

**Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in
Soshanguve township primary schools**

by

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for the degree of
PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR**

in the

Department of Education Management and Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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DECLARATION

I, Mathapelo Sugar Sekhu (Student Number: 22437682), declare that this thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor in Education Management and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that he/she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.

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- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my baby sister, Veronica Lucy Refilwe Mogale.

Your spirit lives in me and forever it shall be, until we meet again.

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For the success of this study, my sincere thanks go to:

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- My dearest friend, MMM for always being there for me in times of need.
- All my relatives for inspiring me and believing in me.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
CHS	Comprehensive School Health
DBST	District Based Support Team
IDSO	Institutional Development and Support Officer
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
MIET	Media in Education Trust
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
NPMS	Noordelike Pretoria Metropolitaansie Substruktuur
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	School Based Support Team
SCCS	Schools as Centres of Care and Support
SNA	Support needs assessment
TARSC	Training and Research Support Centre
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
USAIDS	US Agency for International Development
ZIMTA	Zimbabwe Teachers' Association

ABSTRACT

Unlike other learners, vulnerable learners are faced with psycho-social factors that impede their quality of life. The purpose of this study is to generate knowledge on Ubuntu-based pastoral care as educators provide for vulnerable learners. In doing so, the research responded to the question of how primary school educators manage the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners within Ubuntu theoretical framework. The researcher in this study explores how educators practice pastoral care using Ubuntu as bedrock. The sample consisted of 20 educators (principals, deputy principals, SBST coordinators and class teachers) from five Soshanguve township primary schools in the Tshwane North District Office, Gauteng province, South Africa. Data collection was conducted through one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the aim of eliciting the experiences and practices of educators in performing the role of pastoral care. Document analysis was used to corroborate data collected through interviews. The findings of this study revealed that most educators are eager to support vulnerable children, although they are not well trained to perform pastoral care role. Educators rely on their self-gained knowledge and skills when providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The Departmental legislation (Norms and Standards for Educators of 2000) stipulates the pastoral role as one of the seven roles of an educator, yet educators seem not to be adequately trained, and the Department has not provided educators with the necessary guidance and resources to provide pastoral care. The participants in this study understand pastoral care to be interrelated with Ubuntu, which is perceived as an inherent force that drives educators to perform the pastoral care role. This has led to different educators responding differently to pastoral care support based on their beliefs, interests, and self-gained knowledge and experience. Educators also have different views to performing the role considering their workload and working conditions. As a result, not all educators perform the pastoral care role and those who perform the role do so out of Ubuntu. Such educators are self-motivated and have compassion, care, and love for the vulnerable learners. The main finding of this study is that educators seem to perform pastoral role out of free will, Ubuntu and humanity rather than policy compliance. This study recommends that due to the fact that a school is an extension of the community, pastoral care for vulnerable learners should be treated as a societal issue and it requires a structured, collaborative, and comprehensive approach to deal with it. Therefore, the contribution of this study is an implementation model for the provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners with Ubuntu as a springboard. This study was only limited to the views and experiences of educators in providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners. Future studies may explore the views and experiences of vulnerable learners as the recipients of pastoral care.

KEY WORDS: Ubuntu, pastoral care, vulnerable learners, psycho-social needs, support, role of educators.

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CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The support of vulnerable children in education is no doubt one of the greatest challenges faced in educational transformation following the aftermath of HIV/AIDS worldwide. Schools are expected to be Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) for all children, and more particularly, a supporting environment for vulnerable learners (Media in Education Trust, 2010) (hereon MIET). The school can be a place in which learners grow and develop; a place to acquire knowledge and skills, to meet and interact with others, and to learn about themselves and life in general. Despite the school being a promising and conducive environment for all learners, vulnerable children's' needs and hopes may not be totally met due to the educators' limitations in providing such care and support.

1.2. Background to the study

This study was conducted in a township residential area of Soshanguve in the Gauteng province South Africa. Soshanguve is a low-cost housing development area which is inhabited by black labourers, and is mostly associated with poverty, crime and violence (Mampane and Bouwer, 2011). The research was conducted with the aim of exploring the experiences and practices of educators on how they provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners in terms of the principles of Ubuntu.

Vulnerability alludes to a state of being unable to cope with things that impact negatively on one's life (Mohlakwana, 2013). Vulnerable children are those children whose survival, well-being, and development are threatened by HIV/AIDS and other diseases, poverty, as well as abandonment, according to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2009).

Vulnerable children include orphans, ill and disabled children, as well as those from low socio-economic backgrounds (Mohlakwana, 2013; Diale, Pillay and Fritz, 2014). Arora, Shah, Chaturvedi and Gupta (2015) describe vulnerable children as children who live in a household in which one person or more is ill, dying or deceased; in households that receive orphans; children whose caregivers are too ill to continue to look after them; and children

living with very old and frail caregivers. However, vulnerability is not just limited to orphans, and some orphaned children are well cared for.

This study adopts the definition of vulnerability as seen by Arora *et al.* (2015) and describes vulnerable children as children whose quality of life is negatively affected by poor psychosocial factors such as poverty and neglect. In a nutshell, vulnerable children lack proper care and support in their homes. Schools are therefore better placed to take care of such children since the majority of them are at school (Department of Education, 1996).

Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (hereon the Constitution) speaks to the needs and rights of children. In this study, the researcher focused on the right to human dignity and contextualised other rights related to children. In essence, human dignity/Ubuntu (humanness) is at the heart of the Constitution with the aim of affirming the right to respect, protection of everyone's dignity, and the right to life (Tshoose, 2009; Bekker, 2006). Letseka (2011) and Lefa (2015) postulate that the whole education process should centre around Ubuntu (humanness) as a philosophy, or set of ethical principles, that captures the belief system of South Africans according to which people take responsibility for others. The values of Ubuntu relate to ways of treating others (care, respect and compassion), ways of being (sharing, sincerity, modesty and positiveness) and ways of behaving (democratic, motivating and consultative approach) (Bhengu, 2006; Mbeje, 2010). Ubuntu is seen as humanness, caring, harmony and generosity, respect and compassion (Theletsane, 2012). It refers to the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality, caring and justice (Poovan, Du Toit and Engelbrecht, 2006).

The Department of Education is obliged to uphold the Constitution and its entrenched values and educators should care for themselves, and then care for all the learners in the school irrespective of their background or circumstances (Letseka, 2011). For this reason, the Department of Education introduced the Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000) which has infused the role of pastoral care as one of the seven roles that the educator should perform in the school situation.

