoria, Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of South Africa.
- Patel, L. (2005). Social Welfare & Social Development in South Africa. Oxford University Press South Africa.
- Perumal, R. (2015). The lives Psycho-Educational experiences of orphaned children living with their extended family members. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Johannesburg.
- Putney, L and Green, J and Kelly, J. (1999). Evolution of Qualitative research methodology guideline: Looking beyond defense into possibilities, Reading Research Quarterly Volume 34:
- Robbins, P, Chatterjee, P and Canada, R. (2006). Contemporary Human Behavior Theory: A critical perspective for Social Work, New York, Pearson Education Publishers.
- Robinson, N. (1999). 'The use of focus group methodology with selected examples from health research', Journal of Advanced Nursing. Volume No 29(4): 905-913.
- Rudolf, N. (2009). 'Schools and Communities: Building effective partnership', In Kimbel M, Lake, I, Pendlebury, P and Smith, C. South African Child Gauge 2009: 50-54.
- Shenton, A. (2004). 'Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects', Education for Information Journal 22(2004) 63-75.
- Stewart, T. W. & Shamdasani, P. N. (1990). Focus group: Theory and practice (applied social research methods) (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Sanefeld, S & Perrim, P (2014), Applying an Ecological model to vulnerable orphans and vulnerable children programming, Vol.24, 129-139.
- Strydom, H. (2013). 'An evaluation of the purposes of research in Social Work', Social Work Journal Volume No 10 (1570): 49-58.
- Sittered, H, (2016), School Social Workers perceptions of their role with the framework of inclusive education, Unpublish Masters Dissertation, North West University.
- Terre Blanche, M Durkheim K and Painter D. (2006). Research in Practice, Applied Methods for the Social Sciences, Cape Town, UCT Press.

Tsheko, G. (2007). Qualitative research report on orphans and vulnerable children in Palapye: Botswana, HSRC Press.

United Nations. (1999). UN Declaration on the rights and Welfare of the child. Government Gazette. www.umn.edu Accessed on 18 April 2016.

van Deventer, K. (2009). 'Perspectives on the implementation of life orientation in grade R-11 from selected Western Cape schools. South African Journal of Education 29(127-145).

Visser, M, Zungu, N and Magoro, N. (2010). 'Isibindi, creating circles of care for orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa: Post program outcomes'. Aids Care 27(8): 1014-1019.

Walsham, G. (1995). 'Interpretive Case Studies in IS research: Nature and Method', Europe information system Journal Vol No 4: 74-81.

Wilkinson, S. D. (2004). Focus group in research. In D. Silverman (Ed.), Qualitative research: Theory, method, and practice (pp. 177-199). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Williams, S. (2010). Can schools function as sites for children's services: Case study of two schools in the East Rand Johannesburg, unpublished master's Thesis, and University of Witwatersrand.

Willis, J. (1995). 'Recursive Reflection instructional design model on constructivist interpretivist theory', Educational Technology Journal 35(6): 5- 23

Wong, L. P. (2008). Focus group discussion: A tool for health and medical research. Singapore Medical Journal, 49(3), 256-261.

Wood, L and Guba, L. (2011). 'Care and Support of orphaned and vulnerable children at School: Helping teachers to respond'. South African Journal of Education 31(2075-290).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: LETTER TO GATE KEEPER

P.O Box 4648
 Sundumbili
 4490
 Date: 29 March 2016
 The District Director
 Department of Education
 Private Bag 550
 Uthungulu District
 Empangeni
 3880

Dear Mr. Chonco,

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN THREE SCHOOLS AT Esikhawini

I am Philani Mathonsi, a Social Work postgraduate student at the University of KwaZulu–Natal. I would like to request your permission to conduct a study entitled “**Exploring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools at Esikhawini**”. This study has the potential to broaden understanding of child protection intervention within the school context. The study is an academic requirement for the completion of my Masters in Social Work (MSW). I further request the assistance of DOE officials from the Special Needs Education Services (SNES) to help identify schools to be sampled as research sites. The following criteria will be used to select three schools for the study

- Primary schools with care and support committees that have sent regular progress reports to the DOE officials at SNES section.
- Primary schools with care and support committees that have received DoE conditional grants for children identified in need of care and support, and
- Schools located in the circuit of Mthunzi at Esikhawini.

