



**Social Justice in Previously Disadvantaged Areas in the Post-1994 South Africa:  
Distributive Justice and Learner-Capability in Vulindlela Rural Schools.**

**By**

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## **Declaration**

I, Nduduzo Zondi, declare that:

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**Student's signature**

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**Date**



**Supervisors' signature**

**March 6, 2025**  
**Date**

## **Acknowledgements**

I dedicate my words of thanksgiving to my parents who made all efforts to ensure I ascend to higher education. This achievement is dedicated to them in their final resting place.

My special thanks also goes to my supervisor Professor Khondlo Mtshali for his love and unfailing guidance in this difficult journey even in times when I thought of surrendering. You are the perfect embodiment of ubuntu.

I also pass my special thanks to the school principals in Vulindlela secondary schools for allowing me to conduct this research in respective schools they are managing.

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Lastly, I thank everyone who encouraged me to march on until the final stage of this race.

## **List of acronyms**

ANC: African National Congress.

CAPS: Curriculum and Policy Statement.

DBE: Department of Basic Education.

DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training.

GCIS: Government, Communication Information System.

GHS: General Household Survey.

IDP: Integrated Development Plan.

IKS: Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

ISCE: International Standard Classification for Education.

KZN: Kwa Zulu Natal.

NCS: National Curriculum Statement.

OBE: Outcomes Based Education.

SA: South Africa.

Stats SA: Statistics South Africa

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## Abstract

Education and education-related themes are topical in contemporary South Africa. The struggles and campaigns for socially just education in South Africa have as their background, colonial and apartheid systems that discriminated against the colonized who were variously categorized as Black, Coloured, and Indian. However, the continuing negative impact of the colonial and apartheid educational system is mostly felt by the groups that are labelled as Black Africans and Coloured. While there is extensive research on social injustice and education in South Africa, most of the existing research does not incorporate the ideals and values of learners and their parents. To contribute towards filling this knowledge gap, the current study adopted the *ubuntu* framework and the Capability Approach as theoretical lenses to explore the issue of social justice among previously disadvantaged groups and areas in Post-1994 South Africa. Notably, the two frameworks emphasize the idea of social justice anchored on the notions of agency, values, and ideals of participants. Grounded on these notions, this study focused on the following objectives: firstly, to elicit and interrogate education-related values and ideals held by learners, their parents, and teachers; secondly, the research inquired about resource distribution that would facilitate the achievement of these values and ideals; finally, the research inquired if the achievement of these values and ideals would contribute to a socially just education system. The study adopted the mixed-methods research approach, utilising primary data generated from both semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The study sites are located in Vulindlela District, Northwest of Pietermaritzburg in Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa. Study participants included learners, school principals, and parents of Vulindlela rural school learners. Generated primary data were analysed guided by different analytical approaches including interpretive approach, content analysis, and grounded theory. The study's findings concur with extant literature regarding challenges faced by South Africa's Basic Education but contributed new knowledge towards understanding the impact of these challenges on the values, ideals, beings, doings, and agency of learners. Specifically, the study found that South Africa's basic education system does not contribute positively towards enhancing learners' capabilities and the realisation of ideals, values, and agency at Vulindlela rural schools. The study's recommendations suggest among other points, the need to restore the equilibrium in South Africa's education sector, through constructing an education system premised on 1) actions and beings upheld by learners and their agency, 2) the presence of capability inputs relevant to their values and agency, 3) cognizance of human diversity at

school, family, and community levels and the impact these dynamics have concerning the values, ideals and agency of the learners.

**Keywords:** Capability Approach, Education, Social Justice, South Africa, *Ubuntu*.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction and Background.**

Inequality continues to be one of the defining features of South African democracy since its inception in 1994. With a GINI coefficient of 60%, the Human Development Report shows South Africa as the most unequal country in the world (Human Development Report, 2023/2024). These inequalities can be observed among South Africans in their everyday lives. Notably, suburban areas in the country have access to quality services, while townships like Alexandra in the city of Johannesburg, and Khayelitsha in the city of Cape Town have poor-quality services. The disparity in levels of development in different parts of the country can also be observed in road infrastructure, which seems to differ depending on the class of people living in certain areas. For example, it can be observed that roads in Umhlanga differ in quality and standards compared to the roads in downtown Durban and roads in townships.

These inequalities are also evident in the area of basic education, with a notable disparity between rural and township schools, and the disparity between the public schools in townships and the private better-resourced schools in suburban areas. Generally, private schools tend to do better followed by public schools in towns and suburban areas. Markedly also the public schools in townships and rural areas tend to perform poorly academically compared to their counterparts in suburban areas. The existing research has attributed poor performance in subjects like physics and mathematics to the dearth of material resources in rural and township schools (Sheperd and Berg, 2023). The result of poor performance in townships and rural schools is that learners from these schools have limited choices at the tertiary level. Furthermore, despite being plagued by internal challenges that adversely affect the learners, the schools in rural and township areas are also facing a series of societal challenges. Chief among these is crime – the theft of school infrastructure and learning material is common in rural and township schools. Moreover, drug-related crimes and gangsterism endanger the day-to-day school activities in such areas.

The Department of South African Police Service crime statistics depict a remarkable increase of criminal activities in the first quarter (April to June) from 2020 to 2024. The data shows a notable increase of possession of illegal firearms and ammunition from 3800 in 2023 to 3832 in 2024 which has increased murder rates (SAPS crime statistics, 2024). These illegal firearms and ammunition are also used to commit armed robbery crimes which have grown from 5631 in 2023 to 5641 in 2023 (SAPS crime statistics, 2024). Notably, teachers and learners at schools are also targets of armed robbery given the lack of vigorous security at schools and are also the

victims of these illegal firearms and ammunition. Furthermore, the data depicts that drug-related crimes rose from 41587 to 44735 in the same period of the report (SAPS crime statistics, 2024). Likewise, drug-related crimes have an adverse impact on the arena of education in South Africa. It is further worth noting that two schools that will be investigated are serviced by a police station that ranks sixteenth nationally, and fourth at the provincial level in light of serious crimes reported. The myriads of these challenges impose a huge constraint on achieving a socially just education in democratic South Africa. The provision of resources and the reduction of social ills may pave the way to social justice in education. However, if freedom involves first and foremost the liberation of a person's mind, then we need to inquire about the visions, values, and goals of people (Nyerere, 1968). Consequently, this study explores the values and ideals upheld by the pupils, their parents, and teachers in schools located in previously disadvantaged communities in the study's context.

Moreover, it is imperative to examine the extent, if any, to which education/training received is consistent with the values and ideals championed by the learners and their parents, and the teachers as well in the communities that were hitherto marginalized. This includes assessing 1) if the curriculum reflects pupils' values and ideals, 2) whether learners have meaningful access to learning material essential for achieving their values and ideals, and 3) the diverse factors existing at personal, environmental, and community levels that can either empower or hinder the achievement of values and ideals. This study is premised on the view that social justice and progress in previously marginalized communities centers on the advancement of the values and ideals of people residing in these communities. A brief overview of the history of education in South Africa is essential to highlight the exigency of values and ideals held by hitherto marginalized groups.

## **1.2 Brief Overview of Education in South Africa**

Prior to 1994, education opportunities for South Africans were distributed along racial centering on the different racial groups in the country. After the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, three notable education systems were created (McKeever, 2017). The British colonial government established separate education systems for the whites and African indigenous peoples (McKeever, 2017). While the whites had access to well-funded public schools, with a curriculum aimed at promoting English values, thus creating an English world, learners of African descent could only attend poorly funded missionary schools which operated curriculums that sought to convert them to Christianity and to meet the industrial labour

demands (Lebeloane, 2006; McKeever, 2017). The colonial government imported teachers abroad for the white English public schools, while missionary schools had relatively unqualified teachers (McKeever, 2017). Critics point out that missionary education intended to forge economic inequalities between the white settlers and indigenous people (Majeke, 1952). In reaction to the white English schools, the Afrikaners created a similar education system, however, Afrikaans was the medium of instruction in these schools which also operated curriculums designed to reflect Afrikaner history and values (McKeever, 2017).

The National Party made up of mostly Afrikaners following came into power in 1948 and brought reforms to the education system. (Christie and McKinney, 2016). The white schools (English and Afrikaners) were merged into a single education system that was governed by the apartheid government and continued to receive huge funding (Christie and McKinney, 2016). Some reforms were also extended to schools attended by learners of African descent, whose education shifted from missionary to Bantu education (Lebeloane, 2006). Notably, the Bantu education schools were poorly funded, under-resourced, and had unqualified teachers (Lebeloane, 2006). The primary goals of Bantu education were similar to those of missionary education, which contributed to creating economic inequalities between the whites and indigenous people while enabling training aimed at meeting the industrial labour demands that benefitted the white community (McKeever, 2017). Amidst the rising internal and external calls to end the white minority rule and set the stage for a power transition, the National Party government decided to protect the interests of the white schools. This was achieved through the establishment of state-aided model c schools in the latter part of the apartheid rule (Christie and McKinney, 2017).

In addition, the government conferred a considerable amount of power on the governing body of these schools, allowing them control over admission, property, and financial matters for such schools, whose demography consists of mostly white learners (Christie and McKinney, 2017). These are the schools that would continue with the legacy of coloniality, which privileged the whites while disadvantaging the indigenous black people. Hendrik Verwoed, the apartheid Prime Minister, openly declared that “Bantu people have no place in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour” (Hlatshwayo, 2023). It is thus evident that the missionary and Bantu education systems were not designed to advance the values and ideals of certain groups of persons. These education systems were rather aimed at advancing the interests of the whites while suppressing the values and ideals of various groups of indigenous peoples. This argument is supported by black people’s sustained resistance against Bantu

education seen as a tool that consolidated racial discrimination and white domination (Marx, 2024).

Upon ascension to power in 1994, the African National Congress-led democratic government introduced major educational reforms aimed at addressing the historic educational injustices. These reforms included the division of the educational system into two national departments: the Department of Basic Education (DBE) responsible for administering the pre-tertiary level of education, and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) responsible for the post-secondary level of education (Macha and Kadakia, 2017). These reforms would see the previously disadvantaged groups of persons equally having access to education institutions of their choice. In South Africa, previously or historically disadvantaged groups refer to the people who were unfairly discriminated against and marginalised due to their skin colour (Chinyamurindi, 2017). These groups included women, men, children, and people living with disabilities from various racial groups except whites (Chinyamurindi, 2017). For these categories of people, education comprised part of the constitutionally enshrined human rights under Section 29, which declared that everyone has the right to education (Act 108 of 1996). Different legislation and policies were later enacted to support and enforce the provisions of s29 of the Constitution, which included the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, Adult Basic Education and Training Act 52 of 2000 (GCIS, education, 2016/2017) and the Basic Education Laws Act recently enacted by the Government of National Unity.

White Paper in Education and Training in Democratic South Africa, Education White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education, and National Schools Nutrition Programme comprise a few education policies that were meant to ensure a meaningful realization of the right to education. Major curriculum reforms were also implemented which include Outcomes based Education (OBE) of 1997, the National Curriculum Statement of 2002, and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement in 2012. Notably, while the budget allocation for education has been declining over the years, this sector remains the largest recipient of funds from the government's annual budget. Statistical data shows that educational funds declined from 4.7% in 2022/2023 financial year to 4.4% in 2023/2024 (Bohmer and Kruger, 2024). Furthermore, there is evidence that spending per learner dropped from R27,576,00 in the period 2019/2020 to R26,437,00 in the 2022/2023 financial year (Bohmer and Kruger, 2024).

These changes resulted in a remarkable increase in enrollment of learners of Black Africans, Coloureds, and Indians in educational institutions from 10,5 million in 1995 to 14,8 million in 2016 (GCIS, education, 2016/2017). In terms of gender, the GCIS (2016/2017) report shows an increase in black females attending educational institutions compared to males. On the age aspect, the GCIS (2016/2017) report also indicates that the number of people aged 5 years and above attending a public education institution soared between 2001 and 2016. While there has been an increase in the number of people attending schools and with an education qualification, there has also been a decrease in the number of people not attending schools and without education (GCIS, education, 2016/2017). Despite these major achievements, discourse on a socially just education in SA points out a myriad of challenges that need to be addressed especially in township and rural schools. These issues range from insufficient competent teachers, teaching and learning resources, narrow curriculum, overcrowded classrooms and poor school infrastructure. Extant research has linked poor school performance and high rates of dropouts in rural and township schools to the aforementioned challenges (Books and Ndlalane, 2011; Hay and Beyers, 2011; Du Plessis, 2019). Considering the achievements and failures made in the education sector, the current study contends that it is necessary to evaluate if the current education system is cognizant of learners' values and ideals.

Also, it is imperative to examine the dynamic interplay between the aforementioned issues on one hand, and the values and ideals on the other. While seeking to understand the detrimental impact of these issues on values and education, it is equally important to investigate how neglect of values and ideals contributes to high rates of dropouts at schools. Mohanty (2009) points out that non-attendance and increased dropouts are attributable to the continued neglect of values championed by the communities, parents, and pupils. Therefore, there is a negative nexus between low/non-attendance and learner dropouts and the neglect of values and ideals championed by pupils, their parents, and communities respectively. These highlight challenges of development and justice in the developing world which can be resolved through increased attention to values and ideals championed by pupils, parents, teachers, and communities. Allocation of adequate financial and material resources is also essential in achieving the educational values and ideals aimed at meaningful development and justice in the developing countries.

### **1.3 Problem statement.**

The challenges confronting education in the township and rural parts of South Africa are multifaceted. Markedly, while the pass rates in these schools have been improving in township and rural areas, the ex-model c schools and private schools continue to do better than schools in townships and the rurality. Data from Stellenbosch University in partnership with the Bureau for Economic Research depicts that while schools in quintiles one to three have exhibited significant progress in mathematics performance, these schools are far behind compared to those in quintiles four to five. Quintile refers to the classification of schools according to their needs and the socioeconomic status of the communities they serve (Ogbonnaya and Awuah, 2019). Quintiles one to three are classified as no-fee-paying schools, since they serve poor communities and thus receive huge government funding (Ogbonnaya and Awuah, 2019). Quintiles four to five are fee-paying schools located in wealthy communities and thus receive less government funding (Sheperd and Berg, 2023). In 2022, quintile one to three schools improved their mathematics performance from 20% in 2016 to 31%, while quintile four to five increased their performance from 30% to 45% during the same study period (Sheperd and Berg, 2023). This reflects inequity in the performance between quintiles one to three and four to five schools in certain learning subjects.

The poor performance in quintiles one to three schools has partly been attributed to the shortage of material resources. The shortage of material and financial resources constrains learners' agency and the achievement of their values and goals. The bulk of existing research on social justice and education attaches immense focus on the distribution of resources and less attention to the values and ideals upheld by learners, teachers, and parents. While material and financial resources are important, it is also crucial to interrogate the personal, social, and environmental factors that ensure that resources are fully utilised to achieve learners' values and goals. The inability of schools to provide necessary material resources compromises the achievement of learners' values and goals. The latter contributes to learners' alienation and poor academic performance. Therefore, neglect of values and ideals championed by learners, their parents, teachers, and communities should be interpreted as a challenge that is prone to educational issues like dropouts and low/non-school attendance. These and other challenges can be further exacerbated by the continued neglect of personal, social, and environmental factors that exist.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study.**

This study advances the view that values and ideals are essential for genuine development and justice in the developing world. The study seeks to apply this view in the education sector focusing on the rural parts of South Africa. Thus, the first objective of this study is to elicit the values and ideals upheld by teachers, parents, and pupils of Vulindlela rural schools. Secondly, the study aims to interrogate the means that are pivotal for pupils to achieve their values and ideals. Lastly, this study will critically evaluate whether the achievement of pupils' values and ideals can contribute to a socially just education that is much needed in the country.

#### **1.5 Key questions of the study.**

The following are the main research questions.

1. What are the values and ideals championed by teachers and parents of Vulindlela schools' pupils, and by pupils themselves?
2. What kind of resource distribution will allow the pupils at Vulindlela rural schools to pursue their anticipated values and ideals of life?
3. To what extent does the achievement of these values and ideals contribute to a socially just education?

#### **1.6 Preliminary Literature Review**

The topic of social justice and education has drawn enormous attention from scholars. While some have sought to conceptualise a socially just education, others have taken the liberty to suggest theories of justice that can resolve the challenges of education. In conceptualizing a socially just education, Masebala Tjabane and Venitha Pillay (2011) propose inclusive education, reflexive praxis, and compassionate citizenship education as reflective of a successfully transformed and socially just higher education in South Africa. Similarly, Hay and Beyers (2011) perceive inclusive education as that which accommodates students with varying differences and different abilities within a single classroom environment.

On the question of relevant theories for education, Jan Niuewehuis (2010) suggests a geo-historical approach to developing a theory of social justice on education, that will consider historical factors that have shaped contemporary undesired realities. For Niuewehuis (2010) it is essential to depart from narrow Eurocentric conceptions of social justice as resource distribution. Similarly, Merridy Wilson-Strydom (2015) rejects Eurocentric theories of justice given their neglect of student differences, abilities, and well-being. Advocating Amartya Sen's

Capability Approach, Wilson-Strydom (2015) suggests that it is essential to consider the abilities and well-being of students, and what they value as worth doing and being.

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study.**

This study is anchored on the ontological assumption that human beings are by nature socially embedded individuals. As individuals, human beings are because of others. A popular isiZulu saying that captures the social embedded of human beings is *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*. This can be translated as one is because of others. However, isiZulu speakers are also aware of human diversity, they thus say *abantu abayi nganxanye njenga manzi*. This means that people do not always flow in the same direction as water does. Since one is because of others, the Basotho people bolster this with another saying which is *feta kgomo o tshware motho*. This saying advises that when one is faced with a choice between material wealth and saving human life, one must choose saving human life. Mogobe Ramose (2001) argues that justice is a balance among the living and between the living and spiritual beings. Colonialism disrupted this balance by pitting human beings against each other and by separating the colonized from their spiritual bearings. Notably, values and ideals are part of spiritual bearing. Social justice is thus a restoration of this balance.

Social justice is not simply the distribution of material resources. The capability approach, as advocated by Amartya Sen (1980), illuminates key aspects of justice which are values, agency, individual and social context, which the capability approach calls conversion factors, and material resources. Thus, the starting point of this study is to ascertain the values held by learners, parents and teachers of this research's case study. For social justice, it is not enough to distribute resources, the distributed resources should contribute to the values and goals of the affected individuals and community. The concept of conversion factors captures the contexts that facilitate or inhibit the achievement of individual and collective values and goals. This question of conversion factors and human diversity is of huge paramountcy as it prompts one to consider a variety of factors that can constrain learners from making valuable achievements through education. These factors range from disability, sex, health status, culture, religion, and so on. This means learners experiencing any of these factors require extra attention to assist them make valuable achievements. There is thus synergy between an ubuntu philosophical approach and the capability approach. An *ubuntu* approach anchors the study in its physical locality, that is, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Second, ubuntu provides this study with its ontological foundation. Ubuntu and Capability approaches have agency and values as

key constructs of social justice. Through the concept of conversion factors, the capability approach allows this study to ascertain whether distributed resources help achieve the values and goals envisioned by individuals and communities.

### **1.8 Research Methodology**

A mixed methods approach was used in conducting this academic inquiry on social justice and education. The study employed methods of data collection which were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Quantitatively, open-ended questionnaires were used to collect data from parents, while interviews, aimed at gathering the views of the learners and school principals, constitute the qualitative aspect of the research. All primary data was acquired through personal interaction with the targeted study participants, except in the case of parents where such data was obtained through survey questionnaires. School principals, learners, and parents were the study participants comprising a sample of thirty-five. The study was conducted in five targeted schools in rural Vulindlela district located west of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu Natal. For ethical reasons bordering on protecting participants' identities, the study used random capital letters to label the schools. Thus, the schools that participated in the research are labelled as E, K, L, Q, and U. The collected data was presented through textual and tabular methods and analyzed using qualitative content analysis, an interpretive approach, and a grounded theory. The study adopted mostly the non-probability sampling approach, utilizing both quota and purposive sampling techniques.

### **1.9 Significance of the Study.**

While colonial and apartheid educational systems were created to serve the social, political, and economic aspects of colonialism, these educational systems were anchored on colonization of the mind resulting in the devaluation and objectification of the colonized. The post-1994 democratic governments therefore made efforts to redress the challenges and inequalities existing in the education sector. It is thus paramount to assess if the education reforms introduced by the democratic government can reverse the impact of missionary and Bantu Education. The core objective of this study is to evaluate the extent to which the post-1994 South African government has been able to address the educational injustices of the past. Understandably, most of the existing literature on social justice in education tends to focus on material distributional aspects of justice, this study incorporates agency, supporting structures (what the capability approach calls conversion factors), values and ideals. Firstly, it is important to gauge the agency of the community, teachers, parents and learners in the

functioning of the educational system. Secondly, it is vital to assess the extent to which the educational system is guided by the values and ideals of all its stakeholders. Thirdly, this research will critically evaluate whether proper supportive structures (conversion factors) are provided for the functioning of the education system. These three aspects of justice in education are missing in the existing literature.

### **1.10 Delimitation of the study.**

While the discussion of social justice in education requires the participation of communities, teachers, parents, and learners, this study restricted itself to teachers, parents, and learners of secondary schools in the Vulindlela district. Vulindlela is a black and economically underdeveloped area whose challenges may be different from those experienced in other areas. The aim of this qualitative study is therefore not to generalize its findings, but to highlight the importance of agency, values and ideals in social justice.

### **1.11 Brief Overview of Vulindlela Rural District.**

#### **1.11.1 Geographical location.**

It is worth noting that the location of the Vulindlela rural district is the direct product of policy-making that was underpinned by racial discrimination during the apartheid rule. As a result, Vulindlela is one of the previously disadvantaged communities belonging to what the apartheid regime considered Bantustans. Also known as Homelands, Bantustans refer to “Black independent areas” officially allocated and recognized by the apartheid government under the framework of the Native Land Act of 1913 and Group Areas Act of 1950 (Dugard, 2020). These are the areas where the Black retained their political rights; hence depriving them of the nationality and citizenship of South Africa (Dugard, 2020). The introduction of Bantustans, which was the racially informed strategic extension of Homelands consolidated the racial division between urbanity and rurality under the apartheid rule in South Africa (Marx, 2024).

While urban areas were characterized by the proper allocation of services, infrastructure, presence of industries and factories, and fertile lands, the rural areas (Bantustans) on the other hand were mostly infertile in terms of agricultural farming (Marx, 2024). Also, the Black people residing in Bantustans had no access to quality services nor, were there any industries and factories in which they could work. This structure and arrangement were notably supported by the existing separate education policies aimed at consolidating the racial divisions between whites and non-whites. As alluded to above, the Verwoed-led administration introduced rural

education (Marx, 2024). The reason behind separate education systems was to create not only a racially divided society but also an unequal society between Blacks and Whites (Marx, 2024). It is on this basis that the Vulindlela rural district can be referred to as a former Bantustan.

Covering roughly 2800 ha of land, this rural district is located west of Pietermaritzburg Central Business District, and north-west of the Greater Edendale area (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2015/2016). Most of the lands in Vulindlela currently belong to the Ingonyama Trust, one of the official landholders in Kwa Zulu Natal rural areas (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2015/2016). Traditional councils and chiefs are responsible for land allocation, planning, administration, and delivery of services undertaken by the Msunduzi municipality (Vulindlela Local Area Plan, 2016). Available land is mostly used for subsistence farming, residential zones, and animal grazing. Below is a Pietermaritzburg aerial map showing all sub-regions of this City, including the Vulindlela rural area.

### Aerial Map of Pietermaritzburg

**Map 1: Municipal Wards and Boundaries.**



**Source:** Msunduzi Municipality Integrated Development Plan Review, 2016/2017.1.11.2  
**Demographic information.**

The population size of Vulindlela district was estimated to be around 147,999 as per the 2011 national survey census, a population size which has changed over time (eThekwini and

Msunduzi Municipalities Appraisal Report, 2015). This figure (147 999) rose to 161,562 people in 2013, representing a 2% population increase annually (Vulindlela Local Area Plan, 2016). Ages between 1-20 constitute the largest demographic of this area's population at 45 % (eThekweni and Msunduzi Municipalities Appraisal Report, 2015). Another 33% comprises the Youth aged between 21-40 makes 33% of the population followed by 15 % of adults aged between 41-60, and the elderly constituting a minority of 7 % (eThekweni and Msunduzi Municipalities Appraisal Report, 2015). Typical to many other former Bantustans in KwaZulu-Natal, the residents of Vulindlela are predominantly IsiZulu language-speaking Black people. In the year 2022, the Msunduzi population was recorded at 817725 with the Vulindlela population having risen to 199 809 (Vulindlela Local Area Plan, 2023). Given the two per cent annual population growth, it is estimated that Vulindlela will house roughly 240 072 people by 2033 (Vulindlela Local Area Plan, 2023)

### **1.11.3 Political landscape of Vulindlela rural district.**

Vulindlela rural district comprises 10 municipal wards jointly governed by municipal ward councillors and local chiefs or amakhosi (Integrated Development Plan, 2019/2020). Also, Vulindlela comprises one of the 7 sub-district areas under the Msunduzi Local Municipality.

### **1.11.4 Socio-Economics.**

Economically, this is a low-income residential area, with its working-class mostly involved with low-paying jobs, whilst only a few are within the professional job market. Unemployment is rife, with the majority depending on government grants (Integrated Development Review, 2015/2016.). Common business enterprises in the area range from spaza shops and many unlicensed liquor shops.

### **1.11.5 Basic Services and Infrastructure**

Vulindlela rural district is the most underdeveloped district in PMB city when considering its basic services and infrastructure (Integrated Development Plan, 2015/2016). Infrastructurally, this rural district enjoys electricity supply both from the local municipality and Eskom (Integrated Development Plan, 2015/2016). Furthermore, the Msunduzi municipality has ensured access to safe and healthy drinking water in almost all homes (Integrated Development Plan, 2015/2016). While schools are scattered around the area and poorly resourced, few health clinics are providing health-related services (Integrated Development Plan, 2015/2016).

## **1.12 Structure and Organization.**

This dissertation consists of eight chapters which are as follows:

Following the background and introduction above, the research will proceed to chapter two. The chapter will aim to provide an extensive literature review on education in SA. The review includes an exploration of extant literature on curriculum change and the value of education in South Africa. Moreover, this chapter explores the topic of social justice in existing scholarly works in the South African context. The discussion will also reflect on theories envisaged as viable solutions to education problems in South Africa after 1994. Under this, chapter, a clear articulation of knowledge gaps to be filled by the current research is made towards enunciating the originality of this research.

Under chapter three, attention is directed towards presenting a conceptual framework that guides the research at hand. The chapter aims to understand what a theory is and to outline the role and importance of theory in scientific research. The discussion is followed by a presentation of theories of justice, aiming to depict their merits and demerits in the study. The principal theory of the study is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter four deals with the research paradigm, methodology, and design. This mixed-method research study is guided by Ubuntu-centered interpretive and critical paradigms. The chapter also delineates the research design including an exploration of the study's problem statement, sampling techniques, and research instruments to be used to collect, present, and analyze data.

Chapter five of this study presents and analyses findings regarding the first and second research questions. The first question intends to understand the values upheld by learners, teachers, and parents of learners schooling in Vulindlela rural schools. The second question which will be responded to in this chapter focuses on understanding the contribution, if any, of education in the achievement of actions and beings preferred by learners.

Chapter six answers the third research question which seeks to understand and outline the nature of resources necessary towards the achievement of values and ideals of lives upheld mostly by the learners.

Chapter seven answers the fourth research question. This question intends to understand if the achievement of ideals and values can be perceived as a positive contribution to the common goal of a socially just education.

Chapter eight of the study summarizes key research findings, provides recommendations pertinent to the topic of socially just education based on key findings, and followed by concluding remarks on the entire research.

### **1.13 Chapter summary.**

This introductory chapter opened with a brief prelude and background that reflected on the educational achievements made since 1994 and the ongoing social ills in rural and township schools. The problem statement was formulated around the identified prevailing social ills, particularly the predicaments of education. The research objectives and key research questions were clearly outlined. This was followed by a preliminary literature review around the topic of social justice and education in post-1994 South Africa. The review depicted how a socially just education is conceptualized, and theories of justice advocated as possible remedies to issues of resource disparity, and poor school outcomes to mention a few. This chapter also presented the *ubuntu* and capability approach as conceptual and theoretical frameworks to guide this study. The discussion of methodology indicated that a mixed methods approach will be used in this study. The chapter further discussed sampling and sample size, data collection and data analysis. The last part of the chapter presents an overview of the research site Vulindlela District and its secondary schools. The next chapter is a literature review chapter that engages existing research on social justice and education in South Africa.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review.**

### **2.1 Introduction.**

This is a literature review chapter. In the words of Ellen Rhoades (2011), literature review can be understood as the assessment of previous scholarly works on a particular subject area. Such assessment is highly recommended in any scientific research as it exposes the strengths, weaknesses and validity of knowledge and evidence on the subject area of interest (Rhoades, 2011). These works include but not limited to essays, journal articles, books, conference papers etc. A close and appropriate evaluation of literature ultimately yields a truly informed original contribution to the existing body of knowledge on a particular research topic. Such original contribution can assume the form of adding, changing, and or critiquing evidence or information. Hence, research is born out of such inquiry. This chapter thus reviews literature that focusses on social justice and education in South Africa after 1994. This includes discussion of historical factor(s) that intrigued quest for a socially just education, in which case being racism as per this study's contention. Such historical account is necessary as it paints out a picture of the education disparities premised on racism. Furthermore, this historical outline is a breakthrough for better understanding of how a socially just education has been understood and conceptualized in the democratic South Africa and why. Following a close assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the reviewed literature, this chapter will state briefly how a socially just education should be conceived and why based on historical factors. This conception will serve as the proposed original contribution to the discourse of a socially just education in South Africa. Such contribution includes, if necessary, the task of theorizing about an ideal socially just education in South Africa using this study's significant constructs.