In the context of this study, the term 'educators' means all people who deal with vulnerable learners within the school; that is, educators in the classroom, educators in the School Based Support Team (SBST), heads of department, deputy principals and principals. In a study conducted in the United Kingdom, Calvert (2009) finds that while pastoral care is viewed as a primary function in a school environment, the meaning of the term is obscure,

vague and difficult to describe. In order to support vulnerable learners, the Department of Education also introduced White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) which provides for School Based Support Teams (SBSTs). The SBST is a school structure whose primary function is to co-ordinate learner support services. The intention is to support the learning and teaching process by identifying vulnerable learners and addressing their needs (Department of Education, 2001). This study therefore explored how educators uphold Ubuntu in providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners in primary schools.

1.3. Problem statement

Ideally, educators should provide pastoral care for learners and principals should guide the SBST on how to manage the process of providing for the pastoral needs of the learners (Norms and Standards for Educators, 2000; Tutu, 2007). A South African study by Wood and Goba (2011) states that Norms and Standards (2000) and the SBST regulations do not provide clear guidelines to educators on the management of vulnerable learners' needs and how to provide pastoral care. These sentiments are supported internationally by Molefe (2007) and Murphy (2011). Whilst the response of the Department of Education to the needs of vulnerable learners is highly encouraging, it is worth noting that these policies and guidelines do not offer educators clear directives regarding the expected care and support (Clarke, 2008; Diale *et al.*, 2014). The findings by Ntaote (2011) in Lesotho and Murphy (2011) in New Zealand also confirm that educators lack proper skills to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners which might lead to a lack of emotional support for them, as stated in the study conducted by Ogina (2010) in South Africa.

The Constitution also dictates that all citizens should uphold the Ubuntu culture. The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), as informed by the Constitution, direct educators to uphold Ubuntu through providing pastoral care for all learners; in particular vulnerable learners. There seems to be a gap in the literature concerning what educators do in caring for vulnerable learners. The intention of this study was to generate knowledge on the provision of pastoral care based on the principles of Ubuntu. This seems to be a gap in the literature on pastoral care in the South African context.

1.4. Purpose of the study

This study aimed at generating knowledge on the provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners and relating it to the concept of Ubuntu. This research aimed to examine how schools, under the leadership of the principals, provide for the needs of vulnerable learners

in Soshanguve, Gauteng province in South Africa. The researcher also aimed at illustrating how Ubuntu values direct what pastoral care is in the South African context. South Africans have traditionally adopted the notion of helping and caring for one another in line with Mbiti's maxim of Ubuntu (De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek, 2007). This study focused on what educators do in providing pastoral care for the holistic empowerment of vulnerable learners. This study specifically aimed at:

- Establishing how educators identify the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners.
- Investigating how educators understand the concept of pastoral care as a moral value of Ubuntu.
- Exploring the practices of educators in providing pastoral care through Ubuntu.
- Identifying the factors influencing educators' ability to provide pastoral care.
- Developing a Ubuntu-based pastoral care framework for vulnerable learners in township schools.

1.5. Rationale

As an Institutional Development and Support Officer (IDSO) in the Gauteng Department of Education, the researcher's duties, amongst others, include monitoring and supporting schools for their smooth running and effectiveness. In doing so, the researcher also monitors late coming of both educators and learners. As the researcher was monitoring late coming in one school, she met with the principal at the gate who then pointed out a girl learner who was also late. The principal complained to me that the girl was always late, sometimes 'bunked' classes after break because she sneaked out during break time, and was often absent from school. The principal requested my intervention on the matter. The researcher then called the learner aside and asked her about her behaviour. The learner immediately burst into tears. She explained that her mom was a single parent with three more children younger children. Before coming to school, she had to bathe her sick mom as well as her siblings, and prepare food for them. When the siblings went off to school, she had to feed her mom and make up her mom's bed. Whenever her mom felt better, she prepared food for herself during the day before taking medication. Sometimes her mom was too weak to prepare food for herself, thus the learner had to sneak out and go and feed her. She could not wait out the whole school day because her mom needed to take medication at specified times.

During interaction with educators in a Soshanguve township, the researcher noticed that most of them experience challenges regarding managing the needs of vulnerable learners and this aroused my curiosity. Such curiosity motivated me to study the literature regarding the management and provision of pastoral care to vulnerable children. Literature studies (Clarke, 2008; Van Wyk and Lemmer, 2007) show that parents are the primary caregivers and it is in the absence of parents that educators are expected to care for the learners. However, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has changed the 'norm' that anticipated that parents would be responsible for the well-being of their children. Due to the effects of HIV/AIDS, most children find themselves having to take care of siblings and ailing parents or stay alone (De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek, 2007). As a result, the educators' role to be in *loco parentis* is paramount so as to close the gap that is created by the absence of proper emotional and psychological care in the learners' homes.

Furthermore, the inherent Ubuntu value, as stated by Tutu (2007), requires educators to step in and provide the necessary care and support for vulnerable learners. Each year schools identify learners who are vulnerable, but as mentioned by Diale *et al.* (2014), the educators do not have the skills and competence to identify and help these learners. Instead of being accommodating and understanding of the learners' backgrounds and needs, educators expect them to perform like any other learner. These learners are then left with feelings of helplessness and hopelessness which ultimately affects their school performance and self-esteem (Mwoma and Pillay, 2015).

Although a number of studies have been conducted both locally and internationally on pastoral care and vulnerable learners, the studies did not focus on pastoral care under the umbrella of Ubuntu as a moral value in African culture. Studies have also revealed the different management approaches that schools use to provide care for vulnerable learners (Ogina, 2007; Phuthi, 2014; Ebersöhn and Eloff, 2006). These include school-based counsellors who offer support in the school environment and pastoral care as part of the school curriculum. However, none of these studies relate pastoral care to Ubuntu as proposed in this study.

1.6. Research question

Main question:

How do primary school educators manage the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?

Sub-questions:

- How do educators understand the concept of pastoral care as a value of Ubuntu?
- How do educators identify the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?
- How do educators describe what they do in providing pastoral care?
- What are the factors influencing educators' ability to provide pastoral care?

1.7. Theoretical framework

This study is underpinned by Ubuntu-based moral theory from a Southern African perspective (Metz, 2011). The researcher intended to explore how educators provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners through the lens of Ubuntu-based moral theory. Metz (2011) espouses that a moral theory is roughly a principle purporting to indicate what all correct actions have in common as distinct from wrong ones. The moral theoretical interpretation of Ubuntu roughly means that humanness 'shapes' the moral values of Africans.