I will avail myself for a meeting should there be questions or concerns about the study. The research supervisor is Prof Carmel Matthias at UKZN, Howard College Tel. 0312607531. My contact number is 0827034136.

Yours Sincerely

M.P. Mathonsi

UKZN, Howard College

Student Number: 215081637

APPENDIX TWO: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Consent to participate in academic research entitled: “Exploring the functioning of care and support committees in selected schools at Esikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal.”

Information on the research

I am Philani Mathonsi, a student at the University of KwaZulu -Natal, Howard College currently registered for a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW). I would like to request your participation in this research on the topic of “The functioning of care and support committees in selected school at Esikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal.

This research study will contribute to the domain of learner support services within the school environment and further promote schools to become centers of care and support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). It is anticipated that the research findings will contribute to policy development pertinent to care and support of OVC in schools.

Your school has been selected for the study because it has received funding and support from the Department of Education to assist OVC. In addition, this school has been selected because it has formed a committee to oversee the activities of care and support for OVC.

You will be protected on matters concerning confidentiality. The name of your school and the names of teachers will not be used in reporting the research findings. I would like to request your permission to tape record the interview/group discussion. Although there will be note taking during the focus group interviews, the tape recorder will assist in ensuring that the collected data is accurate as stated by the participants.

Your participation will be in a focus group interview/individual interview that will be facilitated by the researcher for approximately an hour. As research participants you may ask any clarifying questions before the start of the research. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time and your withdrawal will have no repercussions with your employer.

Should you have further questions or any complaints regarding the research or the professional conduct of the researcher, you may contact the research supervisor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College: Prof. Carmel Matthias or the UKZN research office on the contact details provided below.

Participant’s Signatures

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| ▪ Do you understand the reasons and details of this research? | YES /NO |
| ▪ Do you understand that your participation is not compulsory? | YES/ NO |
| ▪ Do you agree to participate in this research study? | YES /NO |
| ▪ Do you agree to be tape-recorded during the focus group interview or the individual interview? | YES /NO |

Contact details

Researcher's contact details	Supervisor's details	UKZN Research Office UKZN HSSREC Office
Mr. Philani Mathonsi Contact No:0827034136 Email:mathonsiphilani@webmail.co.za	Prof. Carmel Matthias Tel:(031)2607922 Email:matthiasc@ukzn.ac.za	Ms. P Ximba Tel:(031)2603587 Email. ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

Signature _____ Date _____

ISENGEZO SESIBILI: IFOMU LESIVUMELWANO SOKUBA NOXOXISWANO LOCWANINGO**OLUSEQENJINI NOLUBHEKENE NOMUNTU NGAMUNYE****ISIVUMELWANO SOKUBAMBA IQHAZA KUCWANINGO LWEZEMFUNDO ESIHLOKWENI ESITHI**

“UKUSEBENZA KWAMAKOMIDI OKUNAKEKELA NOKUSINGATHWA EZIKOLENI EZIQOKIWE eSikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal.

Ulwazi ngalolucwaningo

Ngingu Philani Mathonsi umfundi wase nyuvethi ya KwaZulu-Natal, kwisikhungu sase Howard. Ngifunda iziqu ze Masters Emkhakheni weze nhlalakahle. Ngifisa ukukunxusa ukuba ubambe iqhaza kulolucwaningo lwezemfundo oluphenya ngokusebenza kwamakomidi okunakekela nokusingathwa ezikoleni eziqokiwe eSikhawini, KwaZulu- Natal. Lolucwaningo luyoletha iqhaza elwazini lokunakekelwa kwabafundi ezikoleni luphinde luphakimise izikole eqhophelweni lokuba zibe abanakekeli babantwana abazintandane nabahlukumezekile. Kubhekeleke ukuthi lolucwaningo luqhubeke nokuletha iqhaza ekuthuthukisweni nokunakekelwa nokusingathwa kwabantwana abazintandane nabahlukumezekile ezikoleni.