### **2.2 Traditional account of justice practices and theoretical conceptions.**

It is fair to contend that no human community has been without the concept of justice. The pre-colonial Africa is one of the living pieces of evidence to this claim. A careful consideration of values and norms upheld in different African societies testifies to a great deal of existence of justice and the significance that has been attached to it. Fair and equal distribution of economic wealth among individuals who participated and contributed to the production of that net wealth suffice to be considered as justice (Nyerere, 1962). A fashion of distribution found in Ujamaa championed by Julius Nyerere (1962) and in other African societies. The economic batter system too is a pure reflection of a just and mutual trade that took place between individuals of different societies. Furthermore, consensus was one of the norms and values highly upheld in

African societies in particular. Such consensus was central in law making processes, adjudication of disputes and appointment of rulers for example, a genuine reflection of justice (Soyapi, 2014).

In South Africa, such equal economic distribution, economic batter system, political consensus, and many other forms of interdependent relations intended for human development were interpreted as *ubuntu*. According to Lesteka, (2014) ubuntu could be understood from two dimensions namely as a process and a condition (Letseka, 2014). It is a process when understood as moral theory whose primary concern is to instill humane dispositions (Letseka, 2014). It is a condition when those instilled humane dispositions and other moral values are practiced as a way of life by all individual members of the society (Letseka, 2014). Based on Lesteka's (2014) description of ubuntu, it is fair to argue that in the traditional African context the concept *ubuntu* is the entire embodiment of justice and any action hampering ubuntu is simply injustice.

Likewise, Don J.O. Omale (2006) offers an *ubuntu* oriented account of justice in pre-colonial societies. He notes that restorative justice in particular, has been integral part of the Nguni people comprised of AmaZulu and AmaXhosa (Omale, 2006). The Nguni people and many other African Bantu speaking people have traditionally relied upon restorative justice to peacefully settle their dispute (Omale, 2006). A traditional form of justice criticized as hindering development by the colonial masters while remaining popular among the native people (Keulder, 1998). Using a post-conflict situation, Luc Huyse (2008) notes that several African societies display an array of traditional justice systems whose role centers around peacemaking, reconciliation, and punishment of offences among other things. The Rwandan Gacaca traditional courts and Burundi institution of Bashingantahe are among the traditional justice systems referred to by Huyse (2008).

In the Asian context, Buddha's notion of justice too was legal in nature. He advocated for fair reward and punishment and right to the defiance of unjust laws by individuals (Tjabane and Pillay, 2011). Likewise in the Western setting, Aristotle's justice conception evolved around law and fairness. He contended that acts that are both lawful and fair amount to justice, thus injustice being actions that are incompatible with lawfulness and fairness (Winthrop, 1978). The aspect of fairness was later advanced by the conservative tradition of justice heavily underpinned by Adam Smith's *laissez fair* economic policy in the eighteenth century (Bassiry and Jones, 1993). A *laissez-fair* economic policy is that which champions for minimal state

intervention in economic life whilst recognizing the individual as a primary actor in economic development and growth (Bassiry and Jones, 1993). Smith believed his laissez fair policy as the guarantor of his envisioned just society (Bassiry and Jones, 1993).

The question of the extent of state intervention in the economic realm was later engaged by the liberal justice tradition. Whilst the old liberals rallied for minimal state intervention in economic sphere, the new liberals believed immense state involvement was instrumental for prevalence of justice. Its proponent(s) rally for an active collective human agency and democracy rather than individually and or state centred social justice (Starr, 1999). The main argument is that every person should benefit equally from their vested participation in socio-economic activities and social institutions (Starr, 1999). For the radicals, such equal beneficiation serves as a drive towards a much equitable redistribution of wealth and significant social services ranging from infrastructure, basic services, and retail services for example (Starr, 1999).

Departing from the discussion of justice origins, Sharon Gewirtz (1998) sought to classifies justice into two dimensions namely distributive and relational justice. Distributive justice entails the criteria through which goods and services are distributed while relational justice speaks to the relationship between the structures and processes of governance and the governed (Gewirtz, 1998). On the other hand, Wendy Lambourne (2004) differentiated between retributive, procedural, restitutive, and social justice. Retributive justice entails the due punishment of wrongful acts whilst restitutive justice speaks to the compensation of the wronged party (Lambourne, 2004). Lastly, social justice seeks to offer individuals with the means of achieving social equality. Given centrality of social justice in this dissertation, it is necessary to outline the literature on definitions and description attached to this construct.

### **2.3 Defining, understanding, and describing social justice.**

Similar to other social science concepts, defining and understanding social justice has been contentious among scholars interested in it. Nevertheless, it should be taken into cognizant that different factors like theories history, culture, and context are critical in shaping conception(s) of social justice. influence how social justice is to be conceived.

One of the plural social justice definitions is offered by Gewirtz (2002), Gribb (2002), and Taylor (1997) who perceive it as “equal redistribution of social amenities, and recognition and promotion of cultural diversity”. Clearly, this definition carries both a Rawlsian distributive notion and cognitive element espoused by Young. Further championing a distributive centred

understanding of this concept is David Miller (1999). For Miller (1999), social justice entails a fair and equal distribution both of good and bad things among individuals sharing the same community. Moreover, social justice has been understood as a “fundamental search for equity and fairness in resources, rights, and treatment of marginalized individuals and groups of people without equal power” (Constantine et al, 2007). Bell (1997) describes social justice as an envisioned society where equity is the bases for resource distribution and assurance of physical and psychological safety and security of its members.

Lazarus D.M. Lebeloane (2017, p3), defines social justice as “state of affair in which societal members of different ages, culture, classes, disabilities, gender, income, languages, race or religion share social goods and services equally”. Furthermore, a situation in which all societal members reside peacefully and equally share all available services is depictive of social justice (Moja, Luescher, and Schreiber 2015). Digressing from a purely and explicit distributive oriented understanding, Sam Gindin (2002) posits socially just society as that which fosters and encourages mutual development and capacity of all society members. This definition highly resonates with this study’s major objective which seeks to evaluate the extent to which Vulindlela rural schools’ education can promote learner capabilities. As will be seen in the preceding sections, a capabilities conducive pedagogical environment is envisaged as ubuntu given South Africa’s educational history.

Except for Gindin (2002), a careful analysis of these definitions and understandings exhibit social justice as hinging around the notion of (re)distribution. In this study, the wide assumption that social justice can only be experienced through fair social distributive system is criticized as it neglects the question of meaningful accessibility to those distributed assets by the subjects of different race, class, gender, culture, etc. In other words, are individuals of different backgrounds able to effectively access and utilize the distributed resources, services, and goods which are the means with which to foster dignified standards of lives individually or collectively? Given the lack of clarity over the question of accessibility, the proposed fair distributive justice cannot guarantee ubuntu, hence social justice in South Africa pursued through the educational lens.

Human resources, material resources, and school infrastructure are some of the tangible necessities, whilst intangible necessities comprises curriculum, teaching philosophy, and assessment. Clearly, tangible and intangible necessities are reflective of the distributive notion whilst interaction with such necessities by learners speaks to participation and inclusion. This

study contends that only advanced individual functionings will enable individual persons to live dignified standard of lives. Furthermore, such anticipated dignified standard of life should be interpreted as ubuntu in this study. A condition where individual persons are free from poverty, diseases, crime, and many other undesired social ills which may result to undignified standard of lives. Evidently, understanding social justice hinges on distribution, but this falls short of a clear reflection of areas around which such distribution could be made. In other words, what is the scope of social justice within which distribution can be exercised?

## **2.4 The Scope of Social Justice.**

As alluded above, social justice is a common practice pursued by almost all human societies for different objectives. David Miller (1999) supports this undertaking by maintaining that different people use social justice for many purposes or reasons. The following thus is a breakdown of some major social justice realms through which it has been conceived and practiced.

### **2.4.1 Social justice and development.**

Development constitutes one of the spheres coherently relating to social justice. Anne Leewis (2009) opines that the remarkable efforts to eradicate issues of inequality and poverty through social justice paradigm indicates commitment to development. Leewis (2009) argues that assessment of modernization and dependency theories of development successfully links social justice with development. Moreover, this theory assessment produced the notion of the “Right to Development” as social justice, which Leewis (2009, p938) argues is the central concept of the reviewed book. Similarly, Cristina Balaceanu, Diana Apostol , and Daniela Penu (2012, p680), jointly found a reasonable nexus between social justice and economic development in particular, with the latter being the prerequisite for the former.

### **2.4.2 Social justice and land reform.**

Karol Boudreax (2010) is one of the scholars who aligns social justice with land reform in the South African context. His study emerges from historical injustices that saw many indigenous people in South Africa unjustly dispossessed their lands, hence the need for land reform and compensation to rectify such wrongful trend (Boudreax, 2010, p14-15). Similarly, Mogobe Ramose’s (2001) conception of social justice hinges on the notion of land transformation in South Africa. Ramose (2001) uses amatyotyombe and baipei (informal settlements) as his

premise for quest of land reform which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission failed to accomplish in the name of social justice.

### **2.4.3 Social justice and human rights.**

While some scholars have disputed the relationship between social justice and human rights, others have reckoned a logical compatibility between these two concepts (Hibbert, 2017). Neil Hibbert (2017, p1) developed a normative model of “social justice and human rights as nested membership norms in political societies”. He conceptualizes human rights as instruments with which to eradicate barriers of exclusion, thus being consistent with the egalitarian notion of social justice (Hibbert, 2017, p1). Furthermore, Carl Wellman (1987, p1) argues that quest for human rights like dignified standard of life, and the right to equality emerges from social injustices of racial discrimination. Wellman (1987, p1) asserts that these social injustices have been reversed by way of granting rights committed to equality and dignified standard of lives among different individuals. Likewise, Gregory Vlastos (1962) contends that the remarkable struggles of social justice have been premised on equal rights, mentioning struggle against slavery, colonialism, and economic exploitations to mention few.

Indeed, human rights and social justice are two inseparable themes. Many modern-day governments partly earn legitimacy through enshrined human rights aimed at achieving social justice. South Africa is a best example of the above argument where human rights enjoy a constitutional status under a specific clause of the Bill of Rights. These human rights include the right to life, equality, housing, health, and education for example (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108, 1996). Moreover, the South African Constitution’s preamble advocates the human rights-social justice intimacy as it is committed to designating a society that is premised on social justice and fundamental human rights. The Bill of Rights, which partly contains the rights to education, housing, health, equality, can be envisaged as the cornerstone and blueprint with which to partly achieve a just society in South Africa (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108, 1996). This impartial allocation of human rights to everyone suggests South Africa’s commitment to deviate from unjust to a just society.

### **2.4.4 Social justice and education.**

Education also forms part of the spectacles through which social justice has been contemplated. Conceptualizing a socially just education, describing rural and township education, and examining the relevance of western based theories of justice in the South African education

realm, are some of the major themes covered by South African discourse on social justice and education. These themes will be outlined and discussed in depth in the succeeding sections of this chapter. Of utmost important is that such extensive discourse indicates education not only as a major realm of social justice in South Africa, but also as a mechanism for achieving many aspects of social justice. Provided centrality of education in this study, it is of paramountcy to discuss its definitive insights and the value-importance that has been attached to it. This stance is crucial in this study as it can portray not only the significant role of education in social justice affairs but the coherent compatibility of these two constructs.

## **2.5 Describing and Understanding Education.**

In the developing world, education is one of the topical areas of interest both in the academic sphere and real political world. While the academic research sphere has sought to offer informative insights to forge a socially just education, the governments have relentlessly sought to device policies that will achieve the goal of a socially just education. Likewise, education has been a recipient of contentious definitions and understandings. From an etymological perspective, education is derived from the Latin world where it was used to refer to an act of teaching, training, bringing up, and leading forth (Srivastava, 2014, p3). Broadly defined, education refers to “the aggregate of all processes by which a person develops abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behaviour of practical values in the society to obtain social competence and optimum individual development” (Srivastava, 2014, p4).

Moreover, it is an act of developing the intellect, critical thinking capacity, and social and cultural understandings of one’s own self (Srivastava, 2014, p6). The International Standard Classification for Education (ISCE) conceives of education as organized and sustained communication designed to bring forth the culture of learning. Terence W. Moore (1982, p3) regards education as a group of ongoing activities that chronologically take place at different levels. Moore (1982, p3) notes that the lowest level of education is comprised of a somewhat classroom type of education that involves teaching, instructing, and learning among other things.

On the other hand, John Dewey (2007) refers to education as “reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences”. The espoused experience by Dewey (2007) emerges from childhood to adulthood, hence proving education to be an ongoing process according to different stages of life. Also viewing education from a childhood perception is Harrison Wood

(1992) who viewed ‘public education’ as a tool for developing children’s hearts and minds that will render a feasible democratic life. The aspect of heart speaks to the development of moral responsibility while people’s achievements of their potentials results from the mind aspect (Wood, 1992).

In Africa, scholarly evidence indicates that education both in theory and practise existed before European invasion (Kingsely, 2010, p143) or even prior slave trade (Mosweunyane, 2013, p51). Therefore, it is by no surprise that the African conception of education has assumed a cultural-community centred understanding. According to Mara (2006, p15), African traditional education was aimed at ascertaining the individual members of the society into activities and ways of thinking that conformed to the norms and values of the society in question. In this sense, education, social and cultural norms and values were not isolated from other aspects of life in the pre-colonial African education context (Mara, 2006, p15). Kingsely (2010, p144) adds that the African traditional education system was centred on the philosophy of productivity and functionalism in the community. It is in this sense that Scanlon (1964, p3) remarked that the core focus of African vocational education was meant to prepare and equip the African child for her future responsibilities in the community.

Although not documented, the African traditional education curriculum was classified into physical and moral education essential for all aspects of human development (Kingsely, 2010, p144). Thus, Kingsely (2010, p144) defines African education as the process by which all societies seek to preserve and advance their accumulated knowledge, skills, and attitude with which to consistently foster the well-being of its society members. Koma (1976) also maintains this position by saying “education is everything that prepares young people for either integration in a given society with the aim of perpetuating the established norms and values of such society or transforming values and norms”. Drawing from these remarks, it could be concluded that African traditional education highly hinges around four elements namely human agency, knowledge, culture, and community. The human agency absorbs knowledge and cultural values of the community in question. Once the individual person has properly grasped knowledge and cultural norms and values, she thus assumes the responsibilities of the community. This stance is buttressed by Mosweunyane (2013, p50) when he posits that most of learning in Africa was driven by the desire to meet all the needs of the society through training of individual members. Furthermore, Temba Vanqa (1995) supports this position by arguing that the core purpose of training in the African traditional education was to enable the individual to play a positive role in the society.

## **2.6 Value and Importance of Education.**

Mahendar Kumar (2017) is amongst the vast of scholars to assess the value-importance of education using the Pakistani setting. Kumar (2017) contends that education carries both an intrinsic and instrumental value. Intrinsic value entails the importance of education for its own sake, while instrumental value entails significance of education for end-results (Kumar, 2017). Using the lens of intrinsic-value importance, Aristotle espoused education as an essential element for complete self-realization. From this perception, education is not only a means to an end, but is valued as an end-result in its own (Korsgaard, 1983). Andrew Reid (1998, p319) used the intrinsic and instrumental spectacles in seeking to understand the value of education. Intrinsically, Reid (1998, p320) viewed education as a matter of acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world, thus knowledge and understanding being valuable on their own. Linda Zagzebski (1996) connects importance of education to the development of mind, this being the breakthrough for rational thinking, intellect, and understanding among other things, hence an intrinsic value.

From a moral and functional point of view, Neena Anija (2014, p231) values education as an arena to develop moral values among students. These moral values relate to the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil, just and unjust (Anija, 2014, p231). Mitigating societal violence and dishonesty, countering societal bad influence, and preparing children's positive future role in society are some of the grounds for the exigency of moral values through education (Anija, 2014, p231). Although starting with the individual, Anija's (2014) value of education transcends this entity (individual) towards the society at large. This indicates significance of education in relation to a peaceful and just society.

## **2.7 Understanding Curriculum.**

Curriculum is one of the core constructs in this social justice-oriented research study, hence its discussion is significant. The term curriculum traces its origins from the Latin world. In this geographical context, curriculum carried the meaning of "running, race, and or course". The development and evolvement of this term eventually deviated from its original meaning. This assertion is buttressed by education-centred conceptions of curriculum that emerged later. In 1949, Tyler described curriculum as the learning of students planned and directed by the school to attain its intended educational goals. This was further developed in 1967 by Wheeler as the planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school. Madeleine Grumet (1981) defines curriculum as "what and the extent to which the teachers want their students to

learn the arranged subject content taught in a school". In 1984, curriculum assumed the understanding of learning experiences by learners insofar as such experiences are expressed or anticipated in goals, objectives, plans and designs, and their implementation thereof (Skilbeck, 1984).

Glatthorn (1984) described curriculum as a documented plan and guide for learning which is actualized in the classroom environment as learner-experiences in a given society (Glatthorn, 1984). Glatthorn (1984) notes that society is highly pivotal as it can shape and influence what is learnt and how in terms of curriculum. Despite this, it should be taken into cognizant that not all learning can effectively take place in the classroom environment as some definitions above seem to suggest. Moreover, except for Glatthorn (1984), most of these curriculum definitions seem to offer a top-down understanding of curriculum. Arguably, such top-down understanding of curriculum deviates from a contextually oriented knowledge that reflects the values, interests, and customs of the geographical context in question as Mosweunyane (2013) declares.

Le Grange (2018, p7) opines that curriculum can be explicit, hidden, or null. Explicit curriculum refers to a framework of planned and explicit package of learning content that exposes learners to past, present, and future situations (Le Grange, 2018, p7). He notes that this type of curriculum equips learners with critical thinking capacity about their learning content, with possibility of decolonizing such curriculum should they see fit (Le Grange, 2018, p7). A hidden curriculum is where students are taught while being subliminally instilled colonial masters' values and cultures as ideal (Le Grange, 2018, p7). A null curriculum would then entail all the content knowledge that is being excluded from mainstream curriculum (Reddy S, 2018). This type of curriculum is highly significant in an education transforming environment as it helps curriculum-decision makers to ask what, why, and why questions during curriculum reform processes (le Grange, 2018). Nonetheless, analytical discussion of South African curriculum is critical in this study to assess its degree of complexity, reflexivity, and responsiveness.

## **2.8 Curriculum and Social Justice in the Post-Apartheid South Africa.**

Since the inception of democracy, the South African Department of Education has embarked on relentless efforts to transform education through curriculum. This is reflected by remarkable subsequent changes of South African education curriculum by the three democratically elected governments. Despite these changes, the academic sphere has continuously produced academic

works that identify challenges to South African education curriculum after 1994. Martin and Ngcobo (2015) envisioned a broadened curriculum access to guarantee participation of learners in ways that reflect their needs and demands rather than simply having access to curriculum. For Martin and Ngcobo (2015, p89-90), a broadened curriculum creates room for human agency. In this regard, Martin and Ngcobo (2015, p90) conclude that the ultimate goal of a socially just education is to guarantee equity in the distribution of both resources and opportunities. These scholars espouse a Rawlsian fair distributive social system as the means towards achieving this goal (Martin and Ngcobo, 2015, p90).

Heila Lotz-Sisikta and Ingrid Schudel (2007, p245) sought to examine the practical adequacy of the normative framework for South Africa's National Curriculum Statement (NCS). They both advocate for a normative curriculum framework that promotes democratic values like human rights, and social justice in South Africa (Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel, 2007, p247). Moreover, they argue that a normative curriculum framework is pivotal for addressing previous social ills of marginalization and exclusion inflicted by Apartheid government (Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel 2007, p247). Part of their findings reveal that the examined normative framework of curriculum offered teachers and learners a great opportunity to investigate issues faced by learners and communities in which their schools are located (Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel, 2007, p255). On the other hand, their findings show that some teachers envisaged such normative framework as too utopian in a sense that it assumes that which is theoretically presented as good (social justice and human rights) will be easily attainable (Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel, 2007, p248, 258). Finally, Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel (2007) realize the need for additional actors and agencies to express their opinions for an effective inquiry on practical adequacy of curriculum normative framework. Inclusion of partnerships and communities for example can guarantee valuable learning opportunities for learners in their diverse real-life contexts (Lotz-Sisikta and Schudel, 2007, p258).

Lew Zipin, Aslam Fataar, and Maria Brennan (2015) evaluated the adequacy of Social Realist based curriculum in fostering social-educational justice in South Africa. Arguably, Social Realists champion the need for "powerful knowledge" to be incorporated within mainstream curriculum (Zipin, Fataar, and Brennan 2015, p11). These scholars note that while significance of the question of knowledge selection in curriculum cannot be overlooked, the arguments presented by Social Realists side-lines important ways of thinking about knowledge, power, and curriculum (Zipin, Fataar, and Brennan, 2015, p10-11). Moreover, Social Realist approach to curriculum arguably serves to promote culture of Western epistemologies (Zipin, Fataar, and

Brennan, 2015, p32). Against this backdrop, Social Realist interpretation of what constitutes a social-educational justice is rejected as too narrow and marginalizing ethical purposes (Zipin, Fataar, and Brennan, 2015, p33). Zipin, Fataar, and Brennan (2015, p34) conclude that history, time, context, and cultural inclusivity are important factors of consideration in efforts to designate a comprehensive curriculum, an approach which South Africa too must adopt.

Hlalele Dipane (2019) also ventured to challenge the school curriculum that appraises western epistemologies while neglecting Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) for achievement of sustainable learning in rural South Africa. Dipane (2019, p88) notes that rural South Africa has long valued and relied on indigenous ways of knowing for sustainable learning and survival. Relying on the feedback from rural teachers, Dipane (2019, p88) concludes that dismantling western epistemologies serves to elucidates the genuine learning practices and experiences on one hand, and of learning content on the other. According to Dipane (2019), this is the breakthrough for embracement of community based indigenous knowledge which should be incorporated as integral part of South Africa's education curriculum. Vuyisile Msila (2007) offered to examine how the then Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) enhances meaningful participation of learners in society. She appraises the RNCS adopted in the post-apartheid South Africa for its commitment to the promotion of democratic values and Constitutional goals like social justice, equality, non-racial society, and ubuntu, of which these commitments literally translate to nation-building (Msila, 2007, p152).

Contrary to Msila, Lazarus Lebeloane (2018, p2-3) is of the opinion that South African education curriculum is not decolonized in efforts to forge social justice and equity. Lebeloane (2018) contends that a successful decolonization of a country hinges on decolonizing the school curriculum which he reckons as the formal education laboratories of equity and social justice. He contends that a completely decolonized curriculum entails deconstruction and reconstruction, self-determination and social justice, language and history among the few (Lebeloane, 2018, p5). By self-determination and social justice in particular, Lebeloane (2018, p5) refers to curriculum decolonizing through ensuring legitimacy of content to which knowledge is embedded in. This piece of discourse highlights crucial factors of consideration during curriculum making processes namely demands and needs of learners, the respective communities in which they reside and where their schools are located, and diverse actors and agencies. In this way, curriculum making process becomes diverse, multilateral, and geographically or contextually based. This approach will enable nation building and meaningful realization of Constitutional values like social justice and equity.

## **2.9 Pre-University Curriculum Changes in the Post-1994 South Africa.**

Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, South African education curriculum has undergone 4 changes remarkably as part of education reform efforts designed to foster social justice and equity. Vusi Gumede and Mduduzi Biyase (2016) offer a timeline of different curriculum reforms in South Africa. Of worthy to note is the top-down approach assumed by such curriculum changes from government to teachers and learners at grass roots level. Gumede and Biyase (2016, p70) point out Outcomes Based Education (OBE) as the first introduced reformed curriculum launched by education minister in 1997. Arguably, OBE was outcomes/results oriented rather than being centred on inputs (Harden, Crosby, and Davis, 1999, p8). The restraining challenges of effectively implementing OBE culminated to the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in 2002, and eventually became a Revised National Curriculum Statement in 2005 (Gumede and Biyase, 2016, p70).

NCS proposed the following requirements to all grade 10-12 pupils: 1) to take a minimum of 7 subjects, 2) learn 2 South African languages, 3) make a compulsory choice between Mathematics and Maths Literacy, and 4) study Life Orientation (Gumede and Biyase, 2016, p70). NCS's failure resulted to the introduction of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in 2012 (Gumede and Biyase, 2016, p70). The introduction of CAPS in 2012 raised some debates as to whether it was new or amended (Pinnock, 2011, and du Plessis, 2013), whether it was repackaging or rearticulation (du Plessis, 2013). These debates and confusions were stirred by perceived similarities between NCS and CAPS. These remarkable immense curriculum changes clearly reflect ongoing government concerns and commitments about forging the long anticipated social educational justice. Nevertheless, discussion of challenges hindering the effective implementation of curriculum changes in South Africa is highly pivotal for identification of possible areas of redress.

## **2.10 Challenges Hampering Successful Implementation of Curriculum Reforms in South Africa after 1994.**

The South African education centred discourse has revealed several challenges which have profoundly hindered the successful implementation of a transformed curriculum after 1994. Notably, the identified challenges have been rigorously linked with failure of the DoE on one hand, and teachers at grass roots level on the other. According to Motseke (2005), OBE owed its failure to teacher-unreadiness, lack of teacher-training, overcrowded classrooms, lack of funding and material among other things. Moreover, language hampered OBE as many

teachers could not proficiently speak, read and write in English which was the language of instruction as required by OBE (Vinjevold, 1999). These implementation challenges were not only problematic to teachers, as they also amounted to remarkable underperformance of learners who inherited it (Gumede and Biyase 2016; Minister of Education Motshekga, 2011). Remarkably, these issues were mostly prevalent in Black rural and township schools whose educators received teacher-training during Apartheid era (Motseke, 2005). Likewise, the later introduced NSC suffered the same fate of inadequate teacher-training, lack of resources and government-teacher support which all rendered incapacity for teachers to effectively implement NCS (Maphalala 2006).

Similar findings were made by Samantha Govender's (2018, p1) study that sought to examine teachers' perspectives on the support they received in implementing curriculum reforms in South Africa. Her framework of analysis was a theory of successful curriculum implementation and change using specifically two constructs (Govender's, 2018, p2). Those were support from outside agencies, and capacity to support the innovation. The former construct speaks to external agencies from the school as primary actors of curriculum reform implementation, in which case government DoE (Govender, 2018, p2). The latter construct on the other hand refers to the degree of support within the schools in the light of physical resources, teacher-training, and school ethos and management (Govender, 2018, p2). In light of the support from outside agencies (government DoE), Govender's (2018, p5) findings reveal all teachers' immense discontent about quality and quantity of training workshops with which to implement NCS.

Less frequency of teacher-training workshops and lack of innovative content and material from such workshops are some of the issues raised by teachers in Govender's (2018, p5) study. Furthermore, teachers complained that the DoE was making many curriculum changes which confused them as teachers and making it difficult for themselves to adapt to such changes (Govender, 2018, p5). On the second construct (schools' capacity to support the innovation) there were serious identified challenges. These ranged from lack of a well-developed pedagogical knowledge content, absence of learning material and resources, and overcrowded classrooms (Govender, 2018, p7-8). The tertiary level of education too has experienced curriculum related issues in the South African democracy era.

## **2.11 Need for a Decolonized Curriculum in Post-Secondary Education Post-1994 South Africa.**

The exigency for a reformed curriculum in South African schools has not only been common at secondary level of education. The tertiary level of education too has been subject to enormous calls for what is well known as a decolonized education in South Africa. Not only this assertion is supported by extensive literature on higher education curriculum, but by recent nationwide students' protests where the 'term decolonized education' has gained resurgence. In fact, it is worth saying that higher education discourse has recently been sparked and awakened by the decolonized education movements. Pryah Mahabeer (2018) is one of the scholars to have been awakened by the decolonized higher education agenda where she sought to demonstrate how curriculum decision makers think about a decolonized higher education in South Africa. Her study reveals that while some decision makers continue to preserve Western oriented thinking about curriculum, others were keen to shift towards 'a rehumanizing approach thinking' (Mahabeer, 2018, p7). Arguably, a decolonized education agenda in South Africa has been triggered by desire to eradicate Western dominant epistemologies on one hand, and the resurgence of IKS on the other (Zezeza, 2009). Savo Heleta (2016) contends that the justification for a decolonized education in South Africa lies in the need to forge a curriculum that is relevant to social and historical realities shaping communities where universities are located.

Kershee Padayachee, Mapulo Matimolane, and Rieta Ganas (2018) jointly sought to understand the meaning of decolonization in the light of higher education in South Africa. Their findings exhibit that an epistemically diverse curricula is crucial for meaningful compatibility between a decolonized education and education for sustainable development in South Africa (Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas, 2018, p292). An epistemically diverse curricula is that which conceptually and contextually responds to the diverse needs of students, prepare students for current and future global uncertainties, and foster well-being of societies and institutions (Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas, 2018, p290). Kathy Luckett (2001) proposed a framework for achieving such epistemically diverse curricula based on 4 ways of learning and knowing in South African higher education.

These are 1) cognitive traditional learning of propositional knowledge, 2) learning by doing for the application of disciplinary knowledge, 3) learning experientially through doing with the knowledge discipline, and 4) development of epistemic cognition to think reflexively and

contextually about one's learning. According to Lockett (2001), a curriculum that is underpinned by these four ways of knowing and learning serves to strike the balance between conceptual and contextual knowledge (epistemic diverse curricula) advocated by Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas (2018) above. Likewise, Kehdinga Fomunyan and Damtew Teferra (2017, p197) places immense emphasis on a contextual responsive centred curriculum as crucial in a decolonized higher education in South Africa. They classify four dimensions of responsiveness which are economics, culture, discipline, and pedagogy (Fomunyan and Teferra, 2017, ps197, 198, 199). Evidently, the goal of a socially just education curriculum is dominant across all levels of education in South Africa. This portrays immense continuity for the call of socially just education that has potential of promoting and actualizing the Constitutional values of social justice, equality, and perfect liberty.

## **2.12 Social Justice and Education in South Africa.**

Social justice and education forms part of the prominent agendas in the South African context not only for policy-makers and academic researchers, but for the subject beneficiaries too, those being current, and future learners. Designating a pure education system that caters for all especially the previously disadvantaged native groups is highly crucial for the current and future learning community. To offer a clear insight on South Africa's quest for a socially just education, this section will briefly outline literature on historical racism in the pre-1994 South Africa. This outline will lay a foundation for the plight of education in post-1994 South Africa, hence extensive literature on the ongoing quest for a socially just education.