Examining the Department of Education's document on Values in Education (Department of Education, 2000) and Ubuntu, the researcher mainly focused on the value of caring as linked to sharing, teamwork, generosity, sympathy, empathy, compassion and humanness towards others, with caring being at the centre (Lefa, 2015; Department of Education, 2000). The values of caring are in line with the theory on the ethics of care by Nodding (1984), which explains that the ideal of caring evolves from a natural sympathy that human beings innately feel for each other (Tutu, 2007). Nodding's (1984) theory on the ethics of care stipulates that for learning to be holistic, caring should be at the heart of the education system wherein the educator assumes the role of the one caring while the learners are those cared for (Owens and Ennis, 2012; Naicker, 2015).

Nodding's (1984) theory on the ethics of care identifies three characteristics of caring; 1) the engrossment in the learner, 2) a commitment for the learner, and 3) a motivational shift from a focus on the educator to the learner. The researcher in this study used the three characteristics as a framework to explore how educators manage the needs of vulnerable learners. The three characteristics are explained by Owens and Ennis (2012) as engrossment, commitment, and the ethics of care. Engrossment occurs when the educator establishes a caring relationship by identifying, accepting, and acknowledging the feelings

and relevance of learners' experiences. Commitment reflects the attitude that educators adopt towards learners by taking action to help vulnerable learners. The ethics of care relationship is enhanced as learners realise the educators' commitment to meet their needs and the educator understands and accepts each learner. The ethics of care are realised when the school develops a model to provide for the pastoral needs of all learners, including vulnerable learners. The motivational shift of caring occurs as the educators view the world through the eyes of the learner. That is, the focus shifts from educator to learner.

During the data collection, the researcher observed how committed the educators were in addressing learner needs and also how the educators shifted the focus from the self to the learners when they provided care to vulnerable learners. In order to explore the educators' commitment to managing vulnerable learners' needs, the researcher focused on all the steps taken within the school to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners and the accompanying written records in the process of document analysis.

Another theoretical lens that the researcher used in this study is Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow in 1943 with the aim of understanding what motivates people. Maslow's five-stage hierarchy of needs model was expanded during the 1960s and the 1970s to an eight-stage model which includes cognitive needs, aesthetic needs, and transcendence needs (McLeod, 2007) and is depicted in the following model:

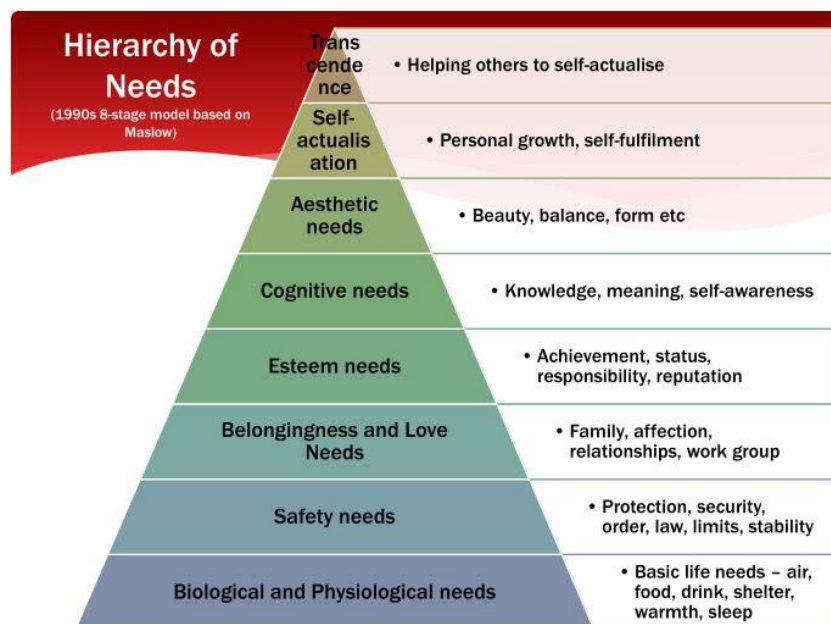


Figure 1-1: Maslow's eight-stage hierarchy of needs (McLeod, 2007)

Maslow's theory states that people are continuously motivated to achieve certain needs, and when one need is achieved, a person seeks to achieve the next. McLeod (2007) and Kaur (2013) point out that there are critics that contest that it is not always the case that the lower needs must be satisfied first before a person can achieve the next level. However, for the sake of this study, the researcher accepted that people would not even think about a transcendence need if their own biological and physiological needs were not met; hence the discussions in the study are limited to the five-stage model. Maslow's theory captures the needs of vulnerable learners as described in this study.

In the following section the researcher explains how Maslow's hierarchy of needs applies to this study. The biological and physiological needs, as explained in the model, are air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, and sleep. In the context of this study, most vulnerable learners come from poor economic backgrounds and are in need of food and clothing which are some of the basic needs in Maslow's theory. Hence most of the vulnerable learners depend on their schools to provide food and clothes.

Safety needs, according to Maslow, include protection from environmental harm, security, order, law, limits and stability. In this study, some vulnerable learners stay in child-headed households which pose a safety hazard to their lives (Parag, 2009; Clarke, 2008). They need adults to protect and care for them so that their needs for safety can be fulfilled. Social needs are described as the need to belong and be loved, being able to work in a group, family, affection, and relationships. Skinner, Tsheko, Mtero-Munyati, Segwabe, Chibatamoto, Mfecane (2006) and Phuthi (2014) mention that some vulnerable learners lack love and affection in their homes. Some vulnerable learners who live with relatives also lack a sense of belonging because the relatives have their own children to take care of and do not give the others the attention they need.

Esteem needs include self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, and managerial responsibility. Mwoma and Pillay (2015) indicate that most vulnerable learners have low self-esteem because they are teased at school by their peers. As a result, most vulnerable learners feel inferior and lack self-worth. Cognitive needs such as knowledge and having a sense of meaning are important, and vulnerable learners seek knowledge and meaning of their lives so that they can cope with their challenges on a day to day basis. Skinner *et al.* (2006) state that vulnerable learners need to feel appreciated and they rely on educators to close the gap created by their 'absent' parents. Such appreciation builds towards the fulfilment of their esteem needs. Self-actualisation needs are realising personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth, and peak experiences.