Uzovikeleka mayelana nezinto eziyimfihlo ezimayelana nalo lolucwaning. Igama lakho ngokunjalo negama lesikole sakho soze kwadalulwa uma sekuthulwa umibiko yalo lolucwaningo. Ngifisa ukucela imvume yakho ukuthi ngisebenzise isiqhophamazwi uma sesiyiqalile inxoxo yalolucwaningo. Nakuba amanothi azobe ethathwa ngenkathi sikhuluma, kodwa isiqhophamazwi soqinisekisa ukuthi konke ukuyobe kade kuxoxiwe kuyikho njengoba kudalulwe umbambiqhaza kucwaningo.

Iqhaza lakho luyakuba kwinoxoxo eseqenjini noma inxoxo yomuntu ngamunye ezoholwa umcwaniningi okothatha isikhathi esilinganiselwa kwihora elilodwa. Njengombambi qhaza kuloluphenyo ungabuza noma yimuphi umbuzo kodinga ukuchazeleka kukhona ngaphambi kokuthi kuqale uphenyo. Iqhaza lakho kuloluphenyo olukuzinikela ngakho ke uvumelekile ukuhoxa noma yinini futhi lokho soze kwaba nomthelela omubi kumqashi wakho.

Uma kwenzeka uba nemibuzo eqhubekayo okukanye izikhalazo mayelana nendlela yokuziphatha engabanga yinhle kamcwaningi. Ungaxhumana nomphathi kamcwaningi Usolwazi Carmel Matthias osenyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natal esikhungwini sase Howard. Imniningwano yakhe yezoxhumano idalulwe ngezansi.

Usishicilelo sikakambambiqhaza

- Uyaziqhonda izizathu nemininigwano yalolucwaningo **YEBO /QHA**
- Uyaqonda ukuthi ukubamba kwakho iqhaza akuphoqiwe **YEBO/QHA**
- Uyavuma ukuba uqoshwe ngenkathi senza ucwaningo **YEBO/QHA**

- Uyavuma ukubamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo **YEBO/QHA**

Imininingwane yozoxhumano

Imininingwane yomcwaningi	Imininingwane kamphathi wocwaningo	IHOVISI LASE UKZN LOCWANINGO UKZN HSSREC office
Mr. Philani Mathonsi Contact No:0827034136 Email:mathonsiphilani@webmail.co.za	Prof. Carmel Matthias Tel:(031)2607922 Email:matthiasc@ukzn.ac.za	Ms. P Ximba Tel:(031)2603587 Email. ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Ushicilelo lukambambiqhaza

Usishicilelo _____ Usuku _____

APPENDIX THREE: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Structure of care and support committees

- Composition of the care and support committee in this school: How is this decided? Voluntary?
- How many members in the committee?
- Views/challenges related to the structure of the committee?
- Frequency of meetings?
- Roles of committee members?
- Role of school of management (support, funding)?
- Are learners represented on the committee?

B. Care and support projects:

- Types of care and support project
- Frequency of projects
- Types of learners' problems needing care and support?
- Estimation of children assisted per year and kinds of services offered?
- Children referred to social workers and for what services?
- Social Workers referrals (method, follow up, successes on referred cases)
- Committee members' perception about the co-ordination of care and support projects (Relevancy to teachers' professional roles, teachers' ability in terms of skills, availability of School resources to render care and support, teachers' availability in terms of time allocation for care and support)
- Other organizations supporting the care and support projects in schools (their services, frequencies of support)
- Committee members' knowledge of legislation pertinent to assisting the OVC (reporting procedure)
- Successes of care and support projects? (impact on child's social well-being and academic achievement)
- Challenges of care and support projects? (school-based challenges, DoE based challenges, community-based challenges)
- Are learners involved?

C. Funding

- Sources of finance for care and support (DoE, Local businesses, local and national NGO's and other government department)
- Funding prerequisite (qualifications, selection criteria)
- Funding conditions (frequency of financial reports on expenditures)
- Duration of funding and specifications of funding (Number of children to benefit)
- Schools' successes to utilize available funding (financial reports, Audit reports)

- Schools' challenges in utilizing available funding (school's bankruptcy, bank overdrafts and bank charges)

D. Networking

- Committee members' awareness of other organizations rendering care and support in schools
- Schools' participation on local structures pertinent to care and support functionality (local forums)
- Schools' ability to network with role players in care and support of children? (Kinds of schools' engagement with those role players)
- Challenges of networking (time constraints, teachers' main focus)
- Successes of networking (frequencies in hosting of NGO services for care and support)