### **2.12.1 Racism as the Steppingstone for the quest of a Socially Just Education in Pre-1994 South African Context.**

Similar to other African countries, the quest for a socially just education in South Africa was prompted by the racially divided education systems imposed by the colonial and apartheid governments. In South Africa, race was the central criterion for the allocation and access to services during the colonial and apartheid governments. Race constituted the mechanism with which to forge a racially divided society that would benefit primarily and largely the white minority racial group (Mhlauli, Salani, and Mokotedi, 2015, p205). The school curriculum played a pivotal role in the consolidation of an institutionalized oppression and racism by the then white minority led government (Mhlauli, Salani, and Mokotedi, 2015, p207). Given the centrality of race difference during the colonial and apartheid rule, the author deems it necessary to shed some light on different conceptions of race. Drawing from Du Bois's (1897,

p53) remarks on race, Edward Zalta et al (2017, p11) defines race as a large family of human beings sharing common characteristics like blood, language, traditions, and impulses. Nonetheless, critics of race reject this concept as biologically invalid. Brody (2011) and Hunt (2011) asserts that race is not biologically valid as its development is economically and politically motivated.

This stance was further upheld by David Rogers (2012, p2) and Moira Bowman (2012, p2) who declared race as a false categorization of people that is not informed by any scientific truth or accurate biological evidence. Rogers (2012, p2) and Bowman (2012, p2) argue that race is a political construction that is designated to legitimize white domination over non-white societies. In short, race was invented by a group of people who sought to advance their economic and political interests. Such remarks highly resonate with the pre-1994 political systems in South Africa. During this period, the white minority government used racial divisions to gain autonomous control over economic resources and political power whilst marginalizing the non-white racial groups (Worden, 1994). Educationally, the white minority-led government designated an education system characterized by disparities and divisions along racial lines. While the white race enjoyed quality of education in ex model c schools, the native race in particular had to absorb Bantu education. A type of education which was typical in Black rural and township communities whose schools were of poor quality.

Lack of resources, poorly trained teachers, and a disabling curriculum are some of the notably undesired factors that were rampant in these schools. The education plight in South Africa culminated in the Soweto Uprising in June 16, 1976 when the government announced Afrikaans as the medium language of communication in Black schools (Hartshorne, 1992). This meant that teaching and learning was to be conducted through Afrikaans across all subjects (Hartshorne, 1992). The Soweto Uprising was a nation-wide students' protest which was led forward by the South African Student Organization (SASO) spearheaded by the late Bantubonke Biko (Badat, 1999). This tragic event not only ended with students fatalities, but also the banning of SASO, and the eventual brutal murder of the education stalwart, Bantu Biko (Badat, 1999). Furthermore, not only this event was a struggle against Bantu education in particular, but a struggle for an entirely overhauled apartheid political regime (Mhlauli, Salani, and Mokotedi, 2015). Analytically, the Soweto Uprising is the genesis of the quest for a socially just education in the history of South Africa in general.

### **2.12.2 The Plight of Education in the Post-1994 South Africa and the Continued Struggle for a Socially Just Education.**

Though the South African democratic government has made startling progress in creating conducive conditions for education access, enrolment, and attendance through policymaking, the ongoing remarkable challenges within this sector cannot be overlooked. As will be evident, the literature demonstrates that education challenges are largely common in rural schools which are predominantly black. Moreover, the literature shows that much of the current education challenges were inherited from the previous apartheid and colonial governments. Linda Chisholm (2005) is among the scholars who have immensely focussed on the education plight in South Africa under apartheid and democratic settings. In *'the state of South African schools'* Chisholm (2005) opines that the racial ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority is at the heart of the education inequalities between black and white schools.

While privileging ex-model c schools in urban areas, these inequalities adversely affected literacy and school completion rates on one hand, and the adequate availability of qualified teachers on the other in rural schools (Chisholm, 2005). In efforts to rectify the education crises under the spectrum of democracy, Chisholm (2005) espouses the need for qualified teachers and teacher education programs at institutions of higher learning. To add on these remarks, it is crucial to encourage enrolment in the teacher education programs sector for increased production of qualified and competent teachers. Furthermore, statistical data on an annual basis is essential to guarantee the desired quantity, quality, and teacher-learner ratio is met especially in rural and township schools. This can be percentages of enrolments in teacher-education programs per annum, the performance of the enrolled candidates, and the amount of candidates who are able to attain teaching qualifications.

While not denying the devastating impact of the racially oriented past on education, Jonathan Jansen (2019) contends that we must not lose sight of the current decision-making at social and political spectrums. Jansen (2019) opines that teachers' union prolonged protests have a far more devastating impact in poorer schools compared to privileged schools. In addition, Jansen (2019) argues that irregularities in the appointment of teachers by unions undermine efforts directed at effective teaching and learning. While it is undisputed that teachers' protests and corruption in the appointment of teachers have an adverse impact on the education of learners, Jansen's (2019) remarks fall short of a thorough explanation of how exactly these two issues contribute towards disparities between poor and privileged schools.

The discourse further demonstrates that despite the significant achievements made by the democratic government, the education system faces a myriad of challenges. Pervasive in rural, farm, and township schools, these challenges range from poor outcomes, overcrowded classrooms, poor socio-economic status, lack of teaching and learning material and essential resources, child-headed homes, learner-unreadiness for tertiary education, learner-pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS among others. Analytically, some of these challenges are complementary. Socio-economic status and lack of resources are identified as the major causes for poor schools outcomes and learner-unreadiness for tertiary education. Testifying to this assertion is Marius Roodt (2018, p2) who argued that learners from poorer backgrounds performed badly especially in mathematics and physical science subjects. Roodt (2018, p3) also noted that poor performances were mostly common in no-fee paying schools attended mostly by the Black students while fee-paying schools performed better-off. Furthermore, his comparison exhibits independent schools performing better than their fee-paying public schools counterparts (Roodt, 2018, p3)

Linking poor outcomes with lack of resources, coupled with socio-economic background is Servaas van der Berg (2002). van der Berg (2002, p145) contends that not only the socio-economic status has influence on poor outcomes, as lack of resources too is a consequence of such undesired trend especially in poor Black and Coloured schools. Similarly, Mabatho Sedibe (2011, p130) highlighted the importance of resources for an effective teaching and learning business and culture especially in previously disadvantaged schools. He describes resources or learner-teacher-support materials as equipment, facilities, and structures that enable the school to effectively perform its functions (Sedibe, 2011, p130). These include but not limited to, classrooms, textbooks, laboratories, furniture and references (Sedibe, 2011, p130). Research has further revealed HIV/AIDS as one of South Africa's pervasive epidemic that has had far reaching negative impact on efforts to render quality education (Attawell, and Elder, 2008). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) found that HIV/AIDS affect education realm in different ways in South Africa (Attawell, and Elder, 2008).

High levels of absenteeism both for teachers and learners, insufficient human resources due to infected teachers, are some of the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS in schools, hence rendering efforts for quality education in vain as per UNESCO report (Attawell, and Elder, 2008, p11). Apart from the infection of learners and teachers, research reveals that parental infection too endangers the education realm. The Department of Education (DoE) reveals parental

HIV/AIDS infection as negatively impacting the education of learners with infected parents (Jewkes, 2000). Notably, parental illness leads to learners being orphans, learner-headed homes, child-parenting, and consequently failing to cope with their schoolwork as they drop out (Griessel-Roux et al, 2005, p254). Griesel-Roux et al (2005, p253) note that not only does this trend alienate children from schools but impedes the culture of skills and knowledge transfer which is highly critical in developing country context like South Africa.

Apart from HIV/AIDS infections, Chisholm (2005) points out that issues of rape of schoolgirls, sexual violence, and abuse constitute the ongoing undesired schooling experience. These challenges are mostly experienced by the girls. Therefore, the sex of the learner is a crucial factor when accounting for various schooling experiences of learners and how these experiences impact their ability to learn. The abovementioned education-related crises comprise the indicators of a socially unjust education in the democratic South Africa. Furthermore, these crises have prompted the continuous production of scholarly works that deal with social justice and education in South Africa from different angles.

### **2.12.3 Conceptualizing a Socially Just Education in South Africa.**

South Africa is one of the domains housing a vast of literature on the theme of a socially just education. Because of the education related discriminatory practises of the pre-1994 government, inclusive education has emerged as the most significant conceptualization of a socially just education in the democratic South Africa. In the political sphere, the South African post-1994 democratic government adopted and implemented inclusive education through policy making reflected in its 2001 white paper as part of its education remedy (South Africa, Department of Education, white paper 6, 2001).

Inclusive education has become a concept on its own right that has drawn enormous attention from academic world which has sought to examine its meaningful connection with social justice in South Africa. Johnnie Hay and Christie Beyer (2011) conducted a joint study that sought to analyse the government's introduction of inclusive education in the light of social justice. Hay and Beyer (2011: p243) started by identifying challenges that impede a successful implementation of inclusive education model namely overcrowded classrooms and insufficient teacher-training. They further noted that carrying out inclusive education at separate schooling environments (learners with special needs and ordinary learners having separate schools) had impediments towards a meaningful and effective inclusive education (Hay and Beyer, 2011: p241-242). Against this deficiency, these scholars perceived inclusive education as the type of

education that accommodates learner differences and their special needs within a single classroom setting (Hay and Beyer, 2011). With a similar trait of inclusive education, is Masebala Tjabane and Venitha Pillay (2011) who conceptualise a transformed and socially just higher education in South Africa after 1994. For these scholars, inclusive education, compassionate citizenship education, and reflexive praxis, all entailed a successfully transformed and socially just higher education (Tjabane and Pillay, 2011: p14-15).

Similarly, Tjabane and Pillay (2011, p14) share a common understanding of inclusivity, that is tolerance and accommodation of learner differences. On the other hand, reflexive praxis entails rationalizing, and posing different questions aimed at redressing education-oriented injustices (Tjabane and Pillay, 2011, p15). Lastly, a socially just and transformed higher education hinges on the notion of promotion of basic human values like equal treatment, respect, and fairness which collectively refers to a compassionate citizenship education (Tjabane and Pillay, 2011). With a different approach, Idilette van Deventer, Philip van der Westhuizen, and Ferdinand Potgieter (2015), collectively sought to develop management strategies for social justice praxis in education. An approach which they argue provided a breakthrough for the construction of a conceptual-theoretical framework premised on the notion of sustained management strategies for social justice and education praxis (van Deventer, van der Westhuizen, and Potgieter, 2015). For these scholars, 'a mutual community-school relationship, government and educational unions' influence, and disciplined school environment, are the three critical management strategies for social justice praxis in the South African education (van Deventer, van der Westhuizen, and Potgieter, 2015).

#### **2.12.4 A distributive-centred notion of social justice and education in South Africa.**

It is worth saying that a large concentration of South African discourse on social justice and education is informed by the distributive notion espoused by John Rawls in his theory of justice. The discourse presents distributive notion as the most viable solution to issues like resource disparity between rural and ex model c schools, and poor schools' outcomes in rural and township schools. Hlalele Dipane's (2012) study portrays rural education being afflicted with quite several negative factors, chief among those being under-resourcing. Hlalele (2012, p113) asserts that resource disparity between rural and ex model c schools is the most visible feature in South African schools' education. He further observed that good learner-performance or outcomes were very difficult to achieve in rural schools, with notable high levels of learner-dropouts (Hlalele, 2012, p113). In a similar vein, Sue Books and Thembi

Ndlalane (2011, p84-86) attributed some educational problems especially in rural and township schools to the lack of resources. Seeking to extract teachers' objectives and concerns about their respective schools, Books) and Ndlalane (2011, p89) found that teachers wanted to see their learners literally gaining practical skills that will make them potential candidates in the workplace. As such, teachers called for allocation of proper resources to make effective attainment of skills by their learners in their respective schools (Books and Ndlalane, 2011, p89-91).

Margret Turnbull (2014, p97) wanted to elicit principals' understanding of social justice and education, and how have they intended to promote it in their respective schools. Her research reveals principals' immense support of the idea of social justice (Turnbull, 2014). Her study findings show that principals understood social justice from the spectacles of distribution, with emphasis highly placed on fair resource distribution for creation of equal opportunities among learners (Turnbull, 2014, p101). On the other hand, her data indicated school principals' efforts to promote social justice in their schools as hampered by the government, hence rendering failure of South African education to deliver social justice to the majority of learners (Turnbull, 2014, pp102-103). Understanding parental choice and trend of sending learner-children to schools allegedly displaying traits of discrimination and intolerance of cultural heterogeneity was another area of interest in Bekisizwe Ndimande's study (2013). Ndimande's (2013, p25) study findings again exhibits the issue of resource disparity between township and ex model c schools as the main drive for this trend. A trend which has led to a parental call for reforming education system that persistently marginalize the Black majority schools in township and rural areas (Ndimande, 2013, p28). While resource disparity hampers promotion of social justice in Turnbull's (2014) assessment, such disparity has compelled parents to send their children to discriminatory and cultural diversity intolerant schools.

The distributive notion as integral part of social justice and education is also visible in Vusumuzi Mncube's (2008) study. Digressing from the idea of resource distribution in schools, Mncube ventured to examine degree of learner-participation and involvement in School Governing Bodies within the education realm. Mncube (2008) found that learner-participation was constrained in rural schools when compared to formerly white-only schools. As such, he contends that only meaningful participation of learners through representation will guarantee democracy and social justice in education (Mncube, 2008).

Finally, Mdutshekelwa Ndlovu (2011, 430) assessed university-school intervention and partnership on the mathematics and science subjects particularly in historically disadvantaged schools. According to Ndlovu (2011, p431), social justice in education rests with university-school partnership especially in mathematics and science subjects through teacher-professional development schemes. Ndlovu (2011) believes that production of highly competing learners in both maths and science rests with his proposed teacher-professional development scheme.

#### **2.12.5 Assessment of Justice Theories: Their Application and Relevance in the South African Education sector.**

While part of the literature took interest in describing the school conditions in rural and township communities, part of it sought to assess relevance and applicability of western theories of justice within the South African setting. These include the works of Merridy Wilson-Strydom (2015) who based her examination to the mostly cited social justice theories in the light of university access in South Africa. The neglect of learner-differences, abilities, and well-being provides premise for Wilson-Strydom's (2015) rejecting conclusions of these theories of justice in her analysis.

Likewise, Jan Nieuwenhuis (2010) takes interest on anti-egalitarian and liberal notions of social justice championed by Rawls and Nozick. He asserts that social justice and education discourse debate has been permeated by economic imperatives inclined to Rawls and Nozick's ideas (Nieuwenhuis, 2010, p274). Citing Michael Apple (1995), Nieuwenhuis (2010, p274) notes that such approach has kept to margins social whole, social identity, and social cohesion. Furthermore, drawing from MacIntyer (1992), Nieuwenhuis (2010) argue against the impossibility of consensus on a range of moral principles as suggested by Rawls and Nozick respectively. Lastly, Taylor (1990), cited by Nieuwenhuis (2010, p274) rejects Rawls traditional position because it negates the importance of human responsibility to act. His analysis reveals that such theories are Eurocentric in nature and serve to consolidate dominance of western nations' thinking about social justice and education (Nieuwenhuis, 2010, p276). Against this backdrop, Nieuwenhuis (2010, p280) recommends a geo-historical and socio-political context approach to the subject of social justice. In the South African context, this includes consideration of previous oppressive laws, communities, and people affected by social injustices that require correction.

### 2.13 Literature Analysis and Gaps to be Filled.

In the post-1994 South African context, a socially just education-oriented body of knowledge deserves enormous credits. This discourse offers informative insights in the light of challenges hampering with a socially just education. Chief among those challenges are poor outcomes due to lack of resources, neglect of learner differences, and inadequate curriculum especially in rural and township schools. While shedding light over education challenges, the reviewed literature is also praiseworthy as it offers viable solutions to the identified problems. These range from conceptualizations of a socially just education which include inclusive education, reflexive praxis, and a holistic curriculum that reflects the values, interests, culture, and history of people and community in question. Furthermore, a Rawlsian fair social distributive system has been espoused as the feasible solution especially on the issue of poor schools resources and outcomes in rural and township schools. Moreover, such discourse is pivotal in the South African democracy era where relentless efforts are made to rectify historically imposed education obstacles through policy making.

Nonetheless, this study maintains that a socially just education approach and understanding that negates ubuntu and capability is incomplete. The author believes that a comprehensive approach and understanding of a socially just education should be premised on the compatibility of ubuntu and capability. It is this study's firm belief that aiming to understand values and ideals upheld by learners should be the starting point for conceptualizing and theorizing about a socially just education in South Africa. From an African perspective, such approach is ubuntu oriented. Ubuntu demands rationally upheld actions and preferences of individuals be respected and advanced. From an education standpoint, *ubuntu* demands that society create conducive conditions for learners to meaningfully exercise and develop their actions and beings. This includes distribution of necessary resources and a curriculum that will accommodate actions and beings of learners. constitutes an ubuntu oriented approach to social justice and education. *Ubuntu* will further demand that societal institutions provide necessary means for the advancement of actions and beings of each learner. Drawing from the reviewed literature above, the study posits an epistemically diverse curricula as pivotal for attainment of capabilities in rural schools. While apartheid administration used curriculum as an instrument for an institutionalized oppression and racism (Mhlauli, Salani, Mokotedi, 2015, p207), the democratic government can reverse such injustice by implementing an epistemically diverse curriculum to build the then oppressed capabilities for certain racial groups.

Based on the above, the study aims to ascertain the actions and beings preferred by learners of Vulindlela rural schools in Pietermaritzburg. Moreover, the study seeks to understand the role that could be played by education in assisting learners in Vulindlela communities to achieve their respective values and ideals of life and the types of relevant resources required in such process. Lastly, the study tries to understand the extent to which achievement of values and ideals of life can be interpreted as a socially just education in the post-1994 rural communities. It is also paramount in this study to understand factors that could hamper learners from succeeding in attaining their capabilities. These factors could be inside and outside school environment.

## **2.14 Chapter summary**

At the onset, this chapter opened with a concise prelude that sought to explain the meaning and role of literature review in an academic inquiry. Evidently, the chapter is composed of different sections that complement each other. After a brief introduction, a traditional account of justice theoretical conceptions and practices was discussed. This discussion offered informative varying insights and practices of justice in different parts of the world which include ubuntu, restitution, and economy. The chapter proceeded with an outline of different academic definitions and descriptions of social justice. It was depicted that much of social justice definitions and descriptions hinge on the notion of fair distribution espoused by Rawls (1971).

Given the broadness of social justice concept, it was necessary to briefly outline the scope of social justice. This juncture laid the platform for discussion of social justice and education which is the core theme of the study. This theme unveiled conceptualizations of a socially just education like reflexive praxis, inclusive education, and an epistemically diverse curriculum. Moreover, the literature places enormous emphasis on the concept of distributive justice to address the ongoing resource disparities between rural and township schools on one hand, and ex model c schools on the other. Nonetheless, this position was rejected on this study as it is devoid of the combination of a holistic curriculum and freedom of choice for achievement of capabilities. A capabilities prone education thus is interpreted as commitment towards an *ubuntu* centred socially just education.

## **Chapter Three: Theoretical and conceptual framework.**

### **3.1 Introduction.**

This chapter will discuss the theoretical and conceptual framework that guide this study. The chapter commences with a general discussion of definitions and understandings of theory, its role and importance in scientific research, and its elements. The chapter will then proceed with an account of general overview of conceptual framework and theories of justice. The discussion will aim to show merits and demerits of justice oriented conceptual framework and theories.

### **3.2 Defining and understanding the role of a theory.**

A theory is a set of ideas, questions, and assumptions that seek to shed light on a particular phenomenon, causal relationship between variables, human behavior and so on. A theory provides parameters within which a researcher can critically contemplate on and or analyze a subject area of any kind. In this regard, theories can be explanatory or descriptive in nature, or encompass both of these aspects, while some are simply the development and or critique or rivals of the already existing theories. Hence, this is an incisive reflection of theories giving rise or emergence to other theories. As useful as they are, it should also be taken into cognizance that theories cannot always offer comprehensive, hence precise understanding of various study objects that are investigated by inquirers. However, such inadequacy is resolved through ongoing academic enquiry that seeks to identify such gaps and offer informative insights on essential constructs to develop a holistic theory on particular subject area. Finally, it is noteworthy that a researcher's selection of the theoretical framework under which the study will be conducted is much informed by the research paradigm in relation to the study object (Porta and Keating 2008). This will be discussed in detail in ensuing sections.

Similar to many social science concepts, defining and understanding the meaning of theory has been contentious among scholars. Nonetheless, it is worthy to note that contentious definitions are helpful for multi-dimensional understandings of concepts informed by different social experiences of different geographical contexts. Christopher Sunday (2015) offers different understandings of a theory. For Sunday (2015), "A theory is a model or framework for observation and understanding that shape what people see and how they interpret what they see". Sunday (2015) elaborates that "A theory is a generalized statement that proposes a logical and coherent nexus between two or more phenomena". Sunday (2015) summarizes this position by defining a theory as a system of interconnected abstractions or ideas for purposes of stimulating and organizing world knowledge.

In addition, Sunday (2015) sheds light over what he calls the levels of theories namely, micro level, meso level, and macro level. These levels actually speak to different aspects to which theories can be applied, for example, individuals, groups, institutions, and structures. To illustrate, when applied at the micro level, the theory is intended to explain behavior of individuals or their family setting (Sunday, 2015). Theories can also be used at a meso level when inquiry is based on social institutions and structures as opposed to individuals. Finally, theories are used at macro level to explain the behavior of large groups of people in terms of ethnicity, gender, and class for example (Sunday, 2015). The variables of the study highly centers on the choice of an individual person, therefore indicating a micro-level theory application. Rather than focusing on structures, institutions, and large groups of people, the study pays a close attention on individuals' choices in the light of well-being. This will be clearly explained once all the key variables and concepts of the study have been introduced.

A simple and general understanding of the role of a theory is that theories help conduct a research inquiry on the selected phenomenon. Neuman (1997) posits that theories provide a frame, or parameters within which researchers can assess their respective phenomena. Additionally, theories offer significant concepts or constructs that help researchers to develop sub-questions to help guide the direction of the investigation. Likewise, this study's formulation of interview questions was largely informed by key constructs of theories underpinning the investigation. Martin Hollis and Steve Smith (1990) asserted that theories attempt to explain and predict behavior or to understand the "world inside the heads of actors". Finally, Colin Wight (1991) viewed theories as traditions of speculations about state relations looking at the struggle for power, nature of political society, and possibility of world community. Having attained different understandings of a theory, the question of what constitute a theory cannot be overlooked, which is the next focus of this chapter.

### **3.3 Elements of a theory.**

According to Bhattacharjee (2012), the building blocks of a theory are namely constructs, proposition(s), logic, and assumption. Constructs refer to concepts used in a theory to explain the phenomenon at hand (Bhattacharjee, 2012). These constructs complement each other. They can be understood in the form of dependent and independent variables that perfectly fit into each other to produce the whole. Proposition(s) entails the relationship between the constructs adopted to explain the study object (Bhattacharjee, 2012). A causal relationship between corruption and underdevelopment can be a good example of propositions where the former

results to the latter. Logic offers a coherent justification behind the link or relationship between constructs of theory (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Assumption and boundary condition are the final elements of a theory (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Bhattacharjee (2012) contemplates that most of the theories are limited by assumptions they make about values, time, and space during course of research. Not only that theories are constrained by their assumptions, but also by the boundary conditions to which theoretical assumptions could apply. In other words, theories are not a one size fit all, while appropriately applying in some instances, they may not be so relevant in other contexts. Arguably, such inadequacy requires rectification in efforts to designate a holistic theory that takes into account all necessary factors, values, and norms of the subject area in question. A coherent relevance of these elements will be outlined after a detailed discussion of key concepts guiding this study.

### **3.4 General overview of theories of justice.**

The concept of justice has gained enormous attention in the twentieth century both in the real political world and academic discourse (Baudot, 2006, p12). This is particularly true of the post-colonial and developing world, with Africa being no exception to this assertion. In post-colonial Africa, much of the crises experienced by the continent have been directly tied to the colonial era and the current global institutional arrangements (Settles, 1996). These crises include plummeting economies, slow economic growth, poor service delivery, weak institutions, and poor governance (Settles, 1996). Evidently, these challenges mostly affect those at the lowest rank of social hierarchy, the previously disadvantaged groups in post-colonial societies (Settles, 1996). Furthermore, such challenges have resulted in social injustices in the affected societies.

These injustices have prompted production of a wide range of scholarly works theorizing and conceptualizing about justice. Noteworthy, culture, rights, history, and religion comprise some of the imperative factors in the task of theorizing and conceptualizing social justice. In this sense, theories and conceptualizations of justice tend to offer different approaches and perspectives through which social justice can be contemplated. The following discussion thus aims to show (in)adequacy of such theories and conceptual frameworks when applied in the field of education in South Africa after 1994. This will justify the selection of this study's principal theories or conceptual framework and neglect thereof of other theories of justice.

### **3.4.1 Liberal Theory of Justice: The case of John Rawls' distributive justice.**

The definition of liberalism is contentious. Nonetheless, from a political ideological or theoretical perspective, the common defining character of liberalism speaks to the idea of promoting individual liberty through creation of equal opportunities for all (Mill, 2019). This assertion can be supported by different strands of liberalism which promote individual liberty. For instance, while the neo-classical liberals advocate for minimal role of government to allow for wider exercise of individual liberty, the welfare liberals consider the government as instrumental in improving peoples' lives through creation of opportunities and distributive measures (Mill, 2019). One of the prominent theorists for the former branch is Robert Nozick while the latter can be associated with John Rawls.

John Rawls is the political philosopher famous for his *Theory of justice*. According to Rawls (1971, p3), justice simply denotes fairness. The structural economic configuration and its economic policies are the embodiment of such fairness (Rawls, 1971, p229). Rawls (1971) proposes a fair distributive social system that will create prone conditions for free market. This can be achieved through his two principles of justice namely, equal liberty and difference principle. The principle of equal liberty relates to equal allocation of rights whilst the difference principle advocate for fair distribution of burdens and opportunities (Rawls, 1971, p53). Analytically, Rawls theory is economical in nature. It advances the argument that social justice can be achieved by way of fair distribution of tangible things like goods and services. As such, the theory assesses well-being from the spectrum of possession of primary goods, for example, who has what, through fair distribution by the government. From this perspective, Rawls conception of justice can be classified as welfare liberalism.

However, this study rejects Rawls' distributive approach to social justice. This study contends that prior to the distribution of goods and services, it is paramount for any justice theorist(s) to be aware of the values and actions that individual persons uphold. The Rawlsian approach lacks this element in the original position. The original position, and its associated veil of ignorance, entails a situation where individuals are not conscious about their social status, they lack understanding of what constitutes a good life (Rawls, 1971, p118). Furthermore, in the original position, individuals are not aware of the advantages tied to the distribution of resources, nor can they choose resources aimed at advancing their interests (Rawls, 1971, p121). From this perspective, the assumption is that individuals are indifferent to one another, and will therefore oblige with any principles of justice presented to them without objecting those principles

(Rawls, 1971, p119-120). These principles will always be applicable from generation to generation and will never be modified. When applying the veil of ignorance in the context of education, it means that the learners have no conception of a good life or the types of lives they want to lead. They can also not contest the curriculum and distribution of resources since they are not aware of what a good life entails and how to achieve it. Lastly, the veil of ignorance constrains the opportunities from which learners can choose those relevant to their goals and assumes that learners are the same rather than being different.

This can be buttressed by Anthony Persson (2022). Citing Michael Sandel, Persson (2022) contends that the principles of justice arising from the original position are pre-determined so as to overlook individuals' differences (Persson, 2022, p5). This limits the choices available to individuals pertaining the types of lives they prefer to lead (Persson, 2022, p5). From a historical and racial perspectives, Charles Mills (2020, p16) maintains that the Rawlsian approach of making choices under the veil of ignorance does not help rectify the historical injustices since individuals are not aware of their past. Quoting Mills, Abraham Singer and Kiren Banerjee (2018, p3) concludes that Rawls' silence on racism and racial discrimination renders his theory of justice incompetent to address racial injustices. These remarks find fertile ground in the context of democratic SA where relentless efforts to correct educational injustices are being made. There is plethora of literature that connects such socially unjust education to racism and racial discrimination as shown in the literature review chapter (Hartshorne, 1992; Ndimande, 2013; Mhauri, Salani, and Mokededi, 2015). In this sense, any theory of justice in the democratic SA should be cognizance of the elements of race and history for effective remedial efforts aimed at the education sector. Therefore, Rawls' *theory of justice* is not suitable for this study given its failure to account for historical and racial issues, and for assuming that individuals are indifferent.

### **3.4.2 Libertarian Theory of Justice: The case of Robert Nozick's Entitlement theory.**

Similar to liberalism, libertarianism is a political theory with presuppositions that center around individualism. Its proponents place immense emphasis on three significant elements, namely, individual rights, free market, and minimal role of the state (Sadeghi, 2018). Libertarianism advocates for negative freedom which is supposed to be enjoyed by individuals (Jacobson, 2016, p7). However, according to libertarianism, negative freedom must not be prescribed by any authoritative entity including the state or government (Jacobson, 2016, p7). Notably, such rights create no obligation on the other individual(s) to act (Duffel, 2004, p354). It is from this

juncture that libertarianism champions the notion of a minimal state. Libertarians contend that extensive authority of the state carries a threat to individual liberty and self-ownership since the state will impose positive rights with the duty to act (Jacobson, 2016, p9). One of the famous libertarians upholding this viewpoint is Robert Nozick (1973) the author of *Anarchy, state, and utopia*.

Nozick's (1973) libertarianism emerges as a response to and a critique of Rawlsian (1971) fair distributive social system. Firstly, Nozick (1973) rejects the idea of (re)distribution on the basis that it (redistribution) heavily lies on taxation, the latter being, to a large extent, "forced labor". In other words, for Nozick (1973), education and health services are not to be funded by the government. This leads to Nozick's (1973) second idea underpinning his theory, that is, 'limited government or night-watchman state'. While Rawls (1971) places immense emphasis on the need for government to provide welfare services like education and health, Nozick limits government's role to protection of the lives of the governed and the contracts to which they enter. This clearly depicts Nozick's rejection of the notion of distributive justice as championed by Rawls on the basis that intensive government intervention on individuals' lives violates and limits their rights. Against this perceived deficiency, Nozick (1973) advocates for what is called entitlement theory which reflects his principles of justice in holdings.