According to Nodding's (1984) theory on ethics of care, the motivational shift occurs when vulnerable learners feel that they are loved and supported. This action allows them to be motivated to reach their personal potential and growth. When vulnerable learners feel special in the eyes of other people, they too will be able to help other to reach their potential in life.

1.8. Significance of study

The intention of this study was to explore the different approaches that schools use to deal with vulnerable learners. The study also generated relevant information for educators and principals to enhance their strategies when providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Furthermore, the study provides an Ubuntu-based framework that schools can use as a guide to develop their own programmes to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Schools can use the findings of this study to strengthen their programmes to ensure that the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners are met. The newly developed programme may enable vulnerable learners to handle their daily challenges better and probably ultimately emerge as holistically better developed people.

1.9. Research methodology

Five primary schools in the Tshwane North district office were involved in this study. The principal and three educators who deal with vulnerable learners were interviewed and relevant documents pertaining to the management of pastoral care for vulnerable learners were also analysed. This research aimed at exploring the feelings, emotions and experiences of the participants; that is, principals and educators on the issues of pastoral care and Ubuntu. Therefore, a qualitative approach within an interpretivist framework was deemed suitable in order to understand the educators' understanding and practices of their pastoral care role for vulnerable learners (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Creswell, 2013).

As suggested by Bowen (2009), the interpretivist epistemology and constructionist ontology enabled the educators in this study to give their understanding and interpretation of the concepts under study in relation to their experiences and emotions. The researcher used a purposive sampling method to select schools and educators who participated in the study. The educators selected had the potential to give in-depth information about the phenomena of vulnerable learners in the schools and pastoral care in general (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014).

In order to elicit rich descriptions of the lived experiences of the educators, the researcher in this study employed a case study approach. The case study approach was relevant as it presented the researcher with a real-life situation and insight on how educators in Soshanguve primary schools practise pastoral care. The two research tools used for data collection were the one-on-one semi-structured interview and a document analysis. The two research tools enabled the researcher to gain insight and knowledge on the concepts under study (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The one-on-one interview was also suitable for this study because it heightened confidentiality wherein information provided by the interviewee remained protected.

The educators' responses were recorded and later transcribed. The process of thematic analysis was followed in conducting the data analysis, followed by interpretation of the research findings. Further discussions on the research approach, design, and methodology of the study are provided in Chapter 3.

1.10. Outline of chapters

- Chapter 1

In Chapter 1, an overview of this study was provided. This included a brief background and rationale of the study, a brief context of the area in which the schools were found, and the problem statement and research questions were presented. The theoretical perspectives, research methodology, strategies for ensuring the credibility of the study, and the ethical considerations, were also discussed.

- Chapter 2

Chapter 2 presents the numerous definitions and statistical background of vulnerable children in South Africa and internationally. The literature on the topic of Ubuntu and pastoral care is also reviewed and reflected on. The legislation that informs the pastoral role of educators, as informed by the Constitution and other related legislation, is also presented.

- Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, the research approach and design are discussed. The methodological grounding is presented. The choice of research site and sampling, and the methods used to collect the data, are explained. The data analysis strategy and the role of the researcher are

discussed, and evidence of the ethical guidelines adhered to is presented. A description of how the researcher enhanced the quality of the study is also presented.

- Chapter 4

Chapter 4 reports on the findings from interview data which involved four class teachers, four SBST co-ordinators, four deputy principals, and four principals on how the participants experienced and responded to the needs of vulnerable learners. Furthermore, the research question: How do primary school educators manage the needs of vulnerable learners? is addressed. The core research category and the other related categories, emerging themes, and a set of propositions that summarise the dominant understanding of the educators' responses towards vulnerable learners are presented. A description of the practices of the educators is reported on, and emerging from these practices, their role in the provision of pastoral care is deduced.

- Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, constant deductive analysis of the data collected from the interviews is presented. The emerging findings of this study are also discussed in relation to the literature review on the concepts of Ubuntu and pastoral care. This helps to establish whether the emerging theory extends, confirms, or disconfirms what is already known about Ubuntu and the educators' role in the provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

- Chapter 6

Chapter 6 is a summary of the study. The chapter includes a summary of the research findings, as well as conclusions and recommendations. Concluding statements are made in respect of the theory generated, and the shortcomings of this study are also discussed.

1.11. Summary of the chapter

This introductory chapter provided the overview of the study which included the research problem, rationale for doing the study, research questions, a brief discussion of the research methodology, and the theoretical framework. The researcher in this study used interviews and document analysis to explore the Ubuntu-based practices of educators in providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The research used Ubuntu as a theoretical framework.

The significance of the study in terms of how the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on educators' provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners was included.

In the next chapter, the researcher presents a literature discussion on the vulnerability of learners, Ubuntu, and pastoral care, as well as legislation that deals with vulnerable children/learners.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW ON VULNERABILITY OF LEARNERS, UBUNTU AND PASTORAL CARE

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the background of the study, the research aim, and the research questions. The researcher also gave a brief account of the research methodology and the participants, as well as how the data were analysed. In this chapter, the researcher provides a brief background of the context of the study, and then moves on to discuss the existing literature on the concept of Ubuntu and pastoral care.

Hearn, Campbell-Pope, House and Cross (2006) state in their study conducted in Western Australia that the World Health Organisation (1999) describes Health Promoting Schools as schools that enhance and support the psycho-social needs and moral well-being of all learners. The international perspective speaks to some aspects of pastoral care, Ubuntu, and the responsibility of schools in providing care.

The Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and the Media in Education Trust (MIET) evolved the initiative of Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) with the aim of reducing the impact of poverty and HIV/AIDS on children and providing them with all the support they need to cope. This initiative has introduced a comprehensive, integrated school-based model of care and support in targeted schools. The benefits of SCCS include, amongst others, more counselling, care, emotional support, and help for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) by developing the life skills they need to help them build resilience (MIET, 2010). This research was grounded on the notion of a school being a caring environment for all children, particularly vulnerable learners.

2.2. Context of the study

This study was conducted in a township residential area of Soshanguve in the Gauteng province of South Africa. According to Mampane and Bouwer (2011), township residential areas in South Africa originated as a result of racial segregation between blacks, whites, and people of colour. Township residential areas are mainly made up of low-cost housing developments and the residents are mostly blacks who want to be closer to their employment places. Life in a township area is mostly associated with poverty, crime and violence; as is the case with Soshanguve (Leoschut, 2006; Prinsloo, 2007).