E. Social worker's roles

- Social workers involvement in the schools' care and support programmes (Types of services and Organizations).
- Social workers' involvement in teacher training for care and support.
- Frequency of social workers' involvement (is their involvement requested by schools or is it their own initiatives)
- Role of DoE social work service

ISENGEZO SESITHATHATHU

IMIBUZO YOCWANINGO EBHEKISWE KWISITHANGAMI

A. Uhlaka lwamakomidi okunakekela nokhuselo

Ukwakheka lwamakomidi onakekelo nokhuselo: Ngabe lokhu kuthathelwa kanjani izinqumo? Kungaba ukuzingenela ekomidini ngokothando nokuzinikela? Mangaki amalunga alo lelikomidi?

Imibono /izinsalelo ezimayelana nohlaka lwekomidi?

- Ukubanjwa kwemihlangano ngokujwayelekile?
- Imisebenzi amalunga ekomidi?
- Imisebenzi yabaphathi besikole (Izimali, Ukuxhaswa)?
- Ngabe abafundi bamelelekile yini kulelikomidi?

B. Imisebenzi yonakekelo nokhuselo

- Uhlobo lwemisebenzi yonakekelo nokhuselo?
- Izikhathi ukwenzeka ngazo lemisebenzi ?
- Uhlobo lwezinkinga zabantwana ababhekhekana nazo ?
- Isilinganiso sesibalo sabantwana abasizakalayo ngonyaka nohlobo losizo abalutholayo
- Abantwana abadluliselwe ko Sonhlalakahle, Ikuphi okomele basizakale kukho?
- Ukudluliselwa kwabantwana kosonhlalakahle(Izindlela yokubadlulisela, Ukulandelela,Ukuphumelela mayelana nalokho okusuke kubikiwe kosonhlalakahle)
- Izindlela amalunga alamakomidi abheka ngayo unakekelo nokhuselo lwabantwabantwan. (Uxhumano nomsebenzi wothasha ngokoqeqesho lwabi, Ngabe uthisha uyakwazi yini ukuwenza lomsebenzi ngokwamakhono noqeqesho anawo, Ngabe zikhona yini izinqalasisinda ngaphakathi ezikoleni, ngabe uthisha uyaphumelela yini kulomsebenzi phezu kokuba ebhekene nomsebenzi wakhe wokufundisa).

- Izinye izinhlangano ezibamba iqhaza ekunakekelweni kwabantwana (Yiluphi usizo abalulethayo ,baluletha kangaki usizo ezikoleni)
- Ulwazi amalunga amakomidi analo mayelana nemithetho yokunakekelwa kwabantwana (Izindlela zokwenza imibiko)
- Izingqinamba ezimayelana nemisebenzi yonakekelo nokhuselo (Izingqinamba ezithintene nokusizwa kwabo abantwana ngokwezidingo zabo, Izingqinamba ezithintene nokufunda kwabo abantwana)?
- Izingqinamba kwimisebenzi yonakekelo nokhuselo lwabantwana (Izingqinamba ezithintene nezikole, Izingqinamba ezithintene nomnyango wezo mfundo, izingqinamba ezithintene nomphakathi).
- Ngabe bona abantwana bayabandakanywa yinki kolomsebenzi?

C. Izimali Zoxhaso

- Izindawo okungatholakala khona izimalo zoxhaso (Umnnyango wezemfundo, Osomabhezini bendawo, Izinhlangano ezinganganyelwe uhulumeni, neminye iminyango kahulumeni)?
- Imigomo okumele ilandelwe yokufumana uxhaso (Izidingo ezibekiwe, Indlela yoikuqoka abayohlumula)?
- Imigomo yoxhaso (Imibiko yezimali esebenzile)?
- Isikhaythi esinqunyelwe uxhaso nemibandela yalo (Inani lezingane elingahlomula)?
- Ukuphumelela kwezikole ukusebenzisa imali abaxhaswe ngayo (Imibiko yezimali, Imibiko kamncwaningi mabhuku).
- Izinselelo zezikole ekusebenziseni izimali (Izimo zesikole sokungabi nayo imali ,izinghlawulo eziphezulu zebhange ngenxa yokungabibikho kwemali kwi- account yesikole)