Entitlement theory gives an account of justice in the light of holdings using three principles (Nozick, 1973: p150). The first principle is original acquisition of holdings. According to this principle, an individual is entitled to hold property given such property was not held or owned by anyone before (Nozick, 1973: p150). The second principle states that a person is entitled to hold property transferred from someone entitled to that property (Nozick, 1973: p150). This is called transfer of holdings. Ownership that does not meet any of these principles is unjust and needs to be redressed, this is called rectification justice in holdings (Nozick, 1973: p150). Clearly, rectification justice is historical, it seeks to rectify a historical injustice that clashes with justice in acquisition and transfer. Nonetheless, for Nozick, addressing previous injustices carries a threat to those he considers "innocent property owners". This forms part of Nozick's critics made by Asif Salahuddin (2018). In his critical evaluation of Nozick's entitlement theory, Salahuddin (2018, p2) notes that the rectification principle is contradictory and has limited application to instances of historical injustices. This is mainly because according to Nozick, argues Salahuddin (2018, p2), attempting to remedy historical injustice carries a threat to the 'innocent owners' and distorts the certainty of legal entitlement.

This can be affirmed by Cohen's (1995) critique that while past injustices remain uncorrected, Nozick's claims cannot be deemed valid. According to Robert Litan (2016, p233) the idea of rectification justice through redistribution and compensation is itself defeated by Nozick's suggestion for a minimal state. This claim is valid particularly in developing countries like democratic SA where government must play a leading role in (re)distributive tasks and processes. Moreover, Litan (2016, p233) opines that rectification principle applies to wrongful actions committed during rather than before an individual's lifetime. Again, this indicates the failure of Nozick's theory to remedy injustices suffered by a current generation as a result of the other generation's historical actions. Therefore, Nozick's failure to remedy a colonial injustice suffered by current and future generations serves as demerit of his theory in this study. This colonial injustice includes a socially unjust education which is inherited by current and future generations.

### **3.4.3 Deliberative Democracy and Justice: The case of Marion Young**

Some theorists have advocated for deliberative democracy as an ideal alternative to liberal democracy and libertarianism. Deliberative democracy centers on the notion of decision-making that is premised on deliberation and consensus on a given matter (Ani, 2013, p211). The legitimacy of a decision thus derives from deliberation or unlimited exchange of arguments (Ani, 2013, p208). Participation, and thus agency, are significant for deliberative democracy. Among the theorists promoting deliberative democracy is Marion Young (1990) whose *Justice and the politics of difference* centers around the significance of participation in decision-making processes about valued action. Young (1990: p3) asserts that a distributive centered notion of justice is narrow. It does not account for the role of the institution in relation to the lives of the subjects.

According to Young (1990: p15), the distributive paradigm assumes that demands of social justice can only be satisfied by allocation of material goods like income and wealth, and distribution of social positions like jobs. While not totally rejecting the importance of distribution, she contends that the scope of social justice must be widened to consider other significant elements (Young, 1990: p16). These include actions, decisions about actions, and prescription of means with which individuals can develop and exercise their capacities and exhibit their experiences (Young, 1990: p16). An institutional decision-making that hinders a group of persons to practice their cultural customs is an injustice, and such injustice cannot be rectified by means of distribution of material resources and income. The same could be said

about an institutional arrangement that denies others meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Both the above assertions serve to illustrate inadequacy of distributive approach in addressing issues of participation and culture. For Young (1990: p37), development and exercise of capacities and expression of experiences constitute the values of good life. This is accompanied by the need to participate in shaping those valued actions and their condition thereof (Young, 1990: p37).

From this juncture, it is imperative to investigate the nature of the institution governing the society rather than focusing on distribution alone (Young, 1990, p20). The nature of institutions differs according to practices, rules, and norms that guide them in processes of decision-making (Young, 1990, p22). Therefore, depending on the nature of its practices, rules, and norms, an institution can either liberate or inhibit a group of persons from determining their actions and participate in the development of their skills and actions they uphold (Young, 1990, p34). In light of the latter, it is injustice for an institution to hinder other group of persons from determining their actions and participation in the advancement of their preferred actions (Young, 1990, p34). According to Young (1990), such injustice is to be conceived through the lenses of oppression and domination. Young (1990, p38) understands oppression as an institutional arrangement which, through its practices, rules, and norms, constrain others from using their skills and determining their actions. Domination on the other hand entails a social arrangement that prohibits others to participate in the advancement of their actions (Young, 1990, p38). Both these forms of injustice create disabling conditions for other groups of individuals.

This is particularly true in the context of the Union of South Africa of 1910 which ultimately became the Republic of South Africa in 1961. Since this period 1910, social institutions have been underpinned by practices, norms, and rules that aimed to constrain certain groups of persons while elevating other groups up the social hierarchy. Race comprised the basis on determining the group of persons to be elevated and inhibited, an institutional configuration which extended to the education realm. Such institutional constraints prompted massive resistance as it was deemed to be unjust. From this perspective, academic discourse has relentlessly sought to theorize and conceptualize about an ideal and just system of education. A system of education that will be centered around norms and rules that seek to equally advance the interests and values of everyone; hence, socially just education. As a remedy to an educationally constraining environment, Young (1990) champions the need for an enabling social condition where all groups of people can equally be accorded opportunities relevant to

what they value as ideal for their lives. She calls for institutional rules and norms that promote development of people's capacities and experiences and allow them to participate in the process of advancing their actions (Young, 1990, p37). This is an agency-oriented approach which this study supports as well. This element of agency is absent from Rawls' and Nozick's theories of justice presented above and will be elaborated further on the following sections below. In the Western context, Young's (1990) approach plays an important role as a critique of Rawls. More importantly, emphasis on agency is shared with some African approaches such as *ubuntu*.

#### **3.4.4 *Ubuntu/botho* philosophy and human relations.**

As indicated above, in some contexts culture forms the basis for conceiving the universe. This ranges from the conception of human rights, social justice, economy, social relations, law, and power sharing for example. In South Africa for example, *ubuntu/botho* comprised, and still continues in some communities, the framework for economic, political, and social relations and practices. Through the use of amaZulu sayings and examples, the following discussion thus aims to articulate the values and principles that underpin *ubuntu*. Many researchers and theorists have tied *ubuntu* with caring, dignity, respect, compassion, inclusion, tolerance, cooperation and mutual coexistence, among other qualities. Mazisi Kunene and Mogobe Ramose are among the African philosophers who present insightful thoughts on the concept of *ubuntu/botho*.

Both Mazisi Kunene (1982) and Ramose (2001) argue that human being and human society are intertemporal consisting of the past (ancestors), the present (the living) and the future (those not yet born). For Kunene (1982), ancestors are past experiences upon which the current and future generations establish their sense of belonging, forge social and economic relations, adjudicate disputes, and deliberate on how to share power. Ancestors are embodiment of socially useful knowledge. An isiZulu saying '*indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili*', advises a hypothetical traveler to ask for (*ukubuza*) directions (*indlela*) from those who have travelled that path (*abaphambili*). Ancestors, the pathfinders, those ahead, "*abaphambili*", are the ones to show us the right way based on their life experiences and knowledge. While the values, *indlela*, are not static, they are passed from generation to generation. This saying addresses the three dimensions of time. The hypothetical traveler, is the present which creates or clear the path for the future. The traveler has agency as she/he asks for direction. Those who have travel the path, are ancestors or the keepers of ancestral knowledge. Ramose (2001) argues that justice is balance among the elements of "triadic structure of the living, the living dead (the

supernatural or sacred forces) and the yet-to-be-born.” The relation between the elements of this triadic structure is cyclical, continual and reciprocal. While the supernatural forces influence the living, the living also influence the supernatural forces.

Kunene (1982, p2) argues that cooperation is intrinsic to human life. There are several sayings that illustrate the centrality of cooperation in social life. Thus, amaZulu say: *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person through others), and *izandla ziyagezana* (one hand washes the other), among other sayings. While the latter saying postulates reciprocal relations existing among human beings, it also embodies the idea of individuality and agency. With respect to the former, it can be safely declared that two hands have distinct identities. Each hand has its own different identity, but more importantly, each hand has agency, is an agent or a doer as each hand washes the other. The saying *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* is anchored on the belief that “human individual is an object of intrinsic value in its own right” (Ramose 2001). It is therefore important for each person to participate in individual and social development. Political action and decisions that denies others an opportunity to participate also denies them their humanity, and is thus an injustice. Such injustice and inhumanity would not only be done to those denied an opportunity to participate but to the perpetrators as well. Thus Ramose (1999) advises that “It is meaningful to state that to denigrate and disrespect another human being is in the first place to denigrate and disrespect oneself”.

In contrast to Rousseau (1985) and Marx (1859) for whom the first act of civilization is the invention of the tool, for Kunene, the first act of civilization is the establishment of cooperative and interactive community. Indeed, in Kunene’s rendition of the myth of origin of amaZulu, human beings did not emerge as individuals but as a collective. Economy and various acts of modification of the environment make the second act of civilization. Ramose confirms that this primacy of human relations over material things is also expressed by seSotho proverb *feta kgomo o tshware motho*’ (Ramose, 1999, p100). This seSotho saying means that when one has to choose between wealth and preserving life, the latter should be the priority (Ramose, 1999, p100). Kunene cautions that it is unethical if those who have do not assist those who have not. As Kunene (1982) reminds us, amaZulu say “*banakho konke kodwa bayizinja*.” This saying means they have everything but they are like selfish dogs which take everything for themselves and leave nothing for others. It is important to note that the primacy of human relations over material acquisition is not an abstract principle but guides people’s everyday lives. This primacy of human relations over material possessions is embedded in institutions such as *ilima* and *ukusisa*. *Ilima* is an agricultural practice and an institution whereby an individual or family

who does not have sufficient labour to cultivate their field is provided with communal labour. In this case, community members take their tools to plough and plant the land of a community member in need of support. The harvest will benefit the community member in question. The aim of this practice is to eliminate poverty for the community member in question and restore their dignity which is a collective goal of the community.

*Ukusisa* is a practice and an institution whereby a community member without livestock enter into an agreement with a community member with livestock. Typically, an agreement between these two parties would be that the recipient will herd and care of the cattle of the giver or owner for a specified timeframe. The recipient will use these cattle for milk and other productive activities such as ploughing. As the cattle reproduce, the recipient will also be given some of the calves so that the recipient may start his own herd of cattle. This then guarantees restoration of dignity between the two parties; the giver and the recipient. Again, these remarks reflect the primacy attached to human relations manifesting in reciprocal relations. Individuality constitutes another dimension comprising *ubuntu*. This can be reflected in isiZulu saying '*abantu abayi nganxenye bengemanzi*'. This means that people will not always flow in the same direction or have similar views on a given issue or phenomenon. *Ubuntu* thus emphasizes the importance of respecting those whose views differ from others given that people do not always agree on the issues at hand.

### **3.5 Understanding the key elements of the capability approach.**

The sections above highlight the need for a theoretical approach or conceptual framework that take values of individual persons as priority and has the potential of addressing historical injustice. It has been shown that most theories of justice fail to attach significance to the values of individuals, agency, and remedy historical injustices except Young and the philosophy of *ubuntu*. This section thus seeks to discuss the capability approach with the aim of extracting in it the degree to which it acknowledges values of individuals and the importance it places on agency. Given that the study deals with capabilities, values, and agency of teenagers, it is of paramountcy to be cognizant of issues pertinent to learners' capabilities, values, and agency. This consideration is essential since the choices and capabilities of learners during teenagerhood determine their position and capabilities in adulthood (Biggeri, 2007)

### **3.5.1 Distinction between capability and functioning.**

According to Robeyns (2003), capability approach is not a theory. Rather, it is an evaluative framework for a wide range of issues including poverty, well-being, inequality, advantage, and social constraints that hamper individuals to achieve their functionings and opportunities. The first two key concepts of the capability approach are functioning and capability. Functionings are beings and doing of a person (Robeyns, 2003, p11). These include reading, speaking, and writing in different languages, walking, and participating on ongoing discussions. In the context of education, reading, writing, speaking, debating, and interacting with learning material are forms of functioning. Capabilities are the things that individual persons are able to do and want to be (Robeyns, 2003, p5). A capability thus refers to the range of freedoms that are available to an individual (Robeyns, 2003, p6-7). A functioning is an achievement, an actual doing and being whereas a capability is a freedom to be or to do something.

Nevertheless, having a capability does not mean that an individual will effect that freedom. To illustrate the difference between functioning and capability, Sen gives an example of an individual who is starving because they do not have food and therefore do not have the capability to feed themselves and individual who is fasting. An individual who is fasting is starving but has capability to provide food for themselves. In the words of Sen (1987), “a functioning is an achievement whereas capability reflects freedom and ability to achieve”. This distinction can further be drawn from Melanie Walker’s (2004) work where she explains that a capability is an opportunity to achieve while a functioning is the actual achievement of something.

### **3.5.2 Agency and values in the context of capability approach.**

Agency constitutes an integral part of the capability approach. Sen (1999) understands an agent as simply someone whose actions are aimed at bringing change based on his or her values and objectives. This highlights the significant role of participation by an agent. To have agency is to have freedom and ability to effect the desired change. Therefore, agency is a quality of an agent and this constitutes the central focus in the capability approach. However, it is important to note that children’s and teenagers’ agency will be shaped by parents, guardians and available institutional framework. For instance, section three of South African Schools Act (1996) is a legislation providing that children’s school attendance is compulsory. In some instances, parents and guardians prefer to send their children in ex model c schools in search of better resourced schools which cannot be found rural areas (Ndimande, 2013). This assertion serves

to prove that not all learners choose their schools of preference and again this can have a profound impact on the agency of learners. Parents, guardians and teachers can thus either support pupils' agency or they can inhibit it (Biggeri 2007, p199). The study will thus assess if schools in Vulindlela do promote learner-agency. This dissertation holds that a socially just education also rests on the extent to which learner-agency is promoted in SA schools.

From this perspective, functionings, capability, and agency are inseparable. Factors hampering agency automatically hamper the individual's freedom and ability to achieve well-being. In brief, agency is essential for one's functionings and capabilities to materialize. On this basis, agency comprise an important aspect of consideration when evaluating the functionings and capabilities of individuals. This study will also seek to understand what factors are likely to constrain learners' agency in achieving their functionings and capabilities within and outside educational environment. Using the instrumental value of education, Walker (2004, p2) contends that education need to be examined based on the impact it has on the things that learners want to do and be with their lives.

On the other hand, values can be understood as those things that have positive weight on the well-being of people (Sen, 1980, p32). These are the things that can contribute positively on the goals that an individual seeks to achieve with his or her life. According to Shockly-Zabalak (1999, p425), value refers to something desirable given its worth and quality. Moreover, values determine what is essential in an individual's life and encourage the individual to make a choice according to that essentiality. In this sense, values influence people's choices on what they consider as important for their lives. Education, health, nutrition, and shelter comprise some of the examples of things upon which people attach value and importance. People attach value to these things given their potential of positive contribution to the goals they want to achieve in their lives. In the realm of education learners, teachers, and parents would highlight the need for qualified and professional teachers, computers, and a library for instance. In Sen's words, these are called "objects of value". Advocacy behind these objects of value lies in their quality and positive contribution in the process of teaching and learning. A learner's interaction with such objects of value contribute to the learners freedom and ability to achieve, hence agency. It is important to note here that learners' values will be shaped by their parents, guardians and social environment. In this sense, ubuntu and capability approach place enormous emphasis on the need for participation. This connection will be explained in the following section.

### **3.5.3 The significance of conversion factors in the framework of capability approach.**

The capability approach is cognizant of the factors that can either contribute or hamper the individual to convert resources into a functioning. Conversion simply means transforming resources into doings. For example, a bike may not be very helpful to an individual with lower body physical impairment, that is, an individual may not be able to ride a bike. In this case, an individual is not able to convert a bike into a doing. In this case, an individual has a deprivation of functionings or doing, that is, is “deprived of practical opportunities as a result of impairment” (Mitra 2006, p241). Notably, this speaks to the question of agency and human diversity. As Walker (2004, p2) puts it, a constrained agency or lack thereof is a predicament to an individual’s ability to have freedom to choose the type of life one prefers. Furthermore, the element of conversion factors seeks to address the issue of human diversity. In other words, human diversity has a profound implication on individual’s achievement of both capability and functioning.

Walker (2004, p3) categorizes conversion factors into personal, social, and environmental characteristics. Personally, individuals differ in terms of their physical bodies, hence strength and ability to achieve something. Writing for example, is one of the tasks required of a learner in the process of learning. But writing can be difficult for a learner who has physical impairment in hands and arms. In this case, a learner leaving with disability requires additional resources to enable him or her to write effectively to achieve learning as a valued functioning. Environmentally, an overcrowded classroom can negatively bear on the learner’s ability to learn, therefore, indicating the need for additional classrooms to enable the achievement of the functioning of learning. A classroom without a wheelchair ramp will make it difficult for a learner who uses a wheelchair to attend classes.

At social level, Robyens (2003) identifies social norms, gender roles, and power relations as some of the factors with huge impact on women’s prospect to achieve capabilities. For example, a belief that prioritizes a boy child at the expense of a girl child may make it difficult for female learners to be successful in their education. An epistemically diverse curriculum is also an important conversion factor. This type of curriculum is vital as it will contextually and conceptually responds to diverse needs of learners (Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas, 2018, p292). Moreover, it will help prepare learners to navigate current and future global uncertainties and creates well-being of societies and institutions which they are part of (Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas, 2018, p292).

### **3.6 Link between *ubuntu* philosophy and capability approach.**

Previous sections indicated that the philosophy of *ubuntu* and capability approach both comprise the theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. It is thus paramount to offer an analysis that seek to show compatibility of these two approaches. First, both approaches prioritize human agency and relations. As shown above, *ubuntu* gives priority to human relations in various ways across the aspects of life. In the realm of education, *ubuntu* always gives precedence to the values reasonably upheld by the individuals. In the same way, when assessing the well-being of individuals, the capability approach initially seeks to understand the actions and beings valued by individuals. These actions and beings are valued by individuals given their pertinence to the types of lives individuals want to lead.

Secondly, both approaches emphasize the importance of agency. In the philosophy of *ubuntu*, respecting the values rationally upheld by individuals is not enough, there is also a need for individuals to participate in the process of developing their values of ideal life. As shown above, meaningful participation of individuals is necessary as it deepens their experience which is essential for community development. With regard to education, Walker (2004) contends that educational environment must be in such a way that it enables learners to be active participants in the process of assisting them achieve the actions and beings they prefer for their lives. Martin and Ngcobo (2015) advocate for a broadened curriculum that will guarantee participation of all learners in ways reflecting their needs and demands. For Martin and Ngcobo (2015), this is the only guarantor for meaningful learner-participation.

Out of these remarks, *ubuntu* and capability approach emphasize the importance of agency as the crucial element in designing a socially just education. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that there are traceable differences between these two approaches. While *ubuntu* is more flexible as it accommodates both collective and individual values, the capability approach focusses more on individual values and it is silent on collective interests. As a remedy, the theoretical and conceptual approach of this study is blending *ubuntu* philosophy and capability approach in effort to offer a holistic approach and or theory of education that is cognizant of both collective and individual interests. The table below highlight the main research questions of this study and the relevant concept(s) that each of the questions seek to address.

Figure 1: Main research questions and relevant theoretical and conceptual tools.

<b>Main research questions</b>	<b>Corresponding theoretical and conceptual tools used to analyze data.</b>
<p>What are the values and ideals championed by teachers and parents for Vulindlela schools' pupils, and by pupils themselves?</p>	<p>The capability approach is primarily concerned about what learners rationally value as ideal actions and beings related to their goals. This question will address what learners value for the lives they prefer to lead. One of the core characteristics of the capability approach is values that people hold. This characteristic is relevant for this research question. In ubuntu, the values and ideals are captured by the word "indlela" in the saying "<i>indlela ibuzwa kwaba phambili.</i>"</p>
<p>In the light of education, how can such values and ideals be effectively achieved?</p>	<p>Capabilities, conversion factors and agency are the basic concepts relevant for this question. The capability approach is interested in what people are able to do and to be. From an <i>ubuntu</i> perspective, customs and institutions inherited from past generations (<i>abaphambili</i>) are some of the conversion factors.</p>
<p>What kind of resource distribution will allow the pupils at Vulindlela rural schools to pursue their anticipated values and ideals of lives?</p>	<p>The relevant concepts are capability input and conversion factors. However, <i>ubuntu</i> would caution us that resources on their own are not sufficient. Thus, the seSotho saying: '<i>feta kgomo o tshware motho</i>'</p>
<p>To what extent does achievement of these values and ideals contribute to a socially just education?</p>	<p>The relevant concepts here are: values, agency, and conversion factors. It has been established that distributive approaches to justice are inadequate since they ignore what learners value, the different factors that can affect learners in terms of</p>

	<p>converting their values into achievements. The capability approach does accommodate these factors.</p>
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### 3.7 Chapter summary.

This chapter opened with a discussion of definitions and role of theory in a scientific academic research. This was followed by elements constituting a theory. The chapter proceeded with a general overview of theories of justice. This overview was aimed to critically outline the relevance and inadequacies of theories of justice. The distributive justice of Rawls and Nozick’s libertarian views were rejected. Rawls exclusive focus on distribution of resources and assuming that individuals are indifferent constitutes grounds for such rejection. In case of Nozick, failure to address a historical injustice is the demerit of his theory in this study, given that injustice in education is a historical issue in SA. The inadequacy of a distributive element was confirmed in Young’s arguments. She advocates for the need to broaden the scope of justice to include other elements like evaluation of social institutions. Young’s central arguments highlight the need for institutions that will enable people to exercise their capacities, determine their actions, and participate in the development of their actions.

The chapter then looked at the philosophy of *ubuntu* in search for an approach that places emphasis on humanity and takes into consideration historical injustice as the norm upon which an enabling institutional arrangement should be based. This derives from the primacy that *ubuntu* attaches to humanity. This chapter employed Kunene and Ramose’s views on *ubuntu*. Kunene’s (1982) philosophy prioritizes cooperation and interaction of human beings. Ramose’s (2001) understanding of law through the lens of *ubuntu* depicts the need to address historical injustices for current and future generations. On this basis, *ubuntu* constitutes the conceptual framework for this study through which educational injustices in SA can be considered and addressed. The capability approach also reflects the significance of humanity. The need to evaluate actions and beings of learners which they reasonably uphold to lead lives of their choices is a reflection of primacy attached to humanity in this approach. Furthermore, the capability approach seeks to address issues that can hamper individuals’ ability to convert resources into actual functionings. *Ubuntu* and capability approach complement each other in anchoring justice on values, agency, resources and conversional factors. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology and research methods that will guide this study.

## **Chapter Four: Research Paradigm, Methodology and Design**

### **4.1 Introduction.**

Apart from setting an apposite theoretical framework, an academic enquiry must exhibit a clear design. This is usually done by identifying an appropriate research paradigm and methodology for resolving the research problem at hand. Unlike the theory which provides parameters within which to understand, describe, and or explain the study phenomenon, the research paradigm and methodology speaks to the overall methods and resources pivotal for conducting the proposed investigation. These include methods of data collection, sampling, presentation, analysis, recording instruments, and outreach means towards location and interviewees. A chronological application of all these elements in a study thus purely reflects the research paradigm, methodology, and design.

Therefore, this chapter seeks to outline and discuss the research paradigm, research methodology, and research design of this academic investigation. This discussion will capture the key elements constituting the above aspects and the position of this study in relation to those elements. It is also crucial that this chapter indicates the nature of this research study in the light of different types of research.

### **4.2 Understanding the meaning of research**

It must be clearly noted that this is an academic research. What a research entails thus is an important question to be addressed at the onset. There could be different understandings and explanations attached to the term research. In its simplest understanding, research entails quest for new information; hence knowledge on a particular subject of interest. According to Kothari (2004), research entails “the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct, or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in construction of theory or in the practice of an art.” Further, Nissim Cohen and Tamar Arieli (2011) explain that research means "gathering and analysing a body of information or data and extracting new meaning from it or developing unique solutions to problems or cases". Both the above definitions of research reflect what this study aims to do in the context of social justice and education in SA. While aiming to develop unique insights on a socially just education in the post-1994 SA, the study also seeks to theorize what a socially just education would be like using ubuntu and a capability approach. The key constructs of a capability approach and *ubuntu* will be pivotal in both the task of conceptualizing and theorizing of a socially just education in SA. These different understandings and explanations clearly show that research is an activity

embedded within human beings, as they are the only entities with such a valuable functioning of critical thinking as declared by Woody (1927). This study too precisely adopts and applies that inquisitive critical thinking and academic activity using the case of education in the post-1994 South Africa. As will be clearly seen in the research design below, this inquiry is made up of a problem statement, data collection, presentation, analysis, and conclusion. This is consistent with the above definitions of research. The question of the types of research cannot be neglected, this will be the focus of the next section.

### **4.3 Types of Research.**

Researchers engage in quite different types of research. This trend is occasioned by the fact that different scholarly inquiries are conducted in different contexts for differing objectives using different methods and techniques. While some scholars seek to explain and understand their study objects, others are simply interested in describing, while some in analyzing their study phenomenon. Moreover, while the study object for some researchers may be wide and in general terms, others decide to put their focus into context by way of case studies. In this regard, it is essential to note that there exist different types of academic research conducted by scholars. These are namely descriptive, analytical, applied, and conceptual research to give few examples (Kothari, 2004).

Descriptive research seeks to describe events as they unfold or presenting status quo as it is (Kothari, 2004). Analytical research on the other hand is that which reviews the already existing information and facts for purposes of developing those facts or drawing different conclusions (Kothari, 2004). Further, an applied research resorts to discover immediate solutions to the sudden societal challenge (Kothari, 2004). Finally, Kothari (2004) differentiates between a conceptual and a fundamental research. Conceptual research is attributed by its relation to certain abstract ideas and theories with the intention to develop new concepts or reinterpret those already existing (Kothari, 2004). Fundamental research on the other hand aims to make generalizations and formulate theory based on observed data (Kothari, 2004). The research at hand drew inspiration from the last two types of research. This study is guided by elements of applied, fundamental and conceptual research. From a fundamental research standpoint, the research seeks to utilize *ubuntu* in the task of theorizing and explaining a just education system. Secondly, this study is conceptual in nature given the use of abstract concepts from both *ubuntu* and capability approach. These concepts include capability, freedom, justice, agency (participation), respect, inclusion, and dignity, among other concepts.

#### 4.4 Research Paradigm.

Scholars have attached different understandings to the term research paradigm. Some understand this concept simply as the researcher's perspective(s), belief(s), and interpretation about the world or phenomenon being researched (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Similarly, Guba (1994) and Lincoln (1994) understand paradigm as a set of basic beliefs guiding the conduct of a scientific research. Lastly, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) defined paradigms as constructions essential for the researcher to attach meanings from the data gathered. According to Charles Kivunja and Ahmed Kuyini (2017), research paradigms have far reaching implications for crucial decisions made at various stages of the research. These include research design, methodology, and methods to be used in the course of academic investigation (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Moreover, these scholars shed light on what they refer to as the essential elements of research paradigm (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

Epistemology, ontology, methodology, and axiology comprise the four elements of research paradigm (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The epistemological aspect of paradigm relates to the philosophical branch of knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation. It speaks to the nature and sources of knowledge sought after about the research unit(s) (Porta and Keating, 2008). Schwandt (1997) defined epistemology as "the study of the nature of knowledge and justification". Nonetheless, this study shifts away from the Cartesian way of knowing which is premised on the belief that only the mind of the individual can create and produce knowledge (Burkitt, 1998). This is in contrast to *ubuntu* where an individual is always connected to others. Consequently, from an *ubuntu* perspective, knowing also depend on others. Secondly, ontological element is concerned with the nature and existence of social reality or phenomenon under investigation (Porta and Keating, 2008). Ontology seeks to establish if the reality about study unit exist on its own or results from human cognitive element (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

*Ubuntu* is grounded on the belief that individuals are inseparable from each other. Thirdly, methodology seeks to address the questions of how and where information about study object can be acquired. Methodology articulates the systematic application of processes and procedures to resolve the identified research problem (Keeves, 1997). Lastly, the axiological aspect relates to the principle of ethics and the degree of its applicability in the course of conducting research (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Every academic research is compelled to

meet the standard(s) of ethics and morality by ensuring that values, interests, and rights of participants are respected and remain confidential.

Research paradigms could be classified into three categories namely, positivist, interpretive, and critical paradigm. Nonetheless, pragmatism has been added as the fourth paradigm by some scholars. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) argue that the key elements of positivism are “deductive logic, formulation of hypotheses, testing those hypotheses, offering operational definitions and mathematical equations, calculations, extrapolations and expressions, to derive conclusions. It aims to provide explanations and to make predictions based on measurable outcomes.” For an interpretive paradigm, emphasis “is placed on understanding the individual and their interpretation of the world around them” (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Its epistemology and ontology are relational. Epistemology is relational in the sense that knowledge is produced in collaboration with participants. An interpretive paradigm is based on a relational ontology since it assumes interconnectedness of individuals in constructing social reality. Like an interpretive paradigm, critical or transformative paradigm assumes relational ontology and epistemology. However, since it is primarily concerned with “social justice issues and seeks to address the political, social and economic issues, which lead to social oppression, conflict, struggle, and power structures” (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017), it interrogates hierarchies and power relations. This study is guided by interpretive and critical paradigms. *Ubuntu* shares the assumptions of relational ontology and relational epistemology with interpretive paradigm. Critical paradigm guides this study which deals with issues of social justice in education.

#### **4.5 Research Methodology.**

There are three different methodologies at the disposal of social science researchers namely, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative methodology is mostly common among researchers who seek to describe and understand the unit of analysis, usually human behavior. Qualitative researches are mostly typical of the ‘what, which, and why’ questions (Dey, 1993). For example, what prompts human beings to behave as they do, or which economic ideology between capitalism and communism is best and why? The intended objective in qualitative studies is achievement of understandings, explanations, and meanings rather than generalization (Porta and Keating, 2008). Contrary, quantitative studies are concerned with studying general effects of particular phenomenon(na) through counting and measuring with the aim of generalizing about that phenomenon (Porta and Keating, 2008). Quantitative studies are mostly in statistical and numerical forms, constructing their

understanding and analysis of research objects based on gathered statistical information from large samples of population (Dey, 1993). The how question is mostly inclined to quantitative studies, for example, how much, how many, and how long, based on numerical data (Dey, 1993).