Soshanguve township is also categorised as a low-socio-economic area. Most parents in Soshanguve area are unable to pay school fees due to poverty and unemployment (Hoadley, 2008) which leads to schools becoming disadvantaged in terms of poor and inadequate resources (Prinsloo, 2007; Hammett, 2008).

The Norms and Standards for School Funding (2017) have categorised schools into five quintiles according to their poverty rate, wherein Quintile 1 schools are the poorest and Quintile 5 schools are the least poor. Schools in the lower quintiles are allocated more government funding than those in higher quintiles because they are classified as poor schools. Although the sampled schools are in Quintiles 3 and 4, most of the learners come from informal settlement houses where the household income is low. Some of these learners stay with their grandparents and others are in child-headed families in which the learners take care of their siblings and, at times, their ailing parents. These learners depend on the School Nutrition Programme organised by the Department of Education for meals while at school, and some are even given food parcels by the school to take home. Some of the learners also rely on the Department of Social Development for school uniforms or get uniforms from caring educators. Unlike in other schools, most township schools are not able to employ counsellors, psychologists, and social workers due to the economic status of the school (Hoadley, 2008). In such schools the learners depend on the educators for their educational as well as emotional and social needs.

2.3. Vulnerability

The Children's Act 38 of 2005 (hereon the Children's Act) was enacted in support of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 (hereon the Constitution) including the Bill of Rights. The Children's Act classifies children as vulnerable and it gives effect to the rights of children with regard to care, protection, well-being and 'best interests' of the child. The Children's Act 38 of (2005) defines a vulnerable child as one who is in need of care and protection. A vulnerable child is one who is neglected, abused, orphaned, or stays in a child-headed household and is without any physical, financial, health, mental or emotional support from a parent or caregiver. The Children's Act also deals with a child who displays uncontrollable behaviour and/or is addicted to drugs. This means that a child is vulnerable if he/she does not have a caring and loving parent to provide for their needs.

Without proper parental support and care, children without any visible means of care and protection from other structures become vulnerable and destitute and must be referred for investigation by a designated social worker (Children's Act 38, 2005). As dictated by the

South African Schools Act (Department of Education, 1996), the majority of these children, aged between seven and 15, should be or are at school. Thus, educators find themselves having to deal with the challenges of supporting these vulnerable learners. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) also attest that one of the implications of these hardships which vulnerable learners are confronted with is that educators need to grapple with the concept of responsive teaching that will provide holistic development for these learners.

Vulnerability is difficult to define (Arora *et al.*, 2015). However, many scholars have attempted to define the concept in various ways. Vulnerability in general refers to physical, psychological, and sociological circumstances that restrict people to live quality lives (Mohlakwana, 2013; Diale *et al.*, 2014). In a study conducted in India, Arora *et al.* (2015) state that vulnerability refers to the state of being weak with the potential of poor outcomes, risk, or danger; thereby leading to resilience or total helplessness. Vulnerability may be in terms of deprivation (food, education, and parental care), exploitation, abuse, neglect, violence, and infection with HIV (Arora *et al.*, 2015). This study then adopted the notion that vulnerability refers to a state wherein people experience negative outcomes in their physical, psychological, and sociological lives and are more exposed to risk than their peers.

Mohlakwana (2013) and Andrews, Skinner and Zuma (2006) identify vulnerable children as children with disabilities or chronic illnesses or those children who are infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS; children who are abandoned and neglected and do not have caregivers who can address their material, health, financial and emotional needs. These children end up having to fend for themselves on the streets or through child labour or criminal activities. Arora *et al.* (2015) conceptualise vulnerable children as children who are living under difficult circumstances which include learners living in a poor household with sick parents, learners in child-headed households, learners who head households, learners who are dependent on old, frail or disabled caregivers, and learners in households that assume additional dependency by taking in orphaned learners.

2.3.1 *Aspects of vulnerability*

In line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Skinner *et al.* (2006) mention three fundamental aspects of vulnerability; *material aspects* which comprise food, clothing, shelter, health care and education; *emotional aspects* which encompass care, love, and support; and *social aspects* which cover affection, relationships, a supportive family, and guidance. It is important to mention up-front that this study adopted the definition as described by UNICEF (2009) which states that vulnerable children are those children whose survival, well-being,

and development are threatened by HIV/AIDS and other diseases, poverty, abandonment or neglect.

Although there is no direct relationship between being an orphan and vulnerability, vulnerable learners include orphans and learners who are without proper care from home as defined in Clarke (2008) and Van Wyk and Lemmer (2007). A child can be an orphan but not vulnerable, or be vulnerable and not necessarily be an orphan. The UNAIDS Global Report (2012) states that there are 17.3 million orphans in the world and most of them live in sub-Saharan Africa (Adejuwon and Oki, 2011). Sub-Saharan Africa has been identified as a region with the largest proportion of vulnerable children in the world (Pillay, 2014; Sewpaul and Mathias, 2013) where every eighth child is an orphan who has lost one or both parents (Mishra and Bignami-Van Assche, 2008). Heath, Donald, Theron and Lyon (2014) point out that approximately 17.8 million children have lost one or both parents through HIV/AIDS worldwide.

With an estimated 6.19 million people living with HIV in South Africa, this has resulted in a large number of vulnerable children who are growing up without proper adult protection, nurturing, or financial support (USAID, 2015). A large number of children in South Africa have been orphaned (maternal orphans, paternal orphans, or have lost both parents) and/or are living in households with sick or dying caregivers (Cluver, Operario, Lane and Kganakga, 2012; Cluver, Gardner, Operario, 2007). Without proper parental support and care, children become vulnerable in cases where there are no other care giving structures. Vulnerability can then be described as a state which deprives a learner to live a healthy and fruitful life because their physical, emotional/psychological, or sociological needs are not met. Some of these learners may be staying in child-headed households, some in child care institutions, and others staying with their relatives; but the common thread is that they may be neglected and/or abused and are at risk of danger and/or exploitation.

Vulnerability affects learners who do not have parental love, care and support. This study focused on the gap in support that is created by the lack of adult caregivers to vulnerable children who are learners.

2.3.2 Vulnerable learners

Soshanguve is one of the townships around Pretoria in Gauteng province with an estimated population of 600,000. The high population in Soshanguve has led to the emergence of informal settlements which had an estimated 33,900 housing units and an average

household size of 6.5 during 1996 (Noordelike Pretoria Metropolitaansie Substruktuur, 1996) (hereon NPMS). Many of the households in Soshanguve area lack much of the basic infrastructure and services, such as proper sewerage systems, electricity, communication systems etc. (Skinner *et al.*, 2006).