D. Ukusebenzisa

- Ulwazi kumalunga ekomidi mayelana nezinye izinhlangano ezenza umsebenzi wokhuselo nokunakekelwa kwabantwana?
- Iqhaza elibhanjwa izikole ekubeni amalunga ezinhloko eziseduze okunakekelwa kwabantwana (amaforamu akhona endaweni)?
- Ziyakwazi yini izikole ukuba noxhumano nezinye izinhlangano ezenza wona lomsebenzi wokunakekelwa kwabantwana (Izinhlobo zoxhumano ezajbandakanya lezinhlangano)?
- Izinselelo kwezokusebenzisana (ukungabi bikho kwesikhathi, imisebenzi ebhekene nothisha)

E. Iqhaza losonhlalakahle

- Iqhaza lawosonhlalakahle emsebenzini owenziwa yizikole wonakekelo nokhuselo?
- Iqhaza lawosonhlalakahle mayelana noqeqesho lothisha emsebenzini wonakekelo nokhuselo?
- Ngabe ukungenelela kosonhlalakahle kuvama ukwenzeka izikhathi ezingaki (ngabe ukungelelela kwabo kusuku kucelwe yisikole noma kusuka ngokwezinhlelo zabo)?
- Iqhazalini elifika nosonhlalakahle?

APPENDIX FOUR: SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMT)

Identifying details

Name of School: _____

Number of learners: _____

Number of educators: _____

Number of support staff: _____

Number of pupil ratio per educator: _____

Has this school identified orphans and vulnerable children (OVC): YES / NO

How many OVC in your school: _____

Are there any initiatives, either materialistic or psychosocial to assist OVC: YES / NO

When did this school assume the duty of OVC support?

Are these initiatives known by the department of education?

B. POLICY AND MANAGEMENT OF CARE AND SUPPORT

- How has the care and support policy been translated into practice?
- Successes in implementing care and support policy?
- Is the child caring functionality a part of the school's strategic plan?
- Challenges in implementing this policy?
- Role of the SMTs in formulating and implementing the care and support policy (Strategic planning)?

C. BUDGETERY ISSUES OF OVC

- Current or previous funding for care and support of OVC?
- Funding regulations specified?
- Successes in utilizing the funding?
- Challenges in utilizing the funding?
- Schools' ability to do fundraising?

D. NETWORKING

- Networking plan for advocating children's rights (long term or short term)
- School's participation in local forums pertinent to welfare of children
- School's ability to become centres of networking and hosting of NGO's services pertinent to care and support

ISJOBELELO SESINE: IMIBUZO EFINQIWE EBHEKISWE KUBAPHATHI BEZIKOLE**A. Imininingwane Yesikole**

Igama lesikole _____

Inani Labafundi _____

Inani lothisha _____

Inani labasenzi abagabona othisha _____

Inani Labafundi kuthisha ngamunye? _____

Ngabe izikole sakho sinalo yini uhla lwabantwana abazintandane nebakhubazekile?

_____ **Yebo/ Qha**

Ngabe lukhona usizo isikole sakho esiphumelela kukho ukusiza abantwana okungaba olwezinto eziphathekayo?

Noma olumayelana nje nokusiza abantwana ngezaluleko ezingqinambheni ababhekana nazo?

----- **Yebo/Qha**

Bangaki abantwana abazintandane nababahlukumezekile esikoleni sakho?

Isikole sakho saqala ninin ukuba abanakekeli lezingane ezizintandane nesihlukumezekile? _____

Ngabe imisebeko yalelonakekelo iyaziwa yini emnywangeri wezemfundo?

B. Imithetho nokuphathwa komsebenzi wokhuselo nonakekelo

- Ngabe Imithetho yonakekeo nokusingathwa kwabantwana yethulwe ngaziphi izindlela esikoleni sakho?
- Yikuphi isikole sakho esiphumelela kukho mayelana naloluhlelo lokusizwa kwabantwana?
- Ngabe onakekelo lwabantwana luyinxenye kwezinhlelo zesikole sakho?
- Izinselelo ekuthulkeni loluhlelo esikoleni sakho
- Izinguquko kuloluhlelo?
- Iqhaza elibhanjwa abaphathi mayelana nokuthulwa kwalemithetho yonakekelo nokhuselo?