To address and evade partialities associated with individual usage of each methodology, some scholars have given preference to both methodologies which is called mixed methods or triangulation. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), mixed methods entails the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to collect, present, and analyze data. Burke Johnson, Anthony Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa Turner (2007) also uphold the view that mixed methods research involves both qualitative and quantitative research aspects. Nonetheless, there are different dimensions that constitutes mixed methods research. For instance, at methodological level, mixing must comprise both qualitative and quantitative perspectives when examining each of the main research questions (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007). Researchers opt for a mixed methods approach for two main reasons: 1) breadth and 2) corroboration (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007). The former is associated with better and in-depth understanding, explication, and description of the research phenomenon while the latter is associated with triangulation (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007).

Triangulation refers to the use of different methods in a qualitative research to produce a holistic understanding of the studied phenomenon (Berg, 2001). There are different types of triangulation which are namely, methods, investigator/researcher, theory, and data source triangulation (Berg, 2001). Methods triangulation speaks to the use of different methods of collecting data on the same study unit. This includes the use of interviews, observation, survey questionnaires and focus group discussion. Secondly, investigator/researcher triangulation involves two or more researchers who aim to provide the accurate understanding or description of their study object. Thirdly, theory triangulation entails the use of different theories to interpret and analyze data. Lastly, data source triangulation is attributed by gathering data from different groups and categories of people. The study at hand is characterized by depth and corroboration which comprise the ground for adopting a mixed methods approach. The study pursued an in-depth understanding of a socially just education in post-1994 SA. This understanding derives from the constructs drawn from *ubuntu* and capability approach. The study contemplates such constructs as key in theorizing about a socially just education and policy making efforts to address the education plight in rural SA. Furthermore, an in depth understanding of a socially just education was achieved through corroboration. This study

displays the use of three types of corroboration which are methods, theory, and data source triangulation. The methods and data source triangulation will be explicated in the sections below. On the perspective of a theory triangulation, the study used key concepts and constructs from *ubuntu* and capability approach.

As will be seen in the data collection sub-section, this study employed methods of gathering information which were both quantitative and qualitative. The difficulty of parental outreach compelled the adoption of a survey questioner, hence a quantitative aspect. Nonetheless, the questionnaires were open-ended to allow parents to justify themselves when responding to the questions. Qualitatively, interviews and focus group discussion were employed for purposes of attaining qualitative information regarding learners' upheld values and abilities.

#### **4.6 Research Design.**

Research design can be understood as the reflection of the actual methodology adopted in the respective scientific investigation. It must accurately articulate and reflect problem statement, key variables or constructs constituting the entire research, instruments of data collection, sampling techniques, and methods of both data presentation and analysis. It is essential to note that an appropriate research design is that which clearly articulate such elements, accompanied with their chronological application on the ground during the course of the study.

##### **4.6.1 Research Methods.**

###### **4.6.1.1 Population**

The main population of the study comprised the learners attending Vulindlela secondary schools. The parents of Vulindlela district whose children attend at Vulindlela secondary schools were also part of the study population. This inquiry was mainly directed to grade 12 learners attending the area's schools. The study targeted grade 12 learners for a variety of reasons. For instance, learners of this grade comprise the youth population that is about to explore the real world. Given the challenges of high rates of youth unemployment, poverty, and crime in SA, it is essential to get the assessment of the educational system from this cohort. Also, grade 12 learners constitute the population that must proceed to post-secondary level of education. From this perspective, grade 12 learners have adequate experience to reflect on the values they rationally uphold. They also have better understanding of the types of resources and capacity of schools that can enable them to succeed.

However, not all the participants resided in this rural area, for example some school principals reside in urban areas of Pietermaritzburg. The female learners in particular comprised the largest category of this study's participants. This is important given gender inequalities at global and local levels. The study by the United Nations Foundation (2023) shows how gender inequalities affect women at all levels of life). At the local level, black women in South Africa comprise a group of persons who suffered dual oppression and discrimination. Black African women were discriminated against on the basis of race and gender (United Nations Foundation, 2023). In particular, Rarieya, Sanger, and Moolman's (2014) study shows gender inequalities in SA education. Statistics South Africa shows that gender inequalities increase with the level of education. Thus, there are more male graduates at the post-graduate levels (Statistics SA, 2024).

The parents made up the second group of this study's population. In particular, parents of all grade 12 learners attending secondary schools in Vulindlela constituted the second category of population for this study. Parental inclusion in this investigation intended to elicit their influence on the shaping of learners' values and goals. The school principals and deputy principal of Vulindlela secondary schools served as the key informants of the study. The rationale behind selecting school principals and or deputies in the study lies in the expertise they have in the realm of education. Moreover, school principals and deputies play a significant role in guaranteeing the successful implementation and execution of education policies at their respective schools. Furthermore, school principals and deputies play an intermediary role between teachers and the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Therefore, the research needed to elicit their views on 1) values and ideals they uphold for their learners, 2) the role of education in advancing those identified values and ideals, 3) the type resources they consider to be essential for assisting learners to achieve their values and ideals, and 4) understanding if achievement of ideals and values by learners can be construed as a contribution to a socially just education. As alluded above, the selection of different categories of persons reflects the use of data source triangulation.

#### **4.6.1.2 Sampling techniques.**

In social sciences, there are two types of sampling methods namely, probability and non-probability sampling. The former speaks to a random selection of study participants, while the latter refers to a non-random selection of participants (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In other words, for probability sampling, everyone in the study population has an equal chance of being

selected based on the assumption that they have the relevant information sought after (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Contrary, the non-probability sampling procedure requires a careful and deliberate selection of sample where not all the population members have equal chance of being included in the inquiry (Kothari, 2004). This indicates the significance of choice and judgement of researcher when selecting a study sample using a non-probability sampling. Participants were chosen because of their familiarity with values and goals of learners. Participants were also chosen because of their knowledge of resources that are required to achieve these goals.

A Non-probability sampling techniques were thus chosen for this study. This choice was based on the researcher's belief that not everyone can meaningfully participate in the talk about social justice and education in South Africa. This compelled the study to therefore make a careful selection of participants whose inputs on the said debate can help the study make a coherent analysis. In particular, quota and purposive sampling techniques were employed. The quota sampling method is characterized by dividing the study population into sub-groups, such as parents and learners in the case of the study at hand. This sampling technique was essential in the study as it enabled the acquisition of views from different groups of persons around the topic of social justice and education. The parents and learners thus comprised the sub-groups of the study's quota sampling.

Five schools out of a total of twenty-two Vulindlela secondary schools were selected. The selected schools were from five municipal wards out of nine wards comprising the rural district of Vulindlela. One male and two females were selected from each of the five targeted Vulindlela rural schools. The total number of learners selected for the sample was thus fifteen. The rationale for choosing more female learners is the fact that black females historically and currently constitute one of the most disadvantaged groups in the South African setting. Historically, black women suffered a dual oppression from the institutionalized racism and certain cultural beliefs and practices upheld mostly in the rural parts of South Africa. While the democratic government addressed the institutionalized racism which deprived black women essential opportunities, the cultural customs and patriarchy embedded in their rural communities and elsewhere continue to constrain them from accessing the opportunities accorded under democracy. It is thus essential that their ideals and values be elicited in the education atmosphere that equally allows everyone to be educated regardless of their sex, race, and other grounds of discrimination.

Further, it is of high paramountcy to inquire the resources which they consider as crucial for helping them to achieve their ideals and values. Also, human diversity prompts the need to ascertain the factors that can constrain the black women from achieving their values and ideals from individual, cultural, and community perspective. In addition, fifteen parents of all grade twelve learners who participated in the study were also part of the sample size. It is the responsibility of parents to children to a successful future. Thus, the values and ideals that parents are important. As such, this is the category of persons whose participation was meaningful in the study. Lastly, of the twenty-two school principals, four principals and one deputy principal were selected as the key informants of this study. The purposive sampling method was applied to school principals given their special expertise and knowledge in the South African education spectrum. Thus, the total sample size for this research was thirty-five participants from five out of twenty-two schools.

#### **4.6.1.3 Location and Access to Research Sites:**

The study was conducted within five targeted rural high schools of Vulindlela district in Pietermaritzburg. Efforts to obtain a gate keeper letter from the provincial Department of Education head office in Kwa Zulu Natal were successful. However, the head office permission did not compel the targeted schools to participate in this research. This was evident when some of the targeted schools refused permission of research, while others welcomingly granted the gate-keeper letters. Contact with schools' managers was initially made through formal letters that presented the intentions of researcher and requested permission to conduct research in their respective schools. Initially, efforts to send letters through ordinary mail proved ineffective. The only effective alternative was to make physical contact with schools' principals during teaching and learning hours. As alluded above, while some school principals were happy to accept and be part of the inquiry, others outrightly rejected this research. Nonetheless, the role of schools' principals was highly pivotal in this research inquiry as they facilitated contact with the students and sending questioners to parents through learners.

Out of the five schools, two principals personally assisted the researcher with the selection of learners who participated in the inquiry. For instance, in schools L, and Q, the researcher was introduced to learners by the respective principals during the classroom activities. In school L, the principal identified three learners and asked them if they are willing to be part of the study. Upon agreeing, the principal then handed the informed consent form and questionnaire to learners to give to parents for their consideration. The principal explained to learners that there

will not be any harm done to them as this is a university academic research. In school Q, arrangements of securing learners and sending message to the parents were undertaken by the deputy principal. However, there were delays experienced in school which were fueled by a number of issues. The first challenge is that the schools and learners were preparing for trial examinations that were to take place in September. South African Democratic Teachers Union's (SADTU) are among issues that contributed to such delay. The meetings of SADTU with member teachers at times would clash with the dates on which the researcher had to meet either learners or the relevant school principals. This resulted in the postponement of the researcher's scheduled meetings with the relevant study participants. Eventually, the deputy principal managed to secure learners who will participate. The deputy principal explained that he selected learners whom he knew would not be shy to voice out their views during the interaction between them (learners) and the researcher.

A similar method was used in school K by the principal. The main concern was to choose learners who will be able to participate in the study. The role of the principal was important given that the researcher was not known to the learners who are adult-teenagers. In school E, the deputy principal spearheaded the selection of learners interested in participating. Further to that, the deputy principal wrote formal letters to the parents of the selected learners asking them to allow their children to participate in the study and also to provide feedback on the questionnaire designated for them. These formal letters assisted in securing the trust of parents.

In school U, the principal appointed a teacher who served as the coordinator between researcher, principal, and learners. The teacher introduced the researcher to learners and allowed the researcher to briefly explain the proposed study. Afterwards, the teacher asked for three students who would be interested to participate in the study during group discussions. Then the teacher gave selected learners informed consent forms both for learner and parent in question and a questionnaire document to be answered by the parent. The feedback from the parents regarding their consent for learners to participate and concerning parental survey questionnaire was handed over to the teacher who then provided such feedback to the researcher.

After a successful selection of learners, they were each given three documents. One of these was an informed consent form requesting the learners' parents to be part of the study, secondly, an informed consent form requesting permission of parents for learners to participate, and thirdly a survey questionnaire to be answered by parents. All the 15 survey questionnaires were

answered in full except one document which had 3 responses out of 13 questions. Further successful attempts were made to obtain this parental information. From a total of 15 learners, only 1 learner was refused participation by their parents, again leading to making another formal parental request which was admitted. The interviews with learners took place in classrooms with the assistance of principals and deputies respectively.

In an attempt to avoid interfering with teaching services in classrooms, some interviews with learners were conducted after school hours and during vacation. Nonetheless, other schools allowed interviews to take place during teaching and learning hours. Attainment of gate-keeper letters meant access to the research site schools. Access actually entails the researcher having permission and entry to designated research sites for collection of their data (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, and Liao, 2004). Gaining an access to a research site is one of the crucial and inevitable stages in the course of the research that is necessary to be acquired by the researcher in question (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, and Liao, 2004).

#### **4.6.1.4 Data Collection.**

Data collection is the most significant stage in scientific academic research. This is the stage when the researcher must elicit highly relevant information for resolving their identified research problems. Attainment of such relevant information requires a careful selection of data collection instruments which can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. These range from survey questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and observation to mention a few (Kothari, 2004). A researcher can rely either on qualitative or quantitative methods of gathering information or combine qualitative and quantitative aspects. This research study relied on survey questionnaires and interviews for collection of data. Survey questionnaires are common in quantitative enquiries whilst interviews is usually used in qualitative studies. This reflects a mixed methods approach and particularly a methods triangulation. Triangulation methods simply imply the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data on the same study phenomenon. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with three learners at a time within the school premises where such learners were schooling. Moreover, the face-to-face interviews were conducted with the school principals in the schools they are managing. While physically visiting the selected schools to carry out interviews, observation was made in light of the condition of the said schools. This included observing the schools' premises, buildings, and infrastructure.

The difficulty of parental outreach resulted in the usage of survey questionnaires to obtain their views on the study's investigation. A questionnaire refers to a set of questions prepared by the researcher to be responded to by targeted participants on their own (Kothari, 2004). In particular, an unstructured questionnaire with open-ended questions was utilized in an effort to obtain in-depth information. An unstructured open-ended questionnaire refers to a set of questions so flexible that they allow the respondent to provide justifications for their responses (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This can yield a qualitative data. Moreover, interviews were conducted with the learners on one hand, and school principals on the other in their respective schools. Unlike questionnaires, interviews allow the interviewer to clarify their questions for respondents, and to ask follow-up questions which may be prompted by responses from participants (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Attrition was encountered during process of data collection. As per Peter Lynn's (year) description, attrition basically refers to a process whereby the sample size keeps reducing during data collection phase. For Lynn (year), this may be occasioned either by respondents ceasing to be part of research, or non-responses to some questionnaires. The study suffered both types of attrition. This was when 1 out of 15 questionnaire documents was not responded to by a parent, and 1 out of 15 learners said their parents did not allow them to partake in this inquiry. Such attrition had far reaching adverse effects in terms of both time and costs of data collection process. However, the compelling necessity for a balanced information led to further efforts being made to attain such information from these participant categories. The interviews with learners took place in classrooms chosen by the principal or deputy, while principals and one deputy principal were interviewed in their offices. To prevent disruption of teaching and learning, some interviews with learners had to be conducted after school hours and during vacation, while other schools allowed interviews to take place during teaching and learning hours.

Usage of these methods of data collection yielded what is referred to as primary data. By definition, primary data refers to the original type of data that is collected for a specific research problem (Hox and Boeije, 2005). This primary information was thus utilized to address the main research questions. These main research questions sought to elicit values and ideals upheld by learners and by parents and school principals for learners, the role that education can play in the achievement of learners' ideals and beings, the types of resources required to contribute to learners' achievement of their capabilities, and lastly, the extent to which achievement of capabilities by learners can be interpreted as socially just education in South

Africa. and the possible challenges that could hamper successful pursuit of learners' preferred values and ideals through education?

Significant of primary data lies is its ability to tap issues and opinions that apply contextually, thus enabling specific responses to specific issues for respective societies as opposed to general assumptions. Furthermore, primary data has been appraised for its ability to reach accuracy on the study phenomenon (Sindhu, 2011). Additionally, primary data is highly reliable provided it is original data that has never been extracted before (Sindhu, 2011). Finally, different methods can be used to gather primary data, including interviews, and questionnaires for example (Sindhu, 2011). The major source(s) of such primary data were the study participants who were mainly learners, school principals, and parents.

#### **4.6.1.5 Data Presentation.**

The nature of collected information shapes the methods of presenting such information. For example, statistical data are most likely to be presented in tables and graphs. On the contrary, qualitative data are typical of textual method of presentation. Overall, there are 4 methods of data presentation, namely, textual, tabular, semi-tabular, and graphical methods (In and Lee, 2017). A textual method simply seeks to communicate information through written text, paragraphs, and or sentences, while tabular technique communicate data through tables and figures (In and Lee, 2017). A semi-tabular method refers to the use of both text and tables to convey the collected information (In and Lee, 2017). Lastly, a graphical method relies on graphs to simplify complex information through images which are meant to indicate certain trends and patterns about the unit of examination (In and Lee, 2017). In this research, preference was given to a textual method.

#### **4.6.1.6 Data Analysis.**

While preference was given to mixed methods in the light of data collection and presentation, the analysis of data was entirely qualitative. Worthy of emphasis is the fact that a qualitative analysis is highly premised on the interpretation of text by researcher as opposed to a statistically driven analysis in quantitative analysis (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The significance of researcher interpretation lies in offering an understanding and meaning about the study phenomenon based on the collected data rather than generalizing (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This research dissertation adopted a combination of content analysis and interpretive qualitative analysis to make sense of the acquired feedback from respondents. By definition, content analysis refers to a systematic analysis of the content of a text in terms of who said what and

why for example (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Interpretive qualitative analysis involves establishing coherence about the study object based on the views of participants in the study (Bryman and Burgess, 1994). The views of respondents were critical in this investigation to offer coherent analysis around the issues of capability inputs, conversion factors, human diversity, and agency which the study considers to be of high paramountcy in a socially just education debate. It is therefore worth emphasizing that the study adopted a qualitative data analysis on the topic of social justice and education in rural South Africa. The said qualitative analysis was informed by the participants' views and key constructs of the study.

In addition to offering logic on social justice and education using participants' views and key constructs, the study also intended to generate either a theoretical or conceptual framework on the unit of analysis (socially just education). To achieve this objective, qualitative researchers rely on a grounded theory. Citing Glaser and Strauss (1967), Bryman and Burgess (1994) contend that theory formulation can only be carried out through the views gathered from the participants. This can be guided by concepts deriving from other theories as well. Bhattacharjee (2012) opines that grounded theory seeks to build theories around study object(s) of interest by searching for open and hidden constructs or concepts. In this regard, the study developed and utilized a hybrid of *ubuntu* and capability approach.

#### **4.7 Auditing.**

Many studies ignore the importance of properly auditing all the required documents for their academic investigations. This significance is mostly alluded to by Alan Bryman (2004) who asserts that a professional research dissertation is that which keeps track or records of all the documents used in different stages of investigation. These include ethical clearance form, gate-keeper letters, informed consent forms, survey questionnaires, interview records, and so on. Bryman (2004) contends that keeping a record of all these assets is essential for the assessment of ethical issues and if appropriate procedures were followed. This study too highly adhered to this principle of auditing as all research documents and audio recordings were submitted for assessment.

#### **4.8 Limitations of the study.**

All academic studies encounter different challenges which are triggered by a variety of factors including, funding, time, and location for example. Depending on the nature of a challenge, some researchers do manage to overcome such issues whilst others do not. Of utmost important to note, such issues carry far adverse effects to academic researchers from producing the

highest standard of their research projects. Likewise, this research dissertation had its own limitations which may be similar to previous scholarly research. Funding is one of such challenges. This academic dissertation was entirely self-funded, no bursaries, nor any scholarship. This posed a major difficulty in terms of data collection specifically.

Location emerged as the second obstacle. The study had to be carried in five different secondary schools which are very far apart given their rural location. Travelling to and from these sub-locations was very costly and further worsened by the lack of funding. Participants outreach also proved to be an obstacle. Physically reaching for parents in particular was not feasible as their homes were largely dispersed apart in Vulindlela. This compelled the adoption of survey questionnaire as a tool of eliciting their opinions, thus not attaining the best possible quality of information. The questionnaires were given to learners to hand to their parents. Attrition in the form of incomplete survey questionnaires was also encountered as a challenge. Thus additional means had to be made to obtain the views of all 15 parents. Finally, representation of the entire population was not met. This was due to the small number of schools targeted which was five out of roughly 22 secondary schools in Vulindlela.

#### **4.9 Chapter summary.**

To recap, this chapter outlined a critical distinction between research paradigm, research methodology, and research design. This discussion outlined important elements constituting these research attributes which helped clearly understand their difference. These included ontology, epistemology, and axiology in light of the research paradigm and this study's position in relation to these. Furthermore, this chapter identified the mixed methods approach as the main research methodology. A clear research design was further outlined in this chapter which included population, sampling techniques, location and access to research sites, methods of data collection, presentation, and analysis. Lastly, the chapter discussed the challenges encountered during the data collection stage. These challenges amounted to limitations of this study. The following chapter will aim to present and analyze data on the values and ideals upheld by parents and school principals for their learners and what learners themselves rationally uphold for their lives using the context of Vulindlela rural district secondary schools.

## **Chapter Five: Educational values and ideals for pupils, parents and teachers at Vulindlela schools**

### **5.1 Introduction.**

This chapter answers the first research question which inquires about the values and ideals held by parents, teachers and pupils of Vulindlela secondary schools. In an effort to achieve social justice, it is important to acknowledge the existence of different values and ideals as *abantu abayi nganxanye bengemanzi*. A contextual interpretation of this isiZulu saying is that human beings by nature have different interests and views. From this perspective, it becomes clear that learners are bound to have different interests, values, and goals which they consider as ideal in leading the lives they prefer. Therefore, this chapter begins with a discussion on the role of education in relation to values and interests championed by learners and their parents, and teachers in Vulindlela rural schools. The views of the participants will be pivotal in seeking to understand the correlation, if any, between education the values and ideals. Secondly, this chapter will elicit the values and ideals championed by the learners and parents, and teachers in Vulindlela rural schools.

### **5.2 The role of education in relation to values and ideals.**

Citing Sen, Walker (p5, 2004) maintains that education is an “enabling factor” for individuals to develop and actualize their functionings. For example, education plays an instrumental role in assisting individuals to participate in political debates about social arrangement, to take economic opportunities, and be employed, to mention a few things (Walker, p5, 2004). However, it is also important to note the intrinsic value of education. The philosophical claim that *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* rests on the assumption that for *umuntu* to be fully human, *umuntu* has to be educated by others. To some extent, the South African constitution acknowledges this importance of education. Section 29 of the constitution guarantees the right to education for everyone. This section places primary responsibility to the state to ensure that such right is fulfilled to the best interest of society. South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 is a legislation that aims to fulfil the provisions of the constitution under section 29. SASA provides that it is compulsory for learners to be sent to schools by their parents or guardians. This constitutional and legislative demand seeks to redress previous disparities in access to education which were racially informed. However, the capability approach suggests that neither instrumental value nor the intrinsic approach are sufficient on their own. Striking the balance between the instrumental and intrinsic value of education is more important. This

section therefore discusses the responses of pupil, parents and teachers to interview questions on the relevance of education in pupil's values and ideals.

While it is a generally accepted view that formal education has instrumental value, some students do not hold that view. A student from School K had this to say:

*“For me it's money, because even education requires money. Some people are not able to continue with post-secondary education because they don't have money to pay for it. My parents must have money for me to be educated. So, for me money is everything”*

Another student thought that money is what they needed the most to become successful.

*For me, I believe money can bring a very remarkable change in my life because in modern days everything centers around money ..... education has not gone well for some people as it has not improved their lives while some have not been able to continue with their studies due to lack of money. So I believe money is the most important thing it can help me start my own businesses which is something I want to do.*

*The reason why some learners do not like school is because they do not see many people in their communities progressing through education. Those who are educated leave their communities for urban areas.*

Nonetheless, it is important to note that most of the participants pointed to the instrumental value of education. Thus, a female learner from School L advises as follows: *“I also think education is important because if I do not have it, I do not see my life and family improving, so education is good as it can help me achieve my goal of teaching so that I can also teach about significance of education”*. A learner from School E added that *“everything starts with education, even money is best attained through education, a better job is only attained based on your university education. Since I want to become a radiologist, only education can help me achieve this profession, so I believe education is everything”*. Another learner from School E pointed out that *“education is the key in modern times, if you are not educated, you are like someone who knows nothing, so education is the key to improve my life. And education does not only opens good employment opportunities, but it also opens opportunities of starting your own business which is what I want to do”*.

A learner from School F points to the centrality of education thus: *“As the youth of today, we can hardly achieve anything without education, we cannot be successful if we are not educated.*

*And if we are not educated, we are going to search for quicker ways of making living like crime, and crime is not a good thing". This is further supported by a learner from School K:*

*Well for me, there are only 3 things I consider to be important in my life which are education, employment, and money. But it's all start with education, even my goal of becoming an agricultural farmer depends on education. I have heard some people saying Africans do not need education for agriculture since it was traditionally practiced, which is misleading because there is a lot of useful knowledge about agriculture that we can also use in our rural communities.*

It was not only students who identified the intrinsic value of education, some administrators held a similar view. A school manager from School L elaborated thus:

*Ya, I think the most important thing here is education, money is not that important because education can alleviate families from poverty.... without education families cannot uplift themselves from poverty. So, it is essential that the government ensures that the environment and structure of schools are in good conditions so that people can learn and go forward.... for example, some homes here were poor, but once someone has attained education, their lives improve.*

Similarly, a manager from School U had this to say:

*You see in this school, we value education above everything. Our school may not have all the necessities for teaching and learning but our vision as the school is to see all learners attending this school achieving their goals through the education we offer them. It is therefore our mission as the teachers to even go an extra mile to ensure that we guide our learners towards the right direction of success.*

A parent had this to say:

*For me, education is very important, that cannot be denied, that is why we send our children to schools, it is because we want them to be educated so that they will not be like us who did not get the opportunity of education. However, we need to also emphasize the importance of respect and good discipline for our learners. Education requires a well disciplined and respecting person.*

However, there were learners that saw beyond the instrumental value of education. A learner from School L advised as follows:

*education is very important as it is only through education that we can get everything we want in life. If you want a better paying job, you must have a tertiary degree, and education gives you the best mentality of doing things. Education gives you a good mentality and even if you had money but without education you can easily be robbed whereas education can help you spend your money wisely.*

Data from all participants above clearly confirm the instrumental value that education has in relation to development of choices preferred by learners for their lives. Put differently, there is a correlation between education and achieving a capability. In the post-1994 South Africa, this positive relationship between education on one hand, and development and employment on the other, is reflected on the education discourse. Reginald Monyai (2018, p83) contends that people in rural areas evaluate education from the perspective of instrumental value as it contributes to employment and community development. This is not surprising given the levels of unemployment, underdevelopment, and low levels of education are highly prevalent in South African remote areas. Likewise, Martinus Nortje (2017, p47) asserts that obtaining a long-lasting employment hinge on access to quality education which is not guaranteed in SA. However, some parents pointed to the importance of good behaviour and discipline for the success in education. This can be supported by these views:

*“As parents, we want our children to focus on education. However, it is also important that learners behave themselves in schools, not to carry dangerous weapons and be involved in drugs. If our schools are surrounded by these issues, our children will never realize the value of education”*. Another parent supported this view thus:

*For me, education is very important, that cannot be denied, that is why we send our children to schools, it is because we want them to be educated so that they will not be like us who did not get the opportunity of education. However, we need to also emphasize the importance of respect and good discipline for our learners. Education requires a well-disciplined and respecting person.*

Pointing to the importance of disciplines, another parent commented thus: *“Education is the key for our children but we need to also warn them to stay away from crime and drugs because these can really disturb our children and they can be a threat to teachers and other learners”*.

Similar view was made by another school manager in school K. *“It’s all interacting, firstly, they must concentrate on their studies, and can appropriately learn if their minds are sober, free from drugs’ intoxication, then they can succeed in education eventually. As for money, they can seek it after they’ve achieved their targets goals”*.

These remarks again highlight concerns of security by parents for learners when they are in schools. This is not surprising considering the levels of crime, drugs, and weapons in communities surrounding school services. Vulindlela is one of the districts highly affected by drugs and crime. Two of the investigated schools are located in communities serviced by a police station that ranks third among police stations with high rates of murder and gun violence nationally (Patrick, 2022). In some Vulindlela communities, these drugs and weapons have found fertile ground in schools where learners themselves are carrying weapons, selling, and doing drugs. In one of the investigated schools, a teacher was shot dead in front of learners within the school premises in 2017 (Mngadi, 2017). Such instances largely undermine efforts to help learners achieve their goals through education. Teachers and learners can be affected psychologically by such acts; hence, logic behind parents’ concerns about good behavior and self-discipline for their children. Schools in such communities tend to be burdened with the task of facilitating good behavior for learners (Western Cape Department of Education, 2007)

There is vast literature on the topic of education and discipline in schools. John Foncha et al (2017) confirm that there is a positive connection between education and self-discipline. The study shows that ill-discipline has greatly contributed to poor academic performance (Foncha et al, 2017). Likewise, the joint study by Charl Wolhuter (2021) and Johannes van der Walt (2021) reveals that indiscipline is one of the challenges prevailing mostly in rural secondary schools in South Africa after 1994. Learner’s inability to do their schoolwork, teachers’ reluctance to teach, and willingness to leave teaching profession are some of the consequences resulting from learner-indiscipline (Wolhuter, and Van der Walt, p141, 2021). Therefore, while emphasizing the importance of education for achievement of capabilities, it is equally important to highlight the significance of good behavior and discipline on the part of learners. This is particularly relevant in an education context where rates of bullying in schools are escalating. Nonetheless, capabilities are not an end goal, but means to an end goal which is well-being.

### **5.3 Values and goals upheld by the pupils.**

Values and goals hold a crucial place in *ubuntu* and capability approaches. Activities and events are considered to be developmental only when they are informed by participants' values and goals. The first interview question asked about the ideal lives and values that learners at Vulindlela believed in. The first question also asked about the values and ideal lives that parents and teachers believe are good for the learners. Answers from the learners pointed in the direction of careers they would like to pursue. These included medicine and law, business management, and teaching among others. Female learners highlighted the need to fill the gap in professions which are dominated by men. The parents and school principals also attached huge emphasis on the need for learners to pursue their career goals using education as an instrument. The views of the respondents on values and ideals can be thematized as community-oriented, filling the gender gaps in the workplace, self-reliance, and individualistic.

#### **5.3.1 Community-oriented values and ideals.**

Some learners and teachers highlighted the need to achieve career goals which they can convert into helping their community in different ways. Thus, a female learner from School E pointed to the global context of her values and goals: *“What I want to do is environmental management given the rise of global warming which is also affecting us here in South Africa. I want to be part of the women who are committed to improving and taking care of the environment and teach other people, especially in my community about the importance of sustaining the environment”*. This remark is highly endorsed in the African context where global warming and environmental challenges mostly affect the women and children. A female learner based at School L further points to the wider social context of values and goals:

*With the education I am receiving in my school, I want to become a teacher so that I can also get an opportunity to teach others about the significance of education especially since we come from poor rural communities affected by apartheid and many other challenges like crime and drugs. I want to teach those coming after me that with education they cannot only change their families but their communities as well”*

A different male learner from School U points out: *“I would really love to become an entrepreneur so that I can assist other aspiring businesspersons to open their own opportunities. In fact, I am a person who loves helping other people so being an entrepreneur can enable me to even help my community with anything necessary”*.