While most learners stay with their parents, parents are mostly absent as they travel in the early hours to work and arrive home very late from work. Some parents only come during weekends and/or holidays. Unemployment is generally the major contributor to vulnerability in children. For formal employment most of the residents of Soshanguve are employed in and around Pretoria and they commute daily between their homes and their employment places. In the absence of their parents, some of the learners stay with their relatives and a number of them stay in child-headed households. In 1996, Soshanguve had 51 light industries, 31 small shops and businesses, and one large shopping complex (NPMS, 1996). In order to earn a living, some community members engage in a variety of informal activities such as tuck shops, car washes, motor repairs, and so forth. Criminal activities are also prominent in the area and they include break-ins into homes, schools, local businesses and even robbing parents as they go to work in the early hours or come from work late in the evening. Learners are also robbed as they go or come from schools.

Another challenge in Soshanguve is poverty. For most, the only form of guaranteed nutritious food for learners living in impoverished households is the meal provided at the schools through the nutrition programme of the Department of Education. Skinner *et al.* (2006) mention that due to poverty, some of the learners get involved in criminal activities to obtain money to support their siblings. Furthermore, some girls become involved in sex work as a source of income (Skinner *et al.*, 2006). As a result, they are at risk of, among others, being infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, or kidnapped for child or sex labour.

In cases where vulnerable children do not have parents to stay with and cannot stay alone, they stay with extended families. Macarov (2008) and Dalen, Nakitende and Musisi (2009) state that the extended family (relatives) remains a better place for vulnerable children because relatives are regarded as family and these children develop a sense of belonging instead of being in a care-giving institution. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) indicate in their studies that as parent(s) die, vulnerable children live with either one parent or relatives. However, most relatives feel overwhelmed by their own family needs and they cannot take on vulnerable children (FHI and USAID, 2001; Molefe, 2007).

With the increasing number of deaths caused by HIV/AIDS, extended families can barely cope with providing care for orphans (Adejuwon and Oki 2011). Heymann, Earle, Rajaraman, Miller and Bogen (2007) concur, and also state that although some children may be cared for by the extended families, most extended families have difficulty in caring for the vulnerable children owing to the demands of their own families.

In the case of orphaned or abandoned children aged 6-12 in institutional and community based care settings in less wealthy nations, it can be said that these children are overburdened by the responsibility. In cases where aunts and uncles cannot take these children in, grandparents then become the only family these vulnerable learners have. Ron-Balsera (2011) and Goldberg and Short (2012) note that grandparents are too old to manage the task of being caregivers. Goldberg and Short (2012) state that some grandparents feel drained by the task because they also cared for their own children. Moreover, most of these grandparents provide 'skip generation parenting' (Phuthi, 2014). The 'skip generation parenting' means that there is a generation gap between two generations. As grandparents are 'forced' to take care of their grandchildren, the gap exists wherein parents are supposed to provide the necessary care, and because of the skip generation, communication becomes a problem and it mostly leads to tension (Phuthi, 2014).

In the absence of care from relatives and grandparents, vulnerable children end up living alone and the situation may lead to 'child-headed families' (Meintjies and Hall, 2009). A child-headed household is one in which the oldest member is under the age of 18 years (Meintjies and Giese 2006). Pillay (2012) highlights that with the increasing number of deaths among young parents due to HIV/AIDS, children have to live on their own in child-headed households. Researchers such as Meintjies and Giese (2006) reported over a decade ago that child-headed households were becoming a common phenomenon. Ogina (2010) concurs and further states that 'child-headed families' and orphan hood are becoming a common phenomenon in many African countries following the increased death rate among young parents.

There are increasing reports of child-headed families in South Africa and the effects are also felt in the schools (Daniel and Mathias, 2012; Pillay, 2012; Theron, 2012). Vulnerable learners are those whose basic rights are not upheld and are faced with adverse circumstances such as poverty, abandonment, and/or abuse. Most vulnerable learners lack love, care and support, and although there might be adults in their lives, there is a parental gap. Due to their psycho-social status, most of these learners are exposed to crime, abuse, child- and sex-labour. Some of these learners stay alone or with ailing parents and they have

to provide for their families. School therefore becomes their only solace where they may get the love and care that they need.

2.3.3 Experiences of vulnerable learners

Vulnerable children have emotional, physical, psychosocial, personal, intellectual, and spiritual needs (Ntaote, 2011; Hlalele, 2012). Vulnerable children face many challenges in their lives. Parag (2009), Clarke (2008), and Mohlakwana (2013) state that vulnerable learners do not have an adult to take care of them and they struggle with their basic needs of food, clothes, shelter, access to education and health facilities, and clothing. They assume different roles because whilst being children; they also have to become caregivers for their siblings in child-headed families or those with frail parents. Some of these learners face the risk of being sexually and emotionally abused or exposed to child or sex labour in order to fend for themselves and their siblings as well as their ailing parents. Generally, these children do not even receive government grants because some of them do not have the necessary documentation to access grants.

Ogina (2007), Molefe (2007), Mohlakwana (2013), Beyers and Hay (2011), and Ntaote (2011) also remark that most of the vulnerable learners have school-related challenges, and display disruptive behaviour such as stealing, violent behaviour, skipping classes, absenteeism or even drop out of school. Likewise, vulnerable learners have a short concentration span in class and a sense of helplessness which may result in poor academic performance (Beyers and Hay, 2011; Ntaote, 2011). The aforementioned interrelated socio-economic factors may end up being a barrier to vulnerable children's learning, which is described by Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2007) as a factor that hinders their ability to learn optimally. The three major groups of barriers to learning, as distinguished by Donald *et al.* (2007), are those barriers based on contextual disadvantage, those based on social problems, and those based on individual disabilities and difficulties in learning. Donald *et al.* (2007) also espouse that vulnerability may be regarded as a social barrier which involves social and emotional contributing factors, and because of the socio-economic life of most of the learners in Soshanguve, they experience barriers to learning that emanate from social problems.