C. Ezokongiwa kwemali mayelana nalo onakekelo lwabantwana

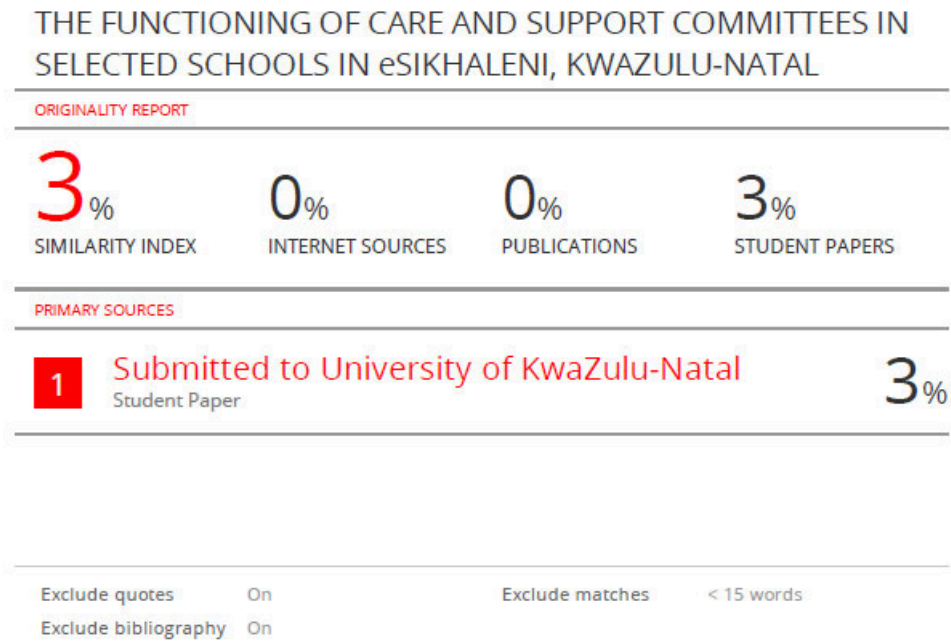
- Imali ekhona njengamanje noma esayatholwa isikole njengoxhaso kungabe isikola?
- Imigoma ebalulula ngokuphathwa kwemali?
- Impulelo ekusesebenziseni imali yoxhaso?
- Izinselelo mayelana nokuqhubezela uhlelo lonakekwelo esikoleni
- Izindlela zokuzikhandela imali?

D. Ukusebenzisa

- Izindlela zosebinziswano ukuze kuphakanyelwe amalungelo abantwana.
- Iqhaza lesikole kuma forums endawo abhekele inhlalakahle yabantwana

- Indima edlalwa yisikole ekuvumeleni ukuba yisizinda sosebenziswano nokuvuleleka kuzinhlangano ezinganganyelwe uhulumeni(NGO) ukuba zize esikoleni zizonika lwezenhlakahle usizo kubantwana

APPENDIX FIVE: TURNITIN REPORT



APPENDIX SIX: EDITORS LETTER

VENENCIA NYAMBUYA

LANGUAGE EDITOR

CONTACT

Researcher
University of KwaZulu-Natal

+27 63 307 6880

NyambuyaV@ukzn.ac.za or
paidanyasha11@gmail.com

09 August 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**Re: THE FUNCTIONING OF CARE AND SUPPORT
COMMITTEES IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN
ESIKHAWINI, KWAZULU-NATAL**

I write to confirm that language editing was performed
on the above dissertation.

Technical changes on spellings, grammatical expression
and scientific writing were made.

The editor shall not be held liable for errors imported in later
versions of the dissertation.

Sincerely,



Venencia Nyambuya (PhD)

PhD in Media & Cultural Studies: University of KwaZulu-Natal [UKZN]
Master of Arts in Media & Cultural Studies (Cum laude): UKZN
Bachelor of Science Honours in Media & Society: MSU- Zimbabwe



23 June 2016

Mr Moses Philani Mathonsi 215081637
School of Applied Human Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Mathonsi

Protocol reference number: HSS/0605/016M

Project Title: The functioning of care and support committees in selected schools in eSikhawini, KwaZulu-Natal

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 19 May 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

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

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

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

Yours faithfully

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

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor C Mattias
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Jean Steyn
Cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 280 3587/8350/4587 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 280 4809 Email: smbap@ukzn.ac.za / seymean@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