These responses seem to paint the picture of the socio-economic status of Vulindlela rural communities. As alluded to in the introductory chapter, Vulindlela is situated in what was KwaZulu homeland hence the apartheid legacy and corruption are visible. Youth unemployment is rife which might be the cause of rising crime in Vulindlela rural communities. The majority of those who are employed are getting relatively low wages. Apart from crime and low-paying jobs, spaza shops and illegal liquor shops are common in the Vulindlela rural district. Given the low level of successful educated individuals in the area, the youth has lost hope in education being instrumental in improving their lives. This is supported by rising levels of learner drop-outs before and during grade 12, poor school outcomes, and low percentage of learners ascending to institutions of higher learning.

Two arguments emerge from the issues highlighted above. Firstly, education in Vulindlela rural district has not improved the lives of many community members. Secondly, given that education from Vulindlela schools has not improved the lives of many community members, there is a high likelihood that it is less valued. Further, it is fair to contend that the constitutional right to education is meaningless to the people of Vulindlela. While the female learner highlighted the significance of teaching others about the importance of education in bringing positive changes in their communities, it is a prerequisite to examine if the quality of education is adequate to help bring the desired changes by individuals. This examination is pivotal given the myriad of challenges highlighted in the SA education discourse.

A response from a male learner in School K seemed to hint on the need to change the method of teaching and learning.

*I want to do teaching so that I can come up with innovative ways of teaching learning. I realize that learners do not listen to teachers and this might have to do with the way in which we are being taught. We are always writing notes, reading from the books and we do not study by doing and observing so I feel like it is important to come up with news ways of teaching and learning.*

Some views from the participants hinted on the need for food surplus in Vulindlela to address the plight of poverty. Thus a female learner from School K points to familial roots of values and goals: “Agriculture is a good opportunity that I would like to pursue. It is inspired by my father who also is farmer so I want to be like him to continue helping some community members with food as we are living suffering communities.” This aspiration to have a career in agriculture was endorsed by a principal from one of the schools:

*We also need more learners who will specialise in agriculture because this industry is the backbone of the society especially here in our rural communities where there are rising levels of poverty and unemployment. So it is very critical to have high numbers of learners specializing in agriculture.*

These views from the learner and school principal depict that Vulindlela rural district is part of the rural communities in SA experiencing poverty. A balanced diet is highly pivotal for the ability of the learners to learn meaningfully. This can be supported by DBE implementation of the nutrition scheme in quintile one to two schools which are also available in the Vulindlela district. Therefore, collective and subsistence farming in this area can play a significant role in overcoming the plight of poverty which has had an adverse impact on learners' ability to learn. This is highly relevant in the context of South Africa where malnutrition and poverty are prevalent. There are many research studies that elaborate on this context. In her presentation on "International conference on dynamics of rural transformation in emerging economic", Neva Makgetla (p5, 2010) highlighted that poverty remains the major challenge in South African rural areas in the millennium. She contends that food insecurity is the major cause of high poverty levels in former Bantustans (Makgetla, 2010, p7).

Citing Faber et al (2011), Mjabuliseni Ngidi (2014, p281) and Sheryl Hendricks (2014, p281) similarly assert that hunger and food insecurity are crises facing Kwa Zulu Natal rural households. The South African government has introduced several initiatives aimed at facilitating food security in rural areas. These include Ilima-Letsema Programme, Siyasondla Homestead Food Gardens, Fetsa Tlala Integrated Food Production Initiative, and Land Care Programme to mention a few (Nkgudi, Maake, and Masekoameng, 2022, p2). It is worth noting that poverty poses a huge constraint in the achievement of a socially just education. From an age-group perspective, the proven record of high rates of poverty in previously marginalised societies include the children some of whom are learners. Poverty thus serves as an external constraining factor to the ability of learners to learn or be educated.

Nonetheless, the community-oriented values and ideals identified by the learning participants are consistent with *ubuntu*. As discussed under chapter three, *ubuntu* is premised on the collective maxim anchored on the need to help one another. The sayings '*umuntu ngu muntu ngabantu*', and '*izandla ziyagezana*' are premised on the said collective maxim. Thus, helping another person without expecting any reward except a simple 'thank you' is doing justice on

its own as it makes one feel better. The study thus strongly commends learners' views that are driven by this maxim as they guarantee shifting away from individualism.

### **5.3.2 Filling the gender gaps in the workplace.**

While some learners identified values which can help them improve their communities, there are those who felt there is need to close the gap in predominantly male jobs and positions. Thus, a female learner in school E highlighted the following:

*As a female learner, I want to do radiography and become a radiologist. I think this profession is mostly dominated by men because when I visited clinics and hospitals around Pietermaritzburg, most of the radiologists are men, women are very few. So I also want to be part of this profession so I can also open my own facility to assist pregnant women and increase the number of women serving as radiologists.*

A radiologist is a medical expert specializing in interpreting images (x-rays) of human internal body organs, tissues, bones, etc (Lundgren, 2015). This learner not only wanted to close the gap of shortage of women radiologists but wanted to have her own facility of radiography in her rural community. The latter is reflective of shifting away from employment towards self-reliance which will be discussed in the ensuing section. The learner is correct to point out to the dearth of female radiologists. It is also more important to note that Vulindlela rural district health facilities do not provide radiology services. This is very challenging in the social context where teenage pregnancy is prevalent. It is equally important that the number of female radiologists increase in the district to address the gender gap identified by the learner.

This aspiration is relevant in the context of a developing country like SA where there are issues of access to health facilities and dire need for health human resources. Similar to its Southern counterparts, research shows that SA rural dwellers must travel long distance to seek medical help due to shortage of medical facilities. Due to overcrowded health clinics, others return to homes without receiving help. This does not reflect a meaningful entitlement to access to health facilities as enshrined by section 27 (1) (a) of the constitution. The research further reveals that SA is in dire need for young and female radiologists given male predominance in this health profession sub-set. The study results of Nokulunga Mkhize et al (2022) showed that while radiologists are predominantly males, the trend has seen male radiologists decreasing from 82% to 69% while females have increased from 18% to 31%. The survey conducted by Morton and Partners further illustrates this shortage. In view of the shortage of radiologists, particularly young and women radiologists and overpopulation, the learner identified a required functioning

in SA to help redress such redress such health issues. This functioning can also contribute largely towards a meaningful entitlement to health care facilities.

### **5.3.3 Striking the balance between employment and self-reliance.**

It is worth mentioning that some learners' views raised the importance of self-reliance, thus deviating from the idea of being employed. Thus, a male learner in school U said the following: *"I want to be a lawyer, an independent lawyer so that I can also open my law firm. I do not want to serve under the already existing law firms like Clientele, Legal Scorpion, and many more, I want to have my firm"*. A different male learner from School E pointed to a self-reliant centred career: *"I would love to become an entrepreneur so that I can assist other aspiring business persons to open their opportunities. In fact, I am a person who loves helping other people so being an entrepreneur can enable me even to help my community with anything necessary"*.

These views highlight the importance of self-reliance and or self-employment which seems to receive less attention compared to employment in addressing poverty. Indeed, self-reliance should be highly promoted in socioeconomic contexts like SA where the issues of unemployment, low-paying jobs, poverty, and crime remain rife.

Twalo (2010) nevertheless highlights that self-reliance must be premised on education that can enable the youth to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to help address the plight of poverty, crime, and unemployment in SA. Influenced by Julius Nyerere, Twalo (2010) asserts that education for self-reliance is an ongoing social life experience that is aimed at capacitating and skilling the youth to respond to the needs of their communities. Thus, it is not limited to a classroom. This assertion finds resonance with one of the views made above on self-reliance where the learner highlighted the importance of helping his community through entrepreneurship.

In summary, learners identified values and ideal lives that are consistent with ubuntu, self-reliance, and the 1996 South African constitution. Among others, learners identified teaching, environmental management, practising law and medicine, entrepreneurship, and agriculture as ideal careers. It is important to point out that values and ideals that learners hold are not only tied to their individual interests but also accommodate communal interests. Thus, the learners' aspirations make sense in the context of South Africa's precolonial, colonial and apartheid history. While colonial and apartheid history is dominated by values, ideologies and philosophies of the oppressors, precolonial history provides seeds of transformation through

*ubuntu*. As discussed in Chapter Four, *ubuntu* prioritizes collective good but not at the expense of individual good. It is in this light that one can appreciate the balance between an individual's career and collective good. It is this balance that the learners who participated in this study are striving for.

Another learner identified environmental management as a preferred career choice. The reason for choosing this career path is global environmental crisis. Likewise, there is a huge need for this functioning especially in developing countries like SA. While economic growth and development comprise one of the country's major concerns, care should be taken to avoid environmental degradation. The ongoing global environmental threat has given rise to immense emphasis on the exigency for environment friendly economic activities, that is, green economy. The South African government defines green economy as "system of economic activities related to the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that result in improved human well-being over the long term, while not exposing future generations to significant environmental risks or ecological scarcities". Quoting the United Nations Environment Programme, William Stafford (2014) and Kristy Faccer (2014) conceives green economy as "economy that results in improved human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities". Jacqueline Borel-Saladin (2013) and Ivan Turok (2013) maintained that green economy is crucial in SA for two reasons. One is the creation of job opportunities amidst high unemployment rates, two, to address the adverse economic impact of high carbon emissions (Borel-Saladin and Turok, 2013). Nicola Jenkin et al (2017) emphasizes the importance of partnering between various stakeholders in the process of creating green economy in SA. These include public and private stakeholders, civil society groups, research institutes, and unions; hence an inclusive green economy (Jenkin et al, 2017, p71).

The commitment to protect the environment is further reflected in the constitution of SA. Section 24 provides that everyone is entitled to healthy and non-harmful environment and have it protected for current and future generations (Constitution of SA, 1996). Legislation and policy initiatives have been made to ensure meaningful and effective realization of the environmental right. These include National Framework for Sustainable Development, National Strategy for Sustainable Development and Action Plan, and National New Growth Path (Stafford and Faccer, 2014, p19).

A female learner in school K identified teaching as her career of choice. This is particularly interesting considering wide speculations that teachers are less paid. It reflects learner's commitment to teaching and its role in the transformation of society through education than money within the teaching profession. Teaching comprises one of the highly demanded skills in the post-1994 South Africa. Teachers are the primary role players for achievement of a socially just education which is one of the noblest goals for post 1994 South African government. Furthermore, teachers are the ones executing education policies within schooling environment adopted by the government for the benefit of learners and designation of a quality education. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, equipping teachers with necessary teaching skills constitutes one of the factors that can help developing countries to effectively improve learning outcomes (Kimathi and Ruszynak, 2018, p2). South Africa is no exception to this claim, given the substantive body of research identifying poor schools' outcomes as one of the concerning challenges particularly in rural schools.

As shown in the literature review chapter, Van der Berg (2002, p145) and Roodt (2018, p3) reveal that South African black rural schools are characterized by poor outcomes related to a number of challenges, including high levels of teacher absenteeism and HIV/AIDS infected teachers (Attawell and Elder, 2008, p11). According to Samantha Govendor (2018 p2), teachers are pivotal role players in implementing education reforms (Govender, 2018, p2). initiated by the democratic government in SA. These include implementing curriculum reforms as South African education system has undergone four curriculum changes from 1994 to date. A study by Paula Armstrong (2015, p11) acknowledges the importance of teaching profession in South Africa. In this view, Armstrong (2015, p12) suggests that the South African government should guarantee adequate teacher payment for two reasons: a) improved education performance and b) attraction of professional teachers willing to render the service of education.

These remarks find high resonance in South Africa especially in light of UNESCO's prediction that by 2025, SA must have 456 000 teachers to provide quality education (Maphalala and Mpofu, 2019). Maphalala and Mpofu (2019) found that SA does not have enough teachers and this undermines efforts of a balanced teacher-pupil ratio. Further alarming is the great number of teachers leaving teaching profession than those who join it (Maphalala and Mpofu, 2019). Therefore, Maphalala and Mpofu conclude that SA's goal to deliver quality education to all citizens hinges on the recruitment and training of more qualified teachers. Based on these

remarks, learner's passion to become a teacher for purposes of articulating the importance of education resonates with South Africa's demand of teachers for production of a socially just education. As shown in the literature review and in this chapter above, education carries both an intrinsic and instrumental value. Achievement of both these educational value aspects largely depends also on the availability of sufficient skilled teachers with innovative ideas of teaching. Moreover, learners' meaningful entitlement to a constitutional right to education also hinges on the availability of teachers who are passionate about teaching and can contribute positively in in teaching and learning realm.

Entrepreneurship is one of the significant opportunities that was not open to Black people in South Africa because of colonialism and apartheid. This can be confirmed by Andries du Toit's (2017, p1) remarks that colonialism and apartheid in SA was characterised by "uneven, selective, and adverse incorporation of rural blacks in the mainstream economy". Hence, the urban rural economic divide (du Toit, 2017, p1). Undeniably, this urban rural economic divide was cemented by implementation of land expropriation by the colonial governments. The Native Land Act of 1913 ensured that a large proportion of land (93%) belonged to whites while black people were restricted to a very small portion of roughly 7% of land (Modise and Mtshiselwa, 2013). This restriction was exacerbated by introduction of the Group Areas Act of 1950 under the apartheid political administration. This act designated different residential and business zones for different racial groups comprising SA. This resulted in massive removal of non-whites, including blacks, from areas designated for whites. Business and education activities were restricted in the specific area designed for a specific racial group. Evidently, this constrained black people from doing business and partaking in nationwide economic activities.

This can be buttressed by Peter Preisendorfer (2012), Ansgar Bitz (2012), and Frans Bezuidenhout (2012) who assert that SA's economy is characterized by low participation rates of black people in entrepreneurial activities. Preisendorfer (2012), Bitz (2012), and Bezuidenhout (2012) maintain that black entrepreneurship is crucial in SA for creation of employment, reduction of poverty, and contributes to self-employment. The study found that most black entrepreneurs are engaged in informal business sector and unregistered enterprises (Preisendorfer, Bitz, and Bezuidenhout, 2012, p7). In Vulindlela rural district, these informal and unregistered enterprises include include spaza shops, unlicensed liquor shops, car washing, street vendors in Pietermaritzburg central business district. Drug dealership also flourishes in some of Vulindlela municipal wards. Alain Ndedi (2014) looks at black entrepreneurship in

SA from a gender perspective. Ndedi (2014) ties black entrepreneurship with alleviation of black women poverty, creation of job opportunities for women, and women-centred self-employment. Therefore, Ndedi (2014) concludes that there is a huge need to empower black SA women in effort to actualize the goal of having many black women entrepreneurs in SA.

Lastly, and from an age perspective, Jean-Marie Mbuya (2016), Chuma Diniso (2016), and Amanda Mphahlele (2016) contend that SA has a huge task of developing entrepreneurial skills at an early stage. In turn, this will nurture the culture of entrepreneurship among the youth of SA (Mbuya, Diniso, and Mphahlele, 2016, p2). Mbuya (2016, p2) and his counterparts envisage the school as an essential environment for developing the culture of entrepreneurship. Forrest Caili (2012) and Pumla Jali (2012) further contend that cultivating youth entrepreneurship is essential in SA so that the youth become agents of change in their respective communities. This can be validated by the learner in School U who had this to say:

*“In fact, I am a person who loves helping other people so being a business person can enable me to even help my community with anything necessary”.*

Self-reliance, one of Ujamaa’s underpinning principles (Nyerere, 1968), can be deduced from this functioning of entrepreneurship. In brief, in a context of poverty, unemployment, dearth of black youth and women entrepreneurs, the learners’ ambitions to participate in entrepreneurship activities is of paramountcy in SA.

The element of self-employment or self-reliance was also raised by a female learner in school E who wanted to become a radiologist. A radiologist is a medical expert specializing in interpreting images (x-rays) of human internal body organs, tissues, bones, etc (Lundgren, 2015). This learner not only wanted to close the gap of shortage of women radiologists but wanted to have her own facility of radiography in her rural community. These aspirations are relevant in the context of a developing country like SA where there are issues of access to health facilities and dire need for health human resources. Similar to its Southern counterparts, research shows that SA rural dwellers must travel long distance to seek medical help due to shortage of medical facilities. Due to overcrowded health clinics, others return to homes without receiving help. This does not reflect a meaningful entitlement to access to health facilities as enshrined by section 27 (1) (a) of the constitution. The research further reveals that SA is in dire need for young and female radiologists given male predominance in this health profession sub-set. The study results of Nokulunga Mkhize et al (2022) showed that while radiologists are predominantly males, the trend has seen male radiologists decreasing from

82% to 69% while females have increased from 18% to 31%. The survey conducted by Morton and Partners further illustrates this shortage. One of the questions comprising the interviews was “why do you think there are so few female radiologists in practice”. This interview was conducted in SA. In view of the shortage of radiologists, particularly young and women radiologists and overpopulation, the learner identified a required functioning in SA to help redress such redress such health issues. This functioning can also contribute largely towards a meaningful entitlement to health care facilities.

#### **5.4 Chapter summary.**

In conclusion, this chapter had two central aims. The first aim sought to establish the first element of capability approach which is eliciting actions and beings upheld by learners in Vulindlela rural schools. These are the actions and beings that learners consider to be crucial for the lives they want to lead. Entrepreneurship, agriculture, practicing law and medicine, environmentalism, all comprise the actions and beings that learners wanted for their lives. The chapter showed a close connection between some elements of the capability approach and Ubuntu, given commitment to serving the needs and interests of communities. It was also established that the functionings identified by learners in this inquiry are relevant to the challenges faced by South Africa since the inception of a democratic set up.

The second objective of this chapter was to ascertain if education, as espoused by Sen and his counterparts, is central to the achievement of capabilities. Data indicated that there is a positive link between education and pupils’ target goals. However, while endorsing education, parents, including one school manager, also highlighted the significance of discipline and abstinence from crime and drugs as paramount in the achievement of capabilities. From this perspective, education is viewed from an instrumental standpoint, and it is an independent variable whilst capabilities are a dependent variable. Therefore, Sen’s contention on the relationship between education and capabilities was verified in this study. As such, the question that arises relates to the means that are necessary for achieving capabilities within the educational environment. This is the question of capability inputs which cannot be overlooked in the context of capabilities and a socially just education. The following chapter thus aims to address the question of capability inputs required for Vulindlela learners to achieve their capabilities.

## **Chapter Six: Nexus between capability inputs and conversion factors in Vulindlela rural schools.**

### **6.1 Introduction:**

Chapter 5 established that achievement of capabilities by learners of Vulindlela secondary schools is tied to the environment of education. This chapter thus centers around the question of resources and capabilities. The chapter seeks to determine the types of resources essential for achievement of capabilities preferred by Vulindlela rural schools' learners. However, from a capability perspective, resources are not sufficient on their own. Thus, this chapter will also ask if there are appropriate conversion factors for the available resources.

### **6.2 Understanding resources and their significance in the context of education**

According to Ewan McGaughey (2018), human beings partly need material resources to fulfill their potential. This then calls for an understanding of the concept of resource. The word “resources” is a broad term that could be used in varying realms. For instance, economists apprehend a resource as a service or asset that could be used to produce goods and services essential to meeting human needs and demands (McConnell, Bruce and Flynn, 2011). Economists usually classify resources into land, labour, and capital (Samuelson and Nordhaus, 2004). In the realm of biology, resources could mean “substance that is required by a living organism for normal growth, maintenance, and reproduction (Uzoma, 2018). Food, water, air, and sunshine are some of the valued resources by biologists for good growth, maintenance, and reproduction (Uzoma, 2018). In geography, resource has been conceived as any material endowed by nature or earth which people value and need to advance their lives (Uzoma, 2018). According to Brian Goodall (1987), a resource entails “something material or abstract that can be used to satisfy human needs or deficiency”.

Put differently, resources are means to an end. For example, a cell phone is valued for facilitating easy communication between people farther distant from each other. Likewise, a vehicle enables quick movement or travelling from one place to another. In this regard, communication and travelling are end goals that can be effectively achieved through cell phone and vehicle respectively. Non-renewable and renewable resources are some of the major classifications linked of resources. While the former speaks to resources that are limited and cannot renew themselves, the latter refers to those resources that are replenishable. Coal and gas are typical examples of non-renewable resources while water, air, and plants are replenishable resources. These are sometimes called biotic and abiotic resources (Uzoma,

2018). Furthermore, some resources are labelled as man-made resources. These are the types of resources which are of great utility to human beings produced through skill and intelligence.

According to some theorists, human resources comprise another type of resources. Nonetheless, some theorists have challenged the notion of human resources especially when resources are viewed from an instrumental point of view. In the view of Ewan McGaughey (2018), humans should be treated with dignity as persons deserving to enjoy rights as opposed to being perceived as resources to be managed by those in the core. Using social justice as a lens, McGaughey (2018) maintains that people are not means to end for other people but are ends to themselves. From this perspective, McGaughey (2018) challenges the view or concept of human resources on the basis of exploitation and unequal treatment of people. Common from these definitions is that resources carry an instrumental value that could be used as means to achieving ends. From this perspective, resources play an instrumental role for human beings to achieve their desired goals.

Applied in the context of education, resources could be understood as all relevant material and tools necessary to facilitate teaching and learning. These should be resources without which teaching and learning and achievement of goals attached to teaching and learning activities can hardly be achieved. For Yunusa Dangara Usman (2016, p30), educational resources refer to all human, fundamental material, and non-material necessary for administering the school and simplifying the process of teaching and learning. Usman (2016, p30-31) classifies educational resources into 6 categories. These are namely, material, financial, time, human, information and communication technology (ICT), and community resources. It is without dispute that no school can effectively render the service of education without material resources like libraries and laboratory. Also, all schools are expected to have proper buildings, sufficient learning equipment like desks, chalks, and chalkboard. Arguably, financial resource constitutes the backbone for all education-oriented resources. Decisive education policy making, making and implementation of curriculum, and teacher-oriented workshops all hinge on the stable financial base.

Moreover, effective administration, management, and rendering the service of education lies with finance. Lastly, payment of teachers, purchase of necessary learning material and resources and their maintenance depend on the financial resource. Education further requires presence ICT resources like computers, internet, and broadcasting devices like television and radio. Circulating, managing, and storing information forms part of the functions performed by

ICT resources in schools, between schools, and between schools and relevant organizations and institutions forming part of the education system. In addition, learners heavily rely on computers and internet to conduct their assignments and other types of assessments and learning activities. Finally, human resources is another aspect of educational resources necessary for a quality education. Human resources include teachers, support staff and parents. Among other things, the role of human resources is guaranteeing distribution of educational learning material and play maintenance role over other school resources. Teachers in particular are responsible for offering lessons and setting assessments for learners at schools.

As shown in chapter 5, the proponents of capabilities approach espouse a positive connection between education and achievement of wellbeing. From a normative point of view, Walker (2004, p2) asserts that education ought to advance both agency freedom and well-being freedom for each individual person. In other words, education is vital for developing a person's freedom of choices relating to the things they value for their lives and well-being. Therefore, presence and access to relevant educational resources is imperative for achievement of well-being (Walker, 2004). Alternatively, educational resources are known as capability inputs and are valued for their inputs. These range from teachers, school buildings, computers, and books. However, the major concern is the question of conversion factors. From a capability approach perspective, it is imperative to take into account diversity of human beings in terms of wealth, physical ability, culture, religion, sex, political setting, etc. These factors can influence one's ability to convert available resources into actual goals.

Nonetheless, research has shown deficit of educational resources especially in countries of the Global South. These countries are characterized by scarcity of educational resources, therefore, failing to render the anticipated quality education. SA is no exception to these claims. Hlalele (2012) asserts that resource disparity between ex model c and black rural schools is one of the features characterizing SA education. This trend has imposed remarkable difficulty in the achievement of better schools outcomes in such communities. Similarly, Books and Ndlalane (2011) found that teachers called for distribution of proper resources to enable their learners attain practical skills that will make them competent in the workplace. In Turnbull's study (2014), school principals championed the need for fair distribution of resources in efforts to create equal opportunities for all learners in SA. According Ndimande (2013), dearth of resources in rural and township schools has compelled parents to send their children to ex model c schools in pursuit of better resourced schools.

Clearly, SA discourse on education attributes immense advocacy on the exigency for adequate school resources in black township and rural schools for better education for all. This advocacy is consistent with South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA). Chief among its provisions, this legislation places responsibility to the minister of education to guarantee provision of essential teaching and learning material (SASA, 1996). Electronic equipment, libraries, laboratories, teachers, stationary, and water, comprise some of the essential learning material and infrastructure as enshrined in the Act (SASA, 1996). In addition to the resources outlined above, this study maintains that curriculum also is a significant resource that cannot be overlooked in the discussion of educational resources. This is largely because curriculum reflects the content being taught in schools. Therefore, it is of paramountcy that the curriculum be parallel with the actions and beings valued by learners as linked with the lives they wish to live. In SA, the education discourse has expressed concerns about the curriculum that is reflective of the aspirations of SA people. For instance, Martin and Ngcobo (2015) assert that SA education needs a broad curriculum that will make learners agents and not subjects of education and reflect their needs and demands. In light of these academic and legislative remarks on educational resources in SA, it is paramount for this study to apprehend the types of resources that Vulindlela rural schools value as relevant to their goals and if they do have access to such resources in their schools.

### **6.3 Types of resources needed by Vulindlela learners to achieve their capabilities.**

This section intends to ascertain, based on interviewees' responses, 1) the types of resources that can contribute to learners' achievement of their agency freedom and well-being freedom, 2) if learners have access to such resources and are able to effectively use them. The latter aspect partly speaks to the question of conversion factors which will be discussed as well.

#### **6.3.1 Infrastructure and facilities.**

Vulindlela is a poor resourced rural district. While the schools under investigation have access to safe and health drinking water, there are schools experiencing challenges with electricity. For instance, in schools L, K, and Q, some classrooms do not have power supply. Furthermore, while schools L, U, E, and K have a library, schools Q does not have a library facility. In some cases, the libraries available in these schools are not helpful to learners.

A learner from School U points to the problem of non-functional libraries thus: *“Another problem at our school is that of the library. We do have a library but the challenge is that it does not have books that will help us do our assignments. When teachers give us assignments,*

*we cannot use this library because its books do not have required information*". A learner from School L points out library rules that restrict access to library material: *"The same goes with the library and the books are there but we cannot use them because teachers are claiming that learners take books to their homes and never return them"*. Such library rules make it difficult for learners to complete their assignments outside School.

A learner from School K points to the lack of functional library: *"Our school lack essential facilities. We do not have a library that is in a good working condition. When teachers give us assignments, we have to travel to the library in town and this is costly as we are staying far from town and our parents do not earn much"*. Lack of a functional library in school K was also confirmed by the school principal. *"We also have a library, but it is not in a proper condition to be used by learners and teachers. We are still urging the department to help us make our library functional and useful to learners"*.

Out of five schools studied, only school U had a computer lab while schools U and L are the only ones with a science laboratory. However, these facilities in both schools are not functional. This is supported by learner from School U:

*Those who have matriculated have told us about the pain of not knowing how to use a computer, not knowing how to even login. In our school as you can see yourself, we do have computers but we do not use them. There are no computer related lessons and this is very frustrating because we do not know the point of having computers when we are not learning anything related to it. We also have a science lab, but it is not working.*

The school U principal had this to say regarding dysfunctionality of computer lab.

*We were given old fashioned computers using windows 7 and we do not have funds to update this version. Also, we could not undertake computer lessons as there was no internet connection and only few teachers are computer literate. This means the government must inject more funds for teacher-training workshops on how to use computer and for enabling us to have internet connection.*

A learner from School L points out, *"the school used to have laboratory but it was destroyed by the learners and no it is no longer functioning"*. The school principal for school L also confirmed the above statement. *"You see, sometimes the learners themselves are problematic. The previous school principal successfully made efforts to have a science lab in this school,*

*but it was later destroyed by the learners. Perhaps we need to teach learners about the importance of having these facilities at schools”.*

The other schools had no computer lab and science laboratory at all. This is confirmed by learners from School E:

*We need computers in our school so that it is not difficult for conduct assignments. Since we do not have computers, we need to go outside the school to dig for relevant information, and some of us end up not completing such assignments because they cannot gather the required information owing to lack of finance to reach for internet cafes....if we had computers, it would be easy for us to collect information and submit before the deadline.*

*Just to add, as matric students, we should be prepared from our schools about how to use a computer, what is internet and its significance in the context of education so that by the time we reach for university level, we do have some basic understanding of a computer. We also need science labs where we can learn by observing and doing rather than imagination. I am a matric student but I do not even know how chlorine looks like in a solid form, we usually learn about such things in the books that if you mix this and that, this is the product you get, which is very hard to understand.*

A learner from School K points to a lack of relevant facilities:

*Our school’s condition is not conducive enough for various teaching and learning activities to take place. We do not do practical learning because our school has no relevant facilities like laboratories. Those who are doing agriculture do not have a small plot of land where they can do what they study on the book. The lack of resources is a big challenge in our school.*

A principal from School E identified other shortages:

*“You see, teaching and learning is conducted under very critical conditions at this school where there is a shortage of classes and desks, resulting to overcrowded classes. We do not have laboratories and science laboratories”.*

A principal from School K points to a list of shortages:

*Our school has very limited learning material, it is a common thing here in rural communities and this makes teaching and learning to be very difficult. Teachers cannot carry their duties*

*completely and learners do not have an alternative way learning except the teacher standing in front of them giving them instructions. As a school, we need overhead projectors, smart boards, internet, and our library is not in a good condition now. We need all sort of resources that will enable us to perform our duties and help our learners achieve their target goals. The principal from School U points out:*

*We do have resources like the library and a computer facility. However, our library does not yet have enough books to assist learners with their schoolwork. Learners have to share books and this is delaying our work. We also have computers and we are making efforts to have internet connection so that we can start having computer related lessons. We have committed teachers and learners to the culture of education and if had all the necessary resources we would have matched the standard of ex model c schools.*

Perhaps, the importance of resources is best summarized by one of the parents thus: *“For our children to have better education, we need teaching resources of high quality so that they stand good chances of going to universities where they further their education”*.