Some of these learners also experience anxiety, depression, withdrawal, despair, low morale, and low self-esteem, and some resort to alcohol or drug abuse (Ebersöhn and Eloff, 2006; Avert, 2007; Beyers and Hay, 2011; Mwoma and Pillay, 2015). Mohlakwana (2013) and Mwoma and Pillay (2015) also find that some of the vulnerable learners are emotionally

neglected which can be associated with a parent who is psychologically absent in the learner's life. As a result, these learners seek a close relationship with the educator who, in most instances, may be the only adult supportive structure in their life. A study by Phuthi (2014) reveals that some vulnerable learners are abused verbally and emotionally by their parents, the extended relatives, guardians and/or at school, and they have suicidal tendencies which are signs of excessive stress and depression (Adejuwon and Oki, 2011). Moreover, learners from child care institutions lack parental love and they tend to be attention-seekers and are disruptive at times (Phuthi, 2014).

According to Clarke (2008), children who head families become vulnerable because they do not have any adult to depend on for care and support; the school then becomes the only place where they meet adults that can provide much needed care and support. Clarke (2008) further emphasises that in some cases where parents are deceased and grandparents and relatives are incapable of taking care of the children, educators may be the only adults that orphans look up to for fulfilment of their needs and support. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2007) concur and also point out that educators may be the only adults that vulnerable children turn to in order to fulfil the role of the parent. Bhana, Morrell, Epstein and Moletsane (2006) state that vulnerability and orphan hood mean that schools are sometimes the only places where children might find care. Vulnerable children look up to their educators to play the role of the parents who neglect them, or are either too sick to provide care for them, or are deceased. Therefore, the school becomes a solace of pastoral care for vulnerable children, child-headed families, and other orphans.

Some orphans have no surviving parents or relatives that they can go to, and others are shunned by relatives (Astoians 2007). As a result, they are forced to stay in a child-care institution otherwise they stay alone (child-headed families) or become 'street-kids'; i.e. homeless and living in the streets. However, Skinner *et al.* (2006) states that some people adopt orphans and vulnerable learners for their own financial gain. Skinner *et al.* (2006) also attest that some foster caregivers do not have the interests of these children at heart and they use the foster grants to support themselves instead. While the foster caregivers may provide material support, there is no emotional support provided (Skinner *et al.*, 2006).

Astoians (2007) and Dalen *et al.* (2009) state that children staying in child care centres are stigmatised at school, and even discriminated against by some of their peers and their educators. Studies documented in Whetten, Ostermann, Whetten, Pence, O'Donnell, Messer and Thielman (2009) show that the cognitive and emotional development of learners who are institutionalised is weakened, and children in families have higher levels of

intelligence than orphans who stay in child care institutions (Miller, 2007; Merz and McCall, 2010).

Furthermore, children living with relatives perform better than vulnerable learners staying in child care institutions (Macarov, 2008). Macarov (2008) further comments that most caregivers show little interest in the educational progress of children they are responsible for. Vulnerable learners experience poverty, neglect, and abuse which affect their childhood, well-being, and progress. In most cases, vulnerable learners become disruptive in school and they engage in criminal acts such as stealing and violence. These learners are sometimes stigmatised at school which affects their self-esteem and self-worth, and some end up dropping out of school or becoming depressed. Vulnerability also acts as a barrier to these children's learning because they are forever preoccupied with their unfavourable situation.

According to Mohlakwa (2013), vulnerable children respond differently to different circumstances. Some may display aggression and/or depression. This might lead to disruptive behaviour in school, which includes bunking of classes, absenteeism, and discipline problems (Phuthi, 2014). Without proper care and support, most children end up being destitute and deprived of their right to a good life and education (Children's Act 38, 2005). They rely on the community to close the gap created by the absence of their parents and caregivers. In the context of this study, vulnerable learners rely on educators to provide pastoral care for them (Mohammed, Gbenu and Lawal, 2014).

2.4. Pastoral Care

One of the key concepts in this study is pastoral care. Pastoral care involves help, advice, guidance, and development of children's values and moral welfare (De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek, 2007). According to Best (2007) and Russell (2007), pastoral care is not something that should be separated from the daily work of the educator; it is integral to teaching and learning practices. Ogina (2007) describes pastoral care as going beyond the traditional academic/pedagogical role of teaching in responding to the non-academic/non-pedagogical needs of the learners.

In a study conducted in Western Australia, Hearn *et al.* (2006) state that pastoral care is concerned with promoting learners' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes. Another view states that pastoral care is about helping vulnerable children to be resilient and survive under adverse circumstances (Mohlakwa, 2013; Phuthi, 2014). This

study adopts the definition of pastoral care as described by Ogina (2007) which refers to identifying and addressing the holistic needs of learners, both academic and non-academic, with the aim of nurturing these learners to live a quality life.

Shaw (2008) mentions that the ethos and tone of the whole school is influenced by the pastoral care practices taking place in the school. A school that promotes pastoral care creates a healthy environment which promotes learning and social development for learners. Learners also feel safe, secure, supported and cared for. Parents of children in a school that enhances pastoral care also feel welcome and they are assured that the environment that their children are learning in is safe and caring. According to the Ireland Department of Education, the entire school community comprising the Boards of Governors, principals, members of senior management, and all staff members (teaching and non-teaching), have a primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all learners in the school, and school systems should also protect learners from any harm such as psycho-social, emotional or intellectual harm (Shaw, 2008).

Shaw (2008) further states that pastoral care in schools encourages good relationships and mutual respect. The school system should harness learners' self-esteem and confidence so that they can develop the necessary skills that will enable them to cope and meet the demands, threats, and challenges that life will throw at them in the future. Schools need to be sympathetic, empathetic, and sensitive to learners' challenges and needs (Shaw, 2008). Pastoral care affords the school an opportunity to demonstrate concern for all learners' personal and social development regardless of their background.

The Ireland Department of Education believes that pastoral care becomes more effective when all staff members work together to ensure that the holistic needs of learners are catered for. Pastoral care in Ireland is universal and is fully integrated in the curriculum and daily routines. Shaw (2008) speaks about the three broad areas of a school's life; namely ethos, provision, and management arrangements. *Ethos* is about the distinctive character and atmosphere of a school wherein learners feel safe and secure, and free from any psychological, emotional and physical harm. Ethos describes a context where learners will feel loved, cared for and supported, and know that their needs are addressed appropriately.

Provision is when a school puts systems in place aimed at addressing the needs of individual learners while also ensuring that their academic development and physical and emotional welfare are considered. *Management arrangements* is when the school management team and the governing body promote good pastoral care provisioning by

ensuring that the available school resources, both human and material, are used efficiently and for the benefit of the learners (Shaw, 2008).