Based on the data above, it becomes clear that computer lab, science lab, school buildings, library, overhead projectors, and sufficient classrooms comprise educational resources needed for Vulindlela rural schools. These resources can be understood as the capability inputs which are prerequisites for learners to meaningfully achieve what they want to do and be. Nonetheless, the views of the participants clearly indicate that their schools lack all such necessary learning tools and material, hence complicating the task of teaching and learning. Clearly, the absence of educational resources poses constraints and disadvantage for learners to succeed in achieving actions and beings related to lives they prefer to lead. These insights highlight the significance of agency in the process of learning, which is one of the important elements of the capability approach. Citing Sen, Walker (2004, p2) defines agency as a person who is able to perform actions that are key to achieving the goals valuable for the well-being of such person. In light of education, agency entails a learner’s ability to interact with the available resources and material to achieve goals that related to their well-being. Nevertheless, this agency can hardly be exercised in the absence of resources.

Given the absence of resources in Vulindlela secondary schools, learner-agency is thus constrained and this adversely affect the well-being freedom of learners and communities comprising this district. Learning by doing and observing motivates learners to be learners and

even to be always present at school knowing they have something to interact with. Part of the reason for increased dropouts at schools after 1994 in SA is lack of motivation for learners to learn and study. This assertion is confirmed in the study by Masitsa (2006) which reveals that grade 12 learners in SA townships are not adequately motivated to learn and study. As such, Masitsa (2006) recommends sound teacher-learner relationship, creating a supporting learning environment, and providing work-related subjects to help motivate learners. Citing Reddy (2004), Goerge and Adu (2018) contend that poor performance in mathematics is partly attributed to lack of motivation both on teachers and learners. According to Tisetso Mokgosi (2016), individual factors like lack of motivation, poor health or malnutrition largely contribute to dropouts in SA.

Using data from Statistics SA General Household Survey, Business Tech reported (2023) that about 30% of learners dropped out at school from grades 9 to 11 in years 2019 to 2021. Likewise, Independent Online (2023) has reported that according to Statistics SA 2022, 3% of learners aged 15 years and 9% of learners aged 17 years old dropped out from school in 2021. Usually, learners aged between 15 and 17 years are in grades 9 to 11. This validates the commonly held argument that high rates of dropouts are common in grades 9 to 12. This is supported by GHS data on years 2016 to 2018 and 2017 to 2019 respectively where grades 9 to 11 have high rates of dropouts compared to grades 1 to 8. Partly contributing to this trend is that learners are not actively participating in what they learn, owing to the absence of resources and material to interact with and a broad and flexible curriculum. Therefore, motivation of learners to go to school can be one of the solutions for mitigating high levels of learner drop-outs and poor schools outcomes mostly in rural and township schools of SA. When examining the impact that education has on Vulindlela learners, it can be concluded that such education does not fully and positively contribute to the goals that learners value for their well-being. It does not adequately assist learners to achieve goals that are closely connected with their well-being.

From Nussbaum's point of view, failure to develop learners' agency freedom while they are young is to fail them to achieve their preferred well-being when they reach adulthood. In the words of Walker (2003, p2), denying a child access to the goods of education is to deny them an opportunity of being well-off in the adult life.

Schools in Vulindlela are typified by poor outcomes and low rates of learners enrolling to tertiary level of education. This trend is reflected in the statistical information provided by DBE

on the performance of grade 12 learners. The data shows the total number of learners wrote, number of learners who passed, and the percentage pass rates for 2021 to 2023.

Figure 2: Matric pass rate from 2021 to 2023.

Year	2021			2022			2023		
School	Total wrote	Total achieved	Pass rate%	Total wrote	Total achieved	Pass rate%	Total wrote	Total achieved	Pass rate%
E	210	201	95.7%	326	287	88.0%	411	287	69.6%
Q	104	81	77.9%	157	86	54.8%	123	56	45.5%
L	104	50	48.1%	60	45	72.7%	54	29	51.2%
U	177	136	76.8%	167	136	81.4%	160	148	92.5%
K	124	52	41.9%	62	53	85.5%	43	39	90.7%

Source: Department of Education SA

The table above depicts some issues that are commonly identified by education related research in poor communities. The data shows that schools E and U are experiencing the issue of overcrowding. The decrease in pass rates in the past 3 years might be directly attributable to overcrowding especially in school E. The discourse on South African education testifies to this assertion. Roodt (2018) indicates that schools in economically poor neighbourhoods have poor outcomes in mathematics and physical science subjects compared to well-off and fee-paying schools. Similarly, Van der Berg (2002) argued that lack of resources had negative impact on the performance of learners in black and colored schools. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that there exists social injustice in Vulindlela rural education as schools lack essential resources and material (capability inputs) to assist learners achieve their well-being through education. From an *ubuntu* perspective, it is unjust and unfair for learners not to have access to the learning material in line with the outcomes they want to achieve through education. As Mahaye contends (2018), “*ubuntu* in education adopts a holistic view of learners as opposed to reducing their abilities and potential”. The absence of learning material thus constrains the learners from succeeding in doing what they want and becoming who they want to be.

### 6.3.2 Educational Workers

Functioning of a school is made possible by a variety of workers including councillors, teachers and administrators. All of these workers are important, however this section will focus on teachers. Teachers and principals are responsible for implementing education related policies and plans of the department of education. These plans may include curriculum implementation

and delivery, wellness of learners, and management of funds aimed at advancing education goals. Based on the participants' views, it is apparent that there is a quantitative and qualitative shortage of teachers at Vulindlela rural schools.

A learner from School E points to this shortage: *"I feel like our school need additional teachers. Our school has many learners, and this cause imbalance between teachers and learners. Teachers find it difficult to even maintain order within the classroom because classrooms are overcrowded and making it difficult to teach and learn"*. Some learners point to shortages of particular teaching expertise. A learner from School K points to a shortage of agricultural teachers: *"Shortage of teachers is also affecting us, I like to learn agriculture but there is no relevant teacher for this subject at school. This is shuttering my goal of becoming a successful female farmer which is one of the sectors mostly dominated by males"*.

A learner from School Q points to a similar experience:

*I think we need an agricultural teacher who will be able to make us understand this subject better. I am not the only one experiencing this issue as all agricultural learners are struggling to understand its teacher. This has made agriculture to be the subject with poor outcomes especially when compared to mathematics and physics which are the subjects thought to be most difficult.*

A learner from School L points to a shortage of teachers with physics teaching expertise: *"At grade 12, we do not have a physical science teacher, she left for another school because ours was poorly resourced. I am very worried about this because in 2 weeks we are writing exams for our first term and we have not learned anything"*.

The shortage of quality educators was also highlighted by some school principals such as the principal from School L.

*One of the most important things is that a school must receive sufficient support from the government. As the school principal, my huge concern is to have a quality of educators. This is one of the major challenges prevailing in rural schools, the shortage of quality educators who have passion about teaching profession. As we speak, I have asked the department to bring us a physical science teacher as the one we had left for another school, but the department is dragging its feet on this matter and physical science is one of the important subjects I cannot remove it from the curriculum. The issue of absence of job opportunities is also affecting teaching profession because we*

*end up having educators who are not passionate about education but who were pushed by the income factor.*

There is a lot of literature indicating that developing nations are in dire need for quality and quantity of teachers (Arends, 2011). SA in particular is no exception to this claim. Attrition of teachers, learner-subject choice, and increased school enrolments have been identified as part of the key driving factors for the need of teachers in South African schools (van der Berg, Gustafsson, and Burger, 2020). The studies by Research on Socioeconomic Policy (RESEP) and Gabriel Wills (2023) both raise the issue of shortage of teachers as pertinent in an education environment where class sizes are getting larger. Failure to meet this demand will result to increased learner-educator ratio; hence poor performance (Wills, 2023). In an effort to understand factors leading to shortage of qualified and competent teachers in SA, Alice Palm (2022) evaluated the incentives that would give an impetus for teachers to return to the teaching profession. These include reduced workload, replacing the current curriculum with a different one, and provision with adequate resources (Palm, 2022). From this perspective, heavy administrative duties, large classes, absence of sufficient resources, extra-curricular activities, and an unjust curriculum prompt teachers to depart from teaching profession. This trend then results to shortage of teachers in SA. In addition, population increase and an education enabling political setting offered by the post-1994 democratic regime also are key factors prompting the need for more teachers. This assertion is particularly applicable in rural areas where population growth is high and these being areas hitherto marginalized by the apartheid government.

Furthermore, there is extensive literature on the challenges encountered in the process to retain qualified teachers in South African rural schools (Murumela et al 2020). However, some researchers have pointed out to the need for competent teachers rather than simply focussing on qualified teacher (Mngomezulu, Lawrence, and Mabusela, 2021). This stems from the argument that not all qualified teachers are competent to teach, therefore, the need for selecting competent teachers for a sustainable future (Mngomezulu, Lawrence, and Mabusela, 2021). Research by Bobitt et.al (1991), Kirby, (1991), and Boyed et.al (2004) reveals that individuals choices about work and geographical location of working are largely influenced by the desire to maximize utilities in the workplace. This has partly contributed to the shortage of teachers especially in South African rural schools.

This argument is particularly true in light of the physical science teacher in school L who left this school for other well-resourced schools in the township. Absence of a physical science

teacher in this school is a huge challenge especially in the context of a technological world where there is dire need for technological skills. This is not only affecting learners' outcomes on the subject in question, but also affects the possibility for physical science learners to acquire the relevant skills to help them lead the life they prefer. Furthermore, shortage of teachers in Vulindlela rural schools has two negative impacts. Firstly, inadequacy of quality of teachers has a negative impact on learners' choices. Learners end up doing subjects not relevant to the actions and beings they want for their lives. An example is a learner who wanted to be a female farmer but could not achieve this goal as there was no agricultural teacher in their school. Secondly, shortage of teachers also affects the curriculum being offered in a given school. This contributes to the narrowness of the curriculum which has to be expanded to accommodate learners' choices about the actions and beings they want.

### **6.3.3 Curriculum**

As indicated in the literature review chapter, curriculum comprise significant constructs in this study. Curriculum is to be understood as the tangible resource embodying the knowledge that will equip learners in the actions and beings they want about their lives. In the SA educational context, there is extensive literature on the topic of curriculum. As shown in the literature review section, most researchers place emphasis on the need to reform the curriculum. While some advocate for indigenous knowledge to be integral part of curriculum (Zezeza, 2009), others champion for curriculum that accommodate the values and interests of learners and communities in which they reside (Fomunyam and Teferra, 2017). The latter is referred to as an epistemically diverse curriculum (Padayachee, Matimolane, and Ganas, 2018). From this perspective of an epistemically diverse curriculum, it is paramount for this study to assess the extent, if any, to which curriculum in Vulindlela rural schools does reflect the values and interests upheld by the learners in particular. To achieve this, below is a table of schools and subjects being offered by each school, this will be followed by presentation of participants' views on curriculum and followed by an analysis.

CAPS is the form of curriculum offered by the SA Department of Basic Education to public schools. In the FET phase, a phase applicable from grade 10 to 12, CAPS demands that a learner must study two languages. One language must be home language while the other must be an additional second language. Furthermore, CAPS require that all FET phase learners must take two compulsory non-language subjects which are mathematics/maths literacy and life orientation, and four addition non-language subjects of choice.

Language subjects	Non-language subjects
Afrikaans	Accounting
English	Agricultural science
IsiNdebele	Business studies
IsiXhosa	Economics
Sepedi	Geography
Sesotho	History
Setswana	Life orientation
Siswati	Life sciences
Tshivenda	Mathematics literacy
Xitsonga	Mathematics
	Physical science
	Tourism

(source: DBE)

All schools that participated in this research offer the learning subjects above with few exceptions. Schools Q and E do not have agriculture while schools L, U, and K do not have tourism. The mode of content delivery for these learning subjects is in person whereby the teacher instructs the learners within the classroom setting. Moreover, learners highlighted that their curriculum is narrow, it does not contain subjects that will make them knowledgeable about the things they want to do and be. Some learners have argued that the narrow curriculum has resulted to learner drop-outs and poor outcomes because learners are studying things they do not have passion for. Another learner in school L outlined that they are made to learn many subjects which are not relevant to what they want to do and be and this makes it difficult for them to excel in the subjects related to their target goals.

A student from School L point to the lack of practicals as hindrance to their education: *“Our curriculum does not have enough subjects to help each of us broaden our knowledge on the things we want to do and be. Some of prefer to learn by doing and observing, but there are no*

*practical lessons relating to this mode of learning*". A learner from School E highlights the impact of limited choices within curriculum:

*We have only a few subjects to choose from. This is very bad because some of us end up failing as we learn things that are not our inspiration. Others even leave the school because they cannot cope with the available subjects. All these things, including absence of resources, makes us to be discouraged, there is nothing inspirational about this education. When I wake up in the in morning, I am not motivated that I am a best learner who is going to achieve her dreams through education.*

This student elaborates on this point thus:

*Besides narrow curriculum, our teachers happen to choose which stream of learning will suit us as learners. Some learners do not choose their subjects, the teachers choose subjects on behalf of learners. How then are those learners going to pass? Our parents also mount pressure on us in terms of which careers we should go for and this is not fair to us.*

A student from School K continues highlighting the impact of limited choice:

*I do not think there is justice in our education because not all learning subjects are offered in our school. There are no subjects relating to carpentry for example which is a hands work. Such learners end up learning what they do not want and this is all because of the poor curriculum. As for me, I like tourism, but I had to choose life science because tourism is not offered in this school.*

As a student from School U points out, some school have laboratory facilities that are dysfunctional:

*When I arrived at this school to do grade 8, facilities like science laboratory and a computer lab were already established and now I am doing grade 12 but still they are dysfunctional. We have asked several times that lessons relating to these facilities be conducted, but no one is listening to us. How then are we going to be well prepared students who can effectively interact with learning material at a university to achieve our target goals?*

In this study, the role of curriculum is understood to be equipping learners with the relevant knowledge to achieve agency freedom and well-being freedom. These constructs have already

been explained in the theoretical framework chapter. It is thus of paramountcy in this study to examine if curriculum for learners in Vulindlela rural schools does equip them with the knowledge required for achieving their agency freedom and well-being freedom. This examination shall be grounded mostly on the views of the participants. These views indicate the inadequacy of the curriculum offered in Vulindlela rural schools. This inadequacy has had negative effects in the culture of learning. These include learners having to do subjects which are not in line with their goals, poor performance due to doing learning subjects not in line with learner target goals, and learner-drop out resulting from absence of learning subjects required by learners for their preferred.

In some instances, learners choices on subjects is affected either by teachers or parents who choose for learners learning subjects which they think best suit them. This is against capability approach's stance that all social justice efforts within the realm of education must aim to advance what individual learners value as worth for their lives. It can thus be safely argued that schools in the Vulindlela rural district do not offer an epistemically diverse curriculum. From a capability approach perspective, the curriculum in Vulindlela rural schools cannot help learners achieve functionings related to their preferred agency freedom and well-being freedom. Therefore, education curriculum in this rural setting does not meaningfully contribute to what learners rationally value for their lives and hence it is a socially unjust education. This highlights the exigency for expansion of curriculum that will take into account the needs of learners and distribution of resources relevant to those needs. This approach will not only assist learners achieve their desired capabilities but will also enable them to be active agents in the process of learning in the context of education. Participation of learners while learning deepens not only their knowledge but experience about the things they have reason to value and be.

#### **6.4 Social characteristics and conversion factors in Vulindlela rural schools.**

Social characteristics include “public policies, social norms, discriminating practises, gender roles, societal hierarchies, power relations” (Robeyns, 2003, p12). Some social characteristics facilitate the conversion of inputs to functioning or doings while others hinder this conversion. Some of the social characteristics that hinder learners in Vulindlela schools are sexual harassment of female students by other students and teachers, bullying, in particular of female students by male students and family rituals.

A learner from School E points to sexual harassment as one possible reason for female students under-performance: “*Apart from absence of resources, we are disturbed by boys and the*

*teachers who want us fall in love with them and many girls fall for their tricks. This is perhaps the reason boys are performing better than us because many girls are mixing education and love and you do better on both". A student from School L points to the negative impact of bullying: "You see, the boys are bullying us saying that we are girls and therefore we will outsmart them. They are calling us all sort of names which makes us feel down and loose self-esteem and this has to stop because we are all equal, no one must be made to feel worthless". A learner from School L points to negative role of some traditional family rituals:*

*Yes for me cultural practices performed in my family makes me to miss school days sometimes. I was entered by my ancestors so at times we must perform ancestral rituals which do not allow me to be in public. I thus find myself having to catch up with schoolwork but I can manage I am used to it now and I am thankful to my school principal who understands my condition.*

In addition to disruptive events that takes place within the School is the wider social environment. A learner from School L points to the impact of drugs and crime in the surrounding environment: *"Drugs and crime are rife in our community. When I was in grade 11, I was once robbed my phone on my way to school which was very useful to my studies as I used it to store information and record teachers and so on. Crime is really affecting us as learners". This is further supported by a student from School U: "There are gangsters in the community who are carrying dangerous weapons. This has extended to learners as well and they are also carrying such weapons at school. This has brought fear in the community as you cannot go to other sections of the community if you come from the section with the rival gangsters. For some learners, it becomes difficult to come to school because they are targeted by the rival gangsters.*

A learner from School Q points to a violent incidence that took place in that school:

*There is insecurity in our community which extends to our school. In 2017, a teacher was gunned down here at school and this keeps haunting everyone who saw that tragedy. We plead with the government to deploy security personnel in our schools so that we can feel safe as the learners and our teachers.*

As indicated by a learner from School U, another social environmental factors impacting schools is alcohol:

*I think our community has alcohol problem telling from the number of taverns in the area surrounding our school. This is affecting us as learners as these liquor shops sell alcohol to learners even in their school uniform. Some of these taverns play loud music during the day which is disrupting us in classes.*

A learner from School L points to the intersection of social and environmental characteristics:

*Our school fence is not in a good condition, it has holes/openings in the back yard and these are holes are opened by community members who are thugs and want to sell their drugs in the school during breaktime. It feels unsafe to be in a classroom with someone under the influence of drugs because anything bad can happen. Some learners have now turned into merchandisers of drugs and are carrying weapons. It would be better if there are random police searches in our school to make us safe.*

The lack of proper resources, such as fences, compromise the security of schools especially in neighbourhoods characterised by drugs and crime.

## **6.5 Chapter summary.**

To recap, this chapter aimed to assess the relationship between capability inputs and conversion factors in secondary schools located in Vulindlela. The capability inputs were classified into a topographic map, human resources, infrastructure and facilities, and curriculum. The data presented above indicates that secondary schools in Vulindlela are in dire need for teaching and learning material. These range from classrooms, proper maintenance of buildings and roofs, fence, libraries, computer lab and computers, science laboratories and relevant equipment, and friendly school environment for learners with disabilities. Absence of these learning material has had negative impacts like overcrowded classrooms and poor schools outcomes. Also, lack of resources has resulted to learner drop-out as learners are not motivated given absence of schools' resources. The data also shows that there is need for quality and quantity of teachers in this rural setting. Absence of teachers has forced learners to do learning subjects which they do not have interest in and which are not relevant to what they to do and be.

This chapter also established that the curriculum offered by schools under investigation is not broad enough to accommodate the needs of learners. The narrow curriculum has had similar impacts to those of absence of resources. These include poor performance due to studying subjects not in learners' best interests. Therefore, the curriculum itself is socially unjust as it

fails to equip learners with the knowledge required for achieving their goals. The absence of learning material is inconsistent with SASSA. Also lack of learning material was declared as hampering learners from achieving agency freedom and well-being freedom through education. Also, such absence was found to be inconsistent with ubuntu and therefore education in Vulindlela rural schools was declared as socially unjust. Apart from absence of capability inputs and narrow curriculum, this chapter also examined additional factors that have direct negative impact on the ability of learners to achieve their desired outcomes. These are referred to as conversion factors and were assessed through personal, social, and environmental characteristics. All these categorical factors are present in the investigated schools and include bullying, absence of resources, crime, and insecurity to mention a few. All these issues are negatively hampering learners from meaningfully achieving their agency freedom and well-being freedom.

## **Chapter Seven: Pillars of a just education: Agency, values and resources**

### **7.1 Introduction**

People's conception of the universe can be influenced by a variety of factors ranging from culture, religion, history, and geographical context to mention some. Therefore, the meanings that people attach to different types of phenomena would always vary based on these factors. The same could be said about social justice, and a socially just education in particular. Those in the Asian setting may have unique conception of a socially just education compared to those in European, African, and or Latin American setting. Therefore, a socially just education can be conceived differently by different people. In this study, conceptualizing a socially just education shall be guided by history of SA education, *ubuntu* and a capability approach. Values upheld by learners, allocation of resources relevant to those values, flexible curriculum, human diversity and agency are all factors that need to be considered by education policy makers when deliberating on education matters. This study is premised on the notion that a socially just education in the democratic SA centers on the factors mentioned above. This chapter is thus organized as follows: the first section will provide a general understanding of a socially just education, this will be followed by an outline of factors giving rise to the need for a socially just education in the democratic SA. The third section will aim to determine whether there is a socially just education in Vulindlela rural secondary schools. This assessment will be guided by *ubuntu* and the capability approach. Lastly, the chapter will present an ideal type of a fair and just education system that suits the democratic values of SA.

### **7.2 A general understanding of a socially just education.**

The literature review under chapter 3 of this study shows that researchers have attached varying meanings of a socially just education particularly in the context of SA. Using the British-European context, Dean Reay (2012) understands a socially just education as common education for all regardless of class hierarchy. According to Reay (2012), abolishing difference between free and fee-paying schools and public and private schools on the other hand are the best methods for achieving this common education. In the Asian Chinese context, Charlene Tan (2020) points out that a socially just schooling system is defined through the lenses of an educational balance. According to her, educational balance does not simply entail achieving uniformity in school curriculum and assessments across all schools, nor does it aim to address the issue of schools' outcomes exacerbated by disparities between what she calls 'elite and non-elite schools' (Tan, 2020). Rather, the primary objective of an educational balance is to

guarantee the development of all the needs of a learner within the schooling environment (Tan, 2020). This calls for a school with an ability to accommodate differences of learners to cultivate the culture of unique learner-character (Tan, 2020).

In the post-1994 democratic SA, conception of a socially just education largely centers on the notion of inclusion and distribution. This conception is influenced by the educational historical divisions that led to education being divided along racial lines. This resulted in the allocation of teaching and learning resources being skewed towards schools attended by whites while non-whites schools received little to nothing. Against this backdrop, researchers have called for an inclusive education where differences of learners and their different needs can be accommodated in a single classroom environment (Hay and Beyer, 2011). This notion challenges the initiative that learners living with disabilities require a separate education facility. Likewise, Tjabane and Pillay (2011) perceive inclusive education as tolerating learner differences in the SA higher education. SA DBE's White Paper 6 on inclusive education highlights the importance of recognizing and respecting differences of learners and advancing their similarities (South African Department of Education, 2006). All these conceptions of inclusive education are aimed at achieving the goal of a socially just education in the democratic SA.

The notion of an inclusive education has already been advanced in developed countries for instance. In the United States, inclusive education has been understood as educating learners living with disabilities in the general education program designated for all learners (Idol, 2006). Other researchers point out that inclusive education is based on the idea that local schools are mandated to cater for all learners' educational interests regardless of their cultural and social background and disability. Besides inclusive education, an understanding of a socially just education in the democratic SA hinges on the idea of distribution. As shown in the literature review, most researchers of a socially just education in SA champion the need for distribution of resources so as to address the resource disparity between ex model c and rural schools (Books and Ndlalane, 2011; Hlalele, 2012; Turnbull, 2014). The distributive centered understanding of a socially just education in the democratic SA is unarguably informed by Rawls notion of distributive justice. However, some researchers have rejected resource distribution as narrow particularly in the context of education.

This study too believes that resource distribution alone is inadequate for achieving a socially just education in the democratic SA. From this perspective, the study proposes an *ubuntu* and

capability-oriented understanding of a socially just education. Such education system must be underpinned by four elements namely, ideals and values of learners, capability inputs, human diversity, and agency. A fair and just education must aim to advance the functionings of learners. However, both capability approach and an ubuntu approach prioritize values and ideals that learners want to achieve. Thus, in a just environment, functioning must be guided by values and ideals of the participants. The role of the government is to guarantee provision and access to capability inputs relevant to functionings of learners. From this perspective, distribution is the secondary factor in the process of either theorizing or designating a fair and just education system. The allocation of relevant capability inputs requires cognizance of human diversity. It is important to note that not all learners can equally use the available resources to advance their functionings. There are various factors that contribute to the (in)ability of learners to convert resources into actual functionings.

Therefore, this calls for the need to pay special attention to learners who, because of gender, age, (dis)ability, etc, have difficulty of effectively and efficiently using the available resources. This is in line with the old tradition of inclusive education which calls for accommodation of differences of learners within the schooling environment. Lastly, the ability to convert resources into functionings is pivotal for learners' agency. Therefore, not only capability inputs are crucial, but the curriculum too must also be broad and flexible enough to accommodate the values and ideals rationally upheld by learners.

### **7.3 Factors giving rise to the need for a socially just education in a democratic SA.**

In the post independent Africa and SA in particular, it is well known that history and race are major contributing factors for the need of a socially just and fair education. Therefore, clearly understanding the significance of a fair and just education system in the democratic SA requires evaluation of the objectives of hitherto education systems deemed to be unfair and unjust. This will be done bearing in mind Walker's (2004) view that if education is to truly contribute to one living a fully human life, then it must be assessed based on the extent to which it contributes to actions and values upheld by individuals. Academic discourse on SA historical education points out that 'formal education' was introduced through mission schools by missionaries (Lebeloane, 2006). According to Hawkins (1982), missionaries refer to people responsible for preaching the gospel and customs of Christianity during colonialism; these are the people who established mission schools in modern day SA. On this basis it is essential to assess the core

objectives of missionary education. In other words, it is in this study's interest to evaluate whether mission schools aimed at advancing the actions and values of individuals.

Vast of discourse on missionary education identify similar objectives that were intended to be achieved by the British Empire through this type of education. The commonly shared argument is that mission schools were meant to convert indigenous people of non-European descent into Christianity and civilize them thereof (Du Plessis, 1911), (Loram, 1927), (Jones, 1970), and (Jensz, 2012). From a socio-political perspective, missionary education is said to have aimed at making indigenous people conformists while maintaining white hegemony (Majeke, 1952), (Jensz, 2012). These viewpoints demonstrate clearly that missionary education did not aim to advance the values rationally upheld by indigenous people. Rather, the role of mission education was to create the individuals who were going to fit into the colonial labour market. In the words of Lebeloane (2006), "learners under the missionary education were not taught to be critical thinkers but to be loyal employees". This is indicative of an unfair and unjust system of education, hence, the need to redress it.

When the National Party came into power in 1948, it enacted a series of legislations intended to consolidate racial discrimination and white domination. Likewise, education was key in achieving such goals, hence the introduction of the Bantu Education Act in 1953. From an objectives point of view, critics point out that Bantu Education had similar characteristics with its predecessor which was missionary education. In other words, Bantu education also did not advance the actions and beings of the black students for whom it was designed. Rather, this education system was designed create conformists to the then political and economic status quo while advancing the economic interests of white minority. This is precisely in line with Marxism which rejects the notion of the state on the ground that state is an instrument of oppression that advances the gains of the dominant. In the Apartheid context, this can be reflected by racial discriminatory laws that disadvantaged non-whites while benefiting the whites. Introduced in 1953 by the Apartheid government, this education system received nationwide critics given its objective was not to produce critical thinkers but conformists to the then status quo. The 1976 student protests attest to this statement.

Therefore, similar to its predecessor, Bantu education was not socially just as it was not skewed towards developing the goals of indigenous people. It is undeniable that race played a pivotal role in designating different education systems for different races in the pre-1994 era in SA. This role was twofold: 1) to guarantee prevalence of white domination, and 2) ensure the

inferior status of non-whites so that they are always dependent on the whites. As Mills (1997) points out, Europeans had the tendency to refer to their non-white counterparts as savages who are an inferior race deserving to be civilized by them (Europeans). Given the assumed inferior status of 'native' people, they did not deserve services and facilities of high quality as those of their white counterparts. The education services and facilities are no exception to this assertion. The intention behind this was to cement racial divisions between whites and non-whites and ensuring that the non-white accept their inferior status without resisting (Jensz, 2012). Moreover, the Bantu education intended to consolidate the racial segregation regulated by the Group Areas Act with the aim of sustaining white domination (Majeke, 1952).

Upon ascension to democracy in 1994, there were complex challenges that had to be corrected, chief among those being the racial divisions. The democratic regime had to reverse the dehumanizing stereotype of inferiority attached to the indigenous people. Non-racial society, non-sexism, social justice, and fundamental human rights comprise some of the values with which the democratic regime aimed to restore dignity and equality for all. These values were enshrined in the Constitution that is the supreme law of the land. Education had to play a central role in reversing the dehumanizing conditions of the non-white in the democratic context. To begin with, education was made a human right for everyone irrespective of race, religion, or sex. This right is enshrined under section 9 of the constitution which states that everyone has the right basic education and higher education (Constitution of the RSA Act, 1996). The constitution under this section places onus on the state to guarantee provision of this service to everyone in SA (Constitution of the RSA Act, 1996).

In effort to actualize this constitutional provision, the parliament enacted SASSA in 1996. This act makes it compulsory for all children at the age of seven and above to attend school (SASSA, 1996). Furthermore, SASSA provides that MEC of education must make efforts to establish public schools to serve education to children who lack sufficient funding (SASSA, 1996). Apart from legal framework, the SA DBE has made several remarkable policies and curriculum reforms since 1994 with the aim of creating a fair and just education system. These reforms brought hope for a fair and just education system long anticipated. As outlined in the literature review chapter, curriculum reform in the democratic SA was formally introduced in 1997 in form of OBE (Gumede and Biyase, 2016); a curriculum that was driven by outcomes of learners at schools (Harden, Crosby, and Davis, 1999). Realizing the challenges associated with OBE, the department of education introduced NCS in 2002 (Gumede and Biyase, 2016). Failing to meet the target goals through NCS, the department then introduced CAPS in 2012.

Nonetheless, major educational changes in the democratic SA have continued to spark debates pertaining to the justness and fairness of the education system. The call for decolonized education or curriculum continues to dominate the education discourse despite the introduced reforms. Absence of learning material and resources, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teacher-training, and narrow curriculum constitutes some of the prevailing crises of education that need to be addressed. This gives a sense that a socially just education in the democratic SA is a dream that is yet to be fulfilled. This study does not dispute that the aforementioned issues contribute to an unjust education system in SA. Nevertheless, the study does not believe that lack of resources and teacher training alone amount to an unjust education. There are further issues that need to be considered when evaluating a socially just education. The following section thus aim to make an evaluation of those issues in the context of Vulindlela rural schooling to determine if SA education system is socially just under the democratic setting.

#### **7.4 Evaluating if there is a socially just education in Vulindlela rural secondary schools.**

A vast literature on the topic of social justice and education point out issues of overcrowding, lack of resources, lack of properly trained teachers, and poor schools outcomes to mention a few. These challenges are common in predominantly black schools mostly based in rural areas and those in townships. This study contends that an evaluation of a socially (un)just education must take into consideration a variety of other important factors. Guided by the understanding of a socially just education presented above, this section uses Vulindlela rural schooling to assess if education in this area is just and fair. This will be measured as follows: 1) are values and actions of learners given primacy, 2) are capability inputs (resources) available for learners to meaningfully advance what they rationally uphold, 3) can learners freely exercise their ability to bring achievements they think are ideal for their lives, and 4) are schools friendly enough towards learner diversity? This study believes that an education system fulfilling these elements reflects *ubuntu* and is therefore fair and just.

As established in the previous sections, eliciting and advancing the values and actions that individuals uphold comprise the primary objective and starting point for assessing the individual well-being in the capability approach. The ensuing constructs (capability inputs, conversion factors, human diversity, and agency) that are also relevant for assessment are directly tied to the values and actions rationally upheld by individuals. This stance was also adopted in this study in light of the learners. In the language of Sen (1980), values entail

everything that carries a positive weight on the things that people reasonably uphold. Health, education, shelter, and nutrition constitutes some of the things people have reason to value for their well-being.

These are the functionings that almost everyone value given their potential positive contribution on the actions and beings relevant to the types of lives they desire. As indicated, education is one of the doings to which people attach value and or significance. In this study, education is highly valued by all participants given its immense potential contribution on the things that learners want to do and be. Most of the participants attached an instrumental value of education, highlighting its significance in the achievement of what they want to do and be. The ensuing task then is to evaluate if education in Vulindlela rural schools does contribute positively to the advancement of values preferred by learners.

The data presented in the previous chapters, five and six, depict that schools in rural Vulindlela are facing a myriad of challenges inside and outside the school which have a negative bearing on the quality of education received by learners. These range from poor infrastructure, absence of teaching and learning material, and social issues like crime, drugs, and weapons in the community which eventually spill over to schools' premises. Internally, the environment of schools is not friendly especially to learners living with disabilities. Learners using crutches or wheelchairs for their movement cannot conveniently navigate the school premises. In addition, the buildings for some of the schools require renovation while others need maintenance. The fence for some of the schools has openings which are used by some local community members to sell drugs in schools. The windows are broken while the roofs have openings which make it difficult to teach and learn during windy and rainy seasons. It was further depicted that the investigated schools are in dire need of teaching and learning material and resources.

While some of these schools do not have libraries, others do. However, their libraries are not in good working condition given the absence of relevant books to assist learners conduct their assignments. Likewise, some schools have computers labs and others do not. However, those with computers have no computer related studies. This means their computer labs are not functional given absence of computer lessons. Lastly, the schools under investigation differ when it comes to availability of science labs. While there are schools without a science laboratory, others do have this facility but it is not in use given absence of necessary equipment. Lastly, there is a curriculum challenge experienced by learners attending the investigated schools. This has led to learners having to choose subjects they did not intend to do; hence poor

performance in those subjects and continued drop-outs at schools. Absence or inadequate teaching and learning resources relates to the capability inputs. In the context of capability approach, individuals cannot meaningfully achieve their functionings without any resources to assist them. As Robeyns (2003) and Walker (2004) point out, resources facilitate achievement of functionings pursued by individuals. As such people attach value to different kinds of resources knowing the positive weight they have on the things they do and want to be. In case of the targeted Vulindlela rural schools, computer labs, libraries, science labs, adequate and professional teachers, and proper school infrastructure, are some of the resources identified by participants as lacking at their schools.

Learners and school principals expressed dire need of these resources to facilitate production of quality education. Absence of these resources or their inappropriate functionality means that learners' functionings are not effectively advanced through education. Some learners expressed interest in learning by doing. However, learning by doing is being hampered by absence of relevant learning subjects and material. The absence of adequate learning subjects has had profound negative impact on learners. This include learner-dropouts, poor performance on learning subjects, and learners having to do subjects which are inconsistent with their rational values. In the context of this study, the challenge of lack of resources is arguably not only linked to lack of willingness from relevant authorities to inject adequate funds for school resources, but also tied to the failure to elicit values of learners and distribute resources and material accordingly. The poor schools outcomes and high levels of learner drop-outs are thus orchestrated by the fact that learners find themselves having to study subjects they are not interested in due to failure to elicit their values.

In this study, an education system not informed by what learners want to do and be is interpreted as inconsistent with and lacking *ubuntu*. Also, this is interpreted as clashing with the demands of a capability approach. As elaborated in the theoretical framework, *ubuntu and capability approach* attaches primacy to humanity. The tools, resources, wealth, and modification of the environment are secondary under the framework of *ubuntu and capability approach*. In the context of education, *ubuntu and capability approach* would highlight the need to prioritize actions and beings valued by learners. Any distribution of resources must be informed by what learners value as ideal. Furthermore, an education system built upon actions and beings valued by learners requires a flexible rather than rigid curriculum. The saying "*abantu abayi nganxanye bengemanzi*" in the context of *ubuntu* means people would always have different views and interests. *Ubuntu* would thus emphasize the importance of equally

respecting the view and interest each person has in the community, this view extends to the realm of education.

With that said, limiting learners to choose from same package of subjects which are not in line with what other learners value is inconsistent with *ubuntu*. That which is inconsistent with *ubuntu* is therefore declared as socially unjust in the context of this research. This saying resonates with the education offered by schools in Vulindlela rural district of Pietermaritzburg. In a nutshell, while 1) actions and beings valued by learners are not given primacy, 2) learners are made to choose subjects not in line with their valued doings and beings, the education offered by Vulindlela secondary schools will remain inconsistent with *ubuntu* therefore is socially unjust. This translates into the failure of the democratic government to rectify the hitherto educational injustices in the free and democratic SA.

When actions and beings valued by learners at schools are ignored, agency will get affected given the actions, beings, and agency are inseparable. The absence of resources has a negative bearing on the agency of a learner. This is particularly true when taking into consideration the definition of agency provided in the previous chapters. Choice, freedom, and rationality are the underpinning forces of agency. As highlighted previously, agency speaks to the ability and freedom of an individual to bring about change or improvement in line with the life they want to lead. From an education standpoint, learners have a variety of things that they want to do. This can be reflected by the views presented in the previous chapter. Again, this indicates that “*abantu abayi nganxenywe bengemanzi*”, which is *ubuntu*.

Nonetheless, the completeness of *ubuntu* in relation to agency in an education setting hinges on creation of fertile conditions for learners to effectively bring about their valued achievements. Ignorance of learners’ values, rigid curriculum that does not accommodate learners’ values, and absence of material and resources relevant to learners’ values pose a huge constraint on the agency of learners in Vulindlela secondary schools. The choice, freedom, and rationality of these learners is constrained by the narrowness of the curriculum and absence of relevant material which can be used to advance doings and beings rationally valued by learners. For Walker (2004), “a constrained agency equates to a disadvantage” that limits the opportunity of learners to achieve their capabilities. Again, an education system that constrains agency of learners is inconsistent with tenets of *ubuntu* and is therefore socially unjust.

When using the capability approach, the question of the relation between capability input and conversion factors is more important than just allocation of capability inputs or resources

(Walker, 2003). This is where the element of human diversity comes into play. The relation between capability inputs and conversion factors speaks to the ability of an individual to convert the available resources into the desired outcome. In other words, it is equally important to assess if learners are able to use the available resources to produce the beings that they value. As such, a socially just education is not only concerned with the allocation of resources, but also seeks to evaluate varying factors that can hamper learners from using the available resources into their advantage. According to proponents of the capability approach, this relationship centers around the notion of human diversity. For instance, while a learner with clear vision will effectively use a computer and read books, a learner with an impaired vision may require Braille featured equipment. Therefore, human diversity requires cognizance of different factors that have a huge and direct bearing on learners' abilities to achieve the desired outcomes. As such, socially just education is not limited to distribution of resources as many researchers in this discourse seem to declare. It is equally important to evaluate factors that may hamper learners in producing the anticipated results through the available resources.

In the context of Vulindlela rural schools, human diversity is not prioritized and this is inconsistent with the agenda of inclusive education. Based on observation, the needs and interests of learners with different disabilities cannot be accommodated in the schools under evaluation. Only one school displayed friendly environment for learners with movement related disability. However, there is no learning equipment available for learners with hearing and visual disabilities for instance. Arguably, neglecting human diversity is not only inconsistent with capability but also with the tenets of *ubuntu*. In the realm of education, *ubuntu* would emphasize importance of allocating resources to learners according to their needs. On this basis, it is again safe to conclude that education serviced by secondary schools in Vulindlela is not just and fair.

## **7.5 Recommendations for a socially just education in the democratic SA.**

### **7.5.1 *Ubuntu* and a capability centered education.**

While the educational achievements made thus far are remarkable, SA still have a long journey to travel to achieve a comprehensive just and fair education system. Achieving this goal in practice is not a simple task that can be achieved by one player over a short period of time. Given its complexity, it is essential to envisage *ubuntu* and capability as the framework for decision and policy making in the education sector. As shown above, there is a close connection between *ubuntu* and capability approach which can be used to advance the education system

of a free and democratic SA. To begin with, challenges prevailing within the education system in SA are directly tied to colonial and apartheid history. These include a divided education system between ex-model c schools and Public Schools for townships and rural areas schools characterized by lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, learner-drop outs, and poor performance to mention a few.

According to Ramose's (2001), *ubuntu* demands that a historic feud and injustice be rectified not only for current generation but for the purpose of future generations as well. Such injustice and feud is never erased by the passage of time. Fortunately, SA is now a democracy where relentless efforts are made to rectify past injustices. This can be confirmed in the preamble of the constitution. The remaining question is, how can SA resolve educational crises in efforts to create a fair and just education system for all? In this research, the answer to this question is contemplating the compatibility between *ubuntu* and capability approach. As discussed in the theoretical framework chapter, both these approaches are premised on the primacy of humanity. In both these approaches, the values of individuals are highly revered regardless of how different they may be. In the case of *ubuntu*, this is reflected in the saying "*abantu abayi nganxenywe bengamanzi*". As highlighted in the theory section this saying encapsulates the idea of difference. It literally means that people are always bound to differ on any given matter. In the context of education, this would mean that learners are interested in different actions and beings and *ubuntu* would demand that such differences be respected and promoted. Likewise, capability approach places importance on ascertaining the values that individuals uphold. An education system premised on the values of learners is very essential to guarantee the element of agency.

Agency exists when learners have an opportunity to exercise their freedom and ability to bring about the anticipated results. For education to be fair and just, it must enable learners to exercise their freedom, choice, and rationality. The first aspect of a just and fair education thus rest on ascertaining the actions and beings valued by learners as ideal. However, effective and meaningful exercise of agency is not limited to actions and beings valued by learners. This is where the role of resources emerges as a secondary aspect of a socially just education. As pointed out earlier, allocation of resources enables learners to bring about the desired functionings. Robeyns (2003) support this by highlighting that resources are valued by humans for their special characteristic(s) in performing a particular action. MacGaughey (2018) asserts this when he contends that material resources are of high importance to human beings to fulfill their potential. In this study, emphasis is placed on the need to distribute resources in line with

the actions and beings that are preferred by learners. Availability of relevant resources will enable learners to effectively exercise their freedom and ability to bring positive outcomes in their lives through education. In other words, agency of learners centers on the allocation of resources mostly relevant to what learners want to do and be.

It is contrary to *ubuntu* when humans do not have access to material and resources with which to advance their interests. Similarly, absence of resources consistent with ideals of learners is contrary to the capability approach. Apart from resources, an education system premised on the doings and beings of learners requires that the curriculum be flexible as opposed to being rigid. This flexibility too allows space for agency which must never be hampered. The third facet of a just and fair education relates to human diversity. As shown above, a learner with an impaired visual may require Braille equipment to read and write whereas a learner without this impairment may need books and pens. The learner with an impaired vision thus requires different material to achieve the pursued outcome. In this sense, the question of conversion factors requires one to pay close attention to factors that may have a negative impact on agency of learners. These include but are not limited to political system in place, cultural customs followed, age, gender, socio-economic background, environment and physique. These factors cannot be ignored given the view that a constrained agency translate to a constrained freedom and choice to bring valuable achievements. This is the approach that this study recommends for SA education system to be fair and just.

#### **7.5.2 Collective decision making in education affairs.**

Without neglecting individual agency, African political philosophy prioritize collective decision making and action. Various sources quote Julius Nyerere advising that deliberation and consensus were guiding principles of African political system. In the context South Africa, and among isiZulu speakers in particular, there are various saying to this effect. Among them are “*ubucu obuhle buhamba ngabubili*”(two heads are better than one) and “*izandla ziyagezana*” (one hand washes the other). Both these sayings are premised on the notion of reciprocity and cooperation. In contrast to Western political thought such as Marxism which privilege material resources over human relations, Kunene (1982) claims that the first act of civilization is cooperation and interactive human relations. This approach is necessary in the context of a democratic SA to achieve the education system proposed above. It would be completely unfair and unreasonable to place all such burden on the hands of the government. According to Marina Muskhelishvili (2015), democracy’s freedom of expression is

meaningless if the public is not involved in agenda setting processes. Muskhelishvili (2015) places enormous significance on the individual preferences in collective decision-making processes. She contends that views and aspirations of the public must always underpin the making of collective decisions (Muskhelivshvili, 2015). Likewise, Sen (2002) asserts that individual preferences must constitute the premise upon which social judgements and public decisions are made.

These assertions are completely compatible with *ubuntu* and need to be applied in the education system of the democratic SA. It further suffices to argue that the views made by Muskhelishvili (2015) and Sen (2002) promote the significance of choice. According to Jonathan Levin (2004) and Paul Milgrom (2004), choice can be understood as an act of choosing the most desired preferences or values among the available options to an individual. This stance is strongly suggested in the SA education given “*abantu abayi nganxenye bengemanzi*” which essentially gives room for respect and promotion of choices made by learners in particular. This is the approach that can paint a fair and just picture of education in the democratic SA which is completely different from the previous unjust education systems

## **7.6 Chapter summary.**

The ultimate goal of this chapter was to evaluate the educational system at Vulindlela secondary schools. This evaluation was made using the framework of *ubuntu* on one hand, and a capability approach on the other. It was shown that both these approaches are premised on the primacy of humanity by respecting and promoting the different values upheld by people. Assessing the fairness and justness of Vulindlela rural education was based on the following criteria: 1) are values upheld by learners given priority, 2) do learners have access to resources essential to advance their values through education, 3) is the agency of learners prioritized, 4) is human diversity accommodated? It was found that all these elements are not fulfilled by the education offered in the targeted schools in Vulindlela. The education offered in Vulindlela does not contribute positively towards achievement of the desired outcomes by learners attending these schools. On this basis, the education in Vulindlela rural secondary schools was found to be as unfair and unjust. The chapter then suggested that a fair and just education in the democratic SA can be achieved using a combination of *ubuntu* and capability approach. The next chapter is a concluding chapter.

## **Chapter 8: Summary of findings and general conclusion**

### **8.1 Core objective of the study.**

This study interrogated the extent to which South Africa's Basic Education have reversed unjust imbalances imposed by colonialism and apartheid governments. From an *Ubuntu* perspective and perspective of Capability Approach, justice is premised on participants' agency and on the values and ideals that they hold. Given the dehumanizing impacts of missionary and Bantu Education on the black people, it is imperative for post-apartheid South Africa to address those imbalances. Using Ramose's *ubuntu* approach to justice, that is, "justice as restoration of the equilibrium", this study argued that *ubuntu* and capability approach provide a holistic approach that can create an educational environment where values upheld by learners can be positively advanced. From this perspective, theorists and policy makers of a socially just education system in SA must ask themselves if the current education system meaningfully contributes to the values rationally upheld by learners. As highlighted in the previous chapters, part of the reasons why missionary and Bantu Education continue to be perceived as socially unjust comprise the view that these education systems did not positively contribute to the actions and beings upheld particularly by black learners. Rather, such systems of education were aimed at guaranteeing the inferior status of non-whites in relation to whites. An education system that fails to achieve this goal is therefore declared as socially unjust and contrary to *ubuntu*. The section below briefly outlines the key findings of the study in relation to the main research questions underpinning this study.

### **8.2 Summary of findings.**

#### **8.2.1 Values upheld by learners of Vulindlela rural secondary schools.**

The first research question asked about the ideals and values held by learners, parents, and teachers of Vulindlela secondary schools. This question was addressed in the fifth chapter. The views of learners on values and ideals were categorized into three themes. Firstly, some learners' values and ideals are committed towards serving their communities. Values and ideals oriented towards the needs of communities was interpreted as *ubuntu*. Secondly, some female learners highlighted values and ideals that seek to address gender gaps and inequalities in the workplace whereby men are seen to be dominant. This stance is strongly endorsed in SA where gender gaps and inequality in the workplace continue to be pervasive due to socially constructed norms that deprive women of better opportunities. Lastly, there are learners whose values and ideals tend to shift away from widely upheld notion of employment towards self-

reliance. Again, this stance is highly recommended in SA as the country is battling against issues of poverty, crime, and unemployment. Nonetheless, it is more important to encourage the youth to explore legitimate means of self-reliance amidst the high rates of crime which endanger the existence of security.

### **8.2.2 The role education in the achievement of the championed values and ideals.**

The second research question sought to understand the mechanisms that can contribute towards the achievement of the identified values and ideals. Most of the participants highlighted the centrality of education in improving their well-being. From this perspective, education has an instrumental value in the achievement of values and ideals. The instrumentality of education in the well-being of individuals entails that it is a means to an end. This perception on education is not surprising given the plight of crime, poverty, and unemployment in SA. Also, such perception can be tied to the history of SA that saw some racial groups being privileged while marginalizing others. Education is thus perceived as a tool to reverse colonial and apartheid injustices. However, participants recognized the importance of personal and social conversion factors for the realization of the instrumental value of education. Thus, participants identified discipline as one of the enabling factors for achievement of goals through education. Other social factors that present challenges for education in Vulindlela are crime, drugs and violence. As shown in the previous chapters, this has had detrimental impact on learners' prospects to succeed in achieving their goals through education. This claim is supported by scholars such as Foncha et.al (2017), Wolhuter, and van der Walt (2021).

### **8.2.3 Types of resources essential for achieving the identified values and ideals in Vulindlela secondary schools.**

The third research question centred around conversion factors. It was essential to inquire from the study participants the types of resources that they consider as pivotal in helping them achieve their values and ideals and if they have access to those resources in their schools. All study participants expressed concern about the lack of necessary teaching and learning material at Vulindlela secondary schools. As shown in the data, some schools do have facilities like library, computer laboratories, science laboratories, but these are not functioning. Also, there is lack of adequate qualified teachers in these schools. The showed that there are learners who wrote their first term exam on physical science without a teacher for the said subject. Further, learners from another school highlighted the absence of an agricultural teacher which has made learners to underperform on this subject. The absence of essential resources has thus been a

constraining factor to learners to become what they want to be. Another constraining factor has been the narrow and rigid curriculum which does not comprehensively reflect the interests valued by learners. As a result, there are learners who are doing subjects falling outside their target goals. Moreover, the issue of curriculum has led to poor performance because there are learners doing subjects which are irrelevant for what they value. Lastly, some learners have had to dropout given the absence of resources and subjects they want to study. Thus, absence of resources and broad curriculum fuels lack of motivation on part of learners to be educated. The absence of resources and narrow curriculum also means learners do not have the ability and freedom to bring up valued achievements in their lives. In other words, the agency of learners in Vulindlela rural schools is constrained by absence of resources and a narrow curriculum. On these grounds, the education of Vulindlela rural schools does not contribute meaningfully to the values upheld by learners. This is contrary to *ubuntu* and capability approach, and therefore it is socially unjust.

#### **8.2.4 Lack of cognizance for human diversity in Vulindlela rural schools.**

Given the values held by learners, parents and teachers, the fourth question asked whether, this, combined with resource distribution created a socially just educational system. Chapter Six contributed to answering this question. In this research, a fair and just education system is also evaluated on the degree to which the education system at hand acknowledges and accommodates the diversity of learners. This diversity exists at personal or individual, environmental, and social levels. These factors may have a direct or indirect impact on the learner's prospects to use available resources successfully in achieving their values. In this study, environmental and social issues were identified as the primary barriers to learners' achievement of their values. From a school environment perspective, there exists a number of impeding factors. For instance, out of five schools investigated, only one school had a friendly environment for learners with movement-oriented disability. However, no school had the essential learning equipment for learners with impaired vision and hearing for example. There are also schools with damaged roof and windows; this become a challenge during rainy and cold school days and teaching and learning activities cannot take place. Some schools are not properly fenced, giving way to entry of domesticated animals like cows, goats, and sheep. Also, improper school fencing has resulted to entry of drugs, weapons, and thugs at schools. At community level, participants identified issues of drugs, crime, weapons, unlicensed taverns as carrying a detrimental effect on the culture of learning in Vulindlela. There are learners who end up carrying such weapons and drugs at schools. When theorizing and designating a socially

just educational system, these issues must be taken into consideration so that extra resources can be put in place to overcome them.

### **8.3 Original contribution**

It is imperative that the study at hand highlights the original contribution it brings to the knowledge of social justice and education in South Africa. It cannot be disputed that social justice and education constitutes parts of the themes that have been immensely researched in the democratic South Africa. It is evident from the literature review that numerous studies around a socially just education focus on resources, competent teachers, and curriculum as the most areas that need to be addressed in the education system of South Africa. Likewise, the study at hand also found that Vulindlela rural schools lack proper infrastructure, resources, competent teachers and a comprehensive curriculum that is able to accommodate the education interests of learners. At face value, the findings of this study seem similar to those of existing research, however, what is different in this study is the combined use of ubuntu and capability approach. While there are studies that use ubuntu and capability approach, to the knowledge of this researcher, none of the existing literature have attempted to combine ubuntu and capability approach.

Thus, the first original contribution of this study is the attempt, in Chapter Three, to develop a conceptual and theoretical framework that combines *ubuntu* and capability approach. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of this study used the combination of *ubuntu* and capability approach to guide the analysis of the data. While it is clear that South Africa's Basic Education breeds inequalities, this study situate justice in education within a human development approach. The radical conclusion of this study is that it is not enough to provide material resources that are necessary for the educational system, but it also important for learners, teachers, parents and other educational workers to participate in the framing and provision of education. Thus, the second original contribution of this study is the argument that a socially just education should be anchored within what African political philosophers call consensual democracy.

### **8.4 General conclusion.**

In general terms, the findings of this study are similar to what other researchers have discovered in the discourse of a socially just education in SA. These include absence of teaching and learning material, inadequate competent teachers, poor school infrastructure, curriculum inconsistent with learners' valued interests, and overcrowded classrooms. These challenges have had negative impacts on learners. Among the effects of these challenges are poor

performance in learning subjects, learners dropping out from school, and lack of motivation on learners to mention a few. Nevertheless, this study aims to digress from the popular views upheld by many researchers about the absence of resources, inadequate teachers, and narrow curriculum. Using the findings from Vulindlela rural secondary schools, this study aims to highlight that the aforementioned factors have an adverse impact on actions and beings valued by learners in this area. This further affects learners' ability and freedom to bring up achievements they value for their lives, which is essentially agency. Therefore, the education serviced by Vulindlela secondary schools does not positively contribute to the values and agency of learners. This is not *ubuntu*. The education system of SA would only be just and fair if it is premised on the actions and beings valued by learners themselves and their agency. This is coupled with the allocation of resources to assist them bring about those valued actions and beings. This dissertation argues for a socially just education anchored on consensual democracy, future research will tease and map out the logistics for this social project.

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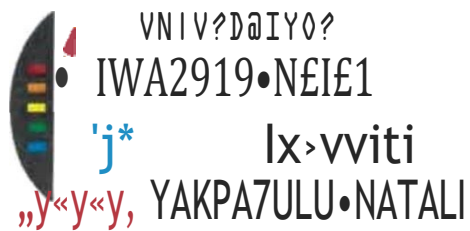
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Appendix 1. Ethical clearance letter.



26 July 2018

Mr Nduduzo  
Zondi  
209524934  
School of Social  
Sciences  
Pietermaritzbur  
g Campus

Dear Mr Zondi

Protocol Reference Number : OSS/0053/018D

Project title: Social Justice in previously disadvantaged communities in the post-1994 South Africa:  
Distributive justice and learner-capability at Vulindlela rural schools

Full Approval – Expedited  
Application

In response to your application received 23 January 2018, 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

Cc Supervisor: Dr Khondlo Mtshali  
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor  
Maheshvari Naiducc School Administrators:  
Ms Nancy Mudau

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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) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [ximbae@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbae@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymanm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymanm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunpt@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunpt@ukzn.ac.za)

website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)

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Appendix 2. Gate keeper letters from school principals.

uMthoqotho high school  
P.O. Box 1867,  
Pietermaritzburg,  
3200

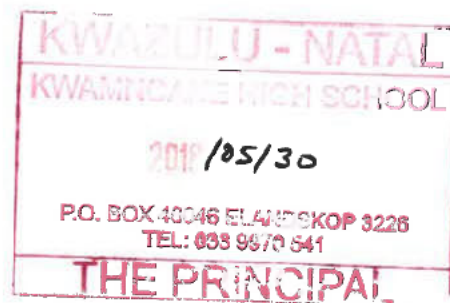
**Re: Approval to Conduct Academic Research at KwaMncane High School**

Dear Mr N. Zondi

This is to certify that your request for conducting research at KwaMncane high school has been approved. It must be clear that you are to give strict adherence to the terms and conditions set by the Head of Department for education letter. Specifically, you are to note that research interviews must not disrupt school learning programs and examination processes. We wish you best of luck as you continue with your research.

Thank You.

[REDACTED]  
Dlamini M.J.S  
School principal  
30/May/2018





## **Laduma High School**

KwaMpumuza Location  
EDENDALE 3217

Private Bag X213  
EDENDALE 3217

26 June 2018

THE HEAD: ETHICS COMMITTEE  
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL  
DURBAN  
4000

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: CONFIRMATION FOR GIVING PERMISSION FOR DOING RESEARCH**

I hereby wish to confirm that ZONDI NDUDUZO has been given permission to conduct research in the abovementioned school. His research topic is: Social Justice in Education.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours in Education Services.



PN Masikane (Principal)





# education

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Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Mr. N.S. Zondi  
University of Kwa Zulu Natal  
Durban  
4000

Dear Nduduzo Zondi

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to do research in Qoqisizwe secondary school is granted. Your interview questions are of high interest as they encourage learners to target their goals while at secondary level of education. I wish you all the best with your research.

Thank you.

Contact no: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] DEPUTY PRINCIPAL



Appendix 3: Informed consent form.

Social Sciences, College of Humanities,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal,  
Pietermaritzburg Campus,

Dear Participant

**INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

My name is Nduduzo Zondi. I am a Political Science PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, South Africa.

I intend to publish an article on “Challenges of post-graduate university students within the school of social sciences in the University of Kwa Zulu Natal: implications for transformation and social justice through academic research”. The study’s core objective is to evaluate challenges that endanger transformation and social justice related academic research in the university of Kwa Zulu Natal, using the perceived social justice related school of social sciences. For this study to be successful, it kindly requires your active and voluntary participation for purposes of gathering information, which would be highly appreciated. As such, your vital role is simply to offer responses to questions that will be posed.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing the challenges of your community relating to resource scarcity, peoples’ movement, and effects on peace.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

I can be contacted at:

Email: [REDACTED] OR 209524934@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Cell: [REDACTED].

My supervisor is Dr. Khondlo Mtshali who is located at the School of Politics, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: Mtshalik@ukzn.ac.za Phone number: +27 (0)33 260 5892.

You may also contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

**DECLARATION**

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

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

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE**

#### **Appendix 4: Interview schedule for school principals.**

- As a teacher, what do you consider as valuable for learners' lives to be ideal? E.g. crime, education, money, employment/self-employment.
- In the light of education, how can these values and ideals be effectively achieved?
- Other than education, are there any other elements you consider as essential for achievement of such values and ideals? If yes, what are those?
- Can these ideals and values be reckoned as social justice experience that has long been anticipated since 1994.
- Can you mention the types of resources you reckon as necessary at Vulindlela schools to achieve the valuables and ideals for your child's life?
- As a teacher, which schools, between those at Vulindlela and formerly white schools only would you prefer to teach? Why?
- Are there any recommendations would you make for your school's conditions to be conducive for learner-capability building? If yes, can you mention them?

### **Appendix 5. Interview questions for the learners.**

- Since you are a learner, what do you consider as valuable for your life to be ideal?  
E.g. crime, education, money, employment/self-employment.
- In the light of education, how can these values and ideals be effectively achieved?
- Other than education, are there any other elements you consider as essential for achievement of such values and ideals? If yes, what are those?
- Can these ideals and values be reckoned as social justice experience that has long been anticipated since 1994.
- Can you mention the types of resources you reckon as necessary at Vulindlela schools to achieve the valuables and ideals for your child's life?
- As a learner, which public schools would/do you prefer between Vulindlela schools and formerly white only schools in Pietermaritzburg urban areas? Why?
- Are there any suggestions you would make for your school's conditions to be prone for your anticipated capabilities?

## **Appendix 6: Survey questionnaires for parents.**

- What are the things you consider as worth/valuable for an ideal life of your child?  
E.g. crime, education, money, employment/self-employment, etc.
- In the light of education, how can these values and ideals be effectively achieved?
- Other than education, are there any other elements you consider as essential for achievement of such values and ideals? If yes, what are those?
- Can these ideals and values be reckoned as social justice experience that has long been anticipated since 1994.
- Can you mention the types of resources you reckon as necessary at Vulindlela schools to achieve the valuables and ideals for your child's life?
- Between public Vulindlela rural schools and Ex Model C schools situated in PMB urban areas, which ones would/do you prefer for your children's education, and why?
- As a parent concerned about better education in general, are there any suggestions you would make for your child's school's conditions to be conducive for learner-capability in particular? If yes, can you mention?