For a school to succeed in pastoral care provision, the school policy and planning should demonstrate the support for learners' needs both within and outside the classroom, and systems for pastoral care provision should be fully implemented and adhered to. In order to enhance the effectiveness of pastoral care in the school, the school needs to have strong links with parents and the community as well as outside agencies that will support the provision of pastoral care in the school. To achieve effective pastoral care provision, there needs to be good relations between staff and parents, as well as between the school and the community, so that everyone can help when discussing and attempting to resolve any difficulties which arise relating to the care and welfare of learners. Pastoral care normally begins in the classroom when the educator identifies a learner who is vulnerable. Therefore, the educators play a critical role in the school's ability and success in providing pastoral care for learners.

Educators are expected to uphold the Constitution and promote the democratic values and practices by developing a sense of responsibility and caring towards others, especially the vulnerable learners. By providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners, the educators will be contributing to the values of the Constitution through upholding human dignity (Ubuntu) and showing solidarity and empathy. The pastoral care role dictates that educators need to provide for the material, social, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of learners. In the researcher's view and in the context of this study, pastoral care is explored from the perspective of the provision of the necessary psycho-social support for learners who are emotionally unable to cope with the demands placed on them by the environment in which they find themselves, including the effects of HIV/AIDS. In this study the researcher argues that all learners who have no proper care and support from their homes are in need of the school to fulfil their intellectual as well as their psycho-social needs.

Through providing pastoral care, the Values in Education document (Department of Education, 2000) demands that educators show compassion, humanness, and empathy for vulnerable learners as part of their responsibility of providing care. By doing so, educators will be performing the role of pastoral care and promoting the culture of Ubuntu in schools. As educators are in contact with these learners most of the time, they are expected to provide pastoral care to learners; thereby practicing and upholding the culture of Ubuntu within the school. This study therefore sought to explore how educators employ Ubuntu

principles in providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The focus in this study was how educators manage the needs of vulnerable learners and provide support for them.

2.5. Ubuntu

At the heart of the Constitution is Ubuntu with the aim of asserting the right to respect, protection of everyone's dignity, and the right to life (Tshoose, 2009; Bekker 2006). The concept of Ubuntu is underpinned by Mbiti's (1970) maxim; 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am'. Loosely translated it means, '*Umuntu ngu muntu nga bantu*' in Nguni or '*Motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*' in Sotho-Tswana (Metz, 2011; Moloketi, 2009; Tutu, 2007).

Magadlela (2013) adds that Ubuntu is crafted on the notion that my humanity is caught up and bound up in yours. Ubuntu is a way of life, of being; one that emphasises our interconnectedness and our humaneness over our individual interests. Paradoxically, Ubuntu starts with and thrives through individual self-awareness and social awareness (Magadlela, 2013). One of the great Hindu Vedic statements found in *Maha Upanishad* reads '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', which means 'The world is my family' (Warrier, 1953). Both Mbiti (1970) and Magadlela (2013) emphasise that an individual is not an island; he/she lives with and amongst other people. It is the researcher's view that a school is an extension of the world, community, and family to the vulnerable learners. A school should be an enabling environment that promotes the interdependence and interconnectedness of children and where individuals can depend on others for care and support. The success of an individual depends on others and it becomes the success of the entire family; in this case, a school community. This perspective speaks to Ubuntu, which is caring for others.

Khomba (2011) adds that Ubuntu is about reciprocity of care. This view is supported by Metz (2011) who states that Ubuntu is a theory of Right Action. In the African culture, the most acceptable normative theory of right action should be geared towards reducing disharmony and encouraging good relations and teamwork which are the identities of solidarity and compassion (Khomba, 2011). Metz (2011) further espouses that at the core of Ubuntu is respect for human life and dignity. Compassion and solidarity for human life is borne on the love for others and it promotes Ubuntu.

Ubuntu, like any other theory, has its own critics and Enslin and Horsthemke (2004) are some of them. For instance, Enslin and Horsthemke (2004) question whether community comes before the individual. In his response, Letseka (2011) states that there are subtle

cross-pollinations between some traditional African socio-political and cultural practices and some Western socio-political and cultural practices. Simply put, Letseka (2011) contends that there are linkages and interrelationships between political and cultural practices. Letseka (2011) further mentions that men are largely interdependent and that no man is so completely isolated and self-sufficient that he does not depend on other people around him.

Metz (2011) posits that a number of philosophers and theorists invoke three sorts of concerns about Ubuntu. The first complaint is that the talk of Ubuntu is very vague and it does not guide the moral actions of people. Metz (2011) disputes that criticism in two ways. First, Metz (2011) explains that other terms that were salient in pre-colonial South Africa can be appropriated to Ubuntu as long as they have similar ideas as Ubuntu. Secondly, there are a number of ways in which pre-colonial Southern African people understood Ubuntu. Ubuntu can be interpreted differently by different people. In light of this argument, the current study explored what educators understood by the concept Ubuntu to establish the common understanding and the differences among educators.

A second common criticism of Ubuntu is its apparent collectivist orientation. The critics suggest that Ubuntu emphasis the majority at the expense of individual freedom. Responding to this claim, Metz (2011) purports that Ubuntu, which translates to *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, merely makes an empirical claim that an individual's survival or well-being is causally dependent on others. Khomba (2011) concurs and further mentions that Ubuntu protects the inalienable rights of an individual and that the rights of an individual are recognisable in the context of society. This notion does not nullify the existence of an individual; rather it emphasises that a person is a communal being and the life of one person in one way or another is impacted by the community around him/her. Furthermore, being part of the community does not take away the existence of self or individuality.

Despite the different views about Ubuntu, the researcher perceives the principles of Ubuntu as highlighting the need for educators to have compassion for vulnerable learners, and to be empathetic to the challenges experienced by vulnerable learners without undermining their self-identity and dignity. In line with Nodding (1984), the ethics of care is about making sure that vulnerable learners are put first and their needs are addressed with dignity and respect.

The third point of concern is about the relevance of Ubuntu for public morality in that it is inappropriate for developing countries such as South Africa, thereby citing the tradition and origin of Ubuntu as a challenge. Metz (2011) argues that although Ubuntu is a Nguni phrase,

the principles underpinning the concept are not Nguni-based, but rather human-based. Ubuntu is about humanity, respect and dignity.

2.5.1 *Ubuntu-related theories*

Letseka (2011) argues that there are similarities between the theory of Ubuntu and the theory of Bildung. Letseka (2011) espouse that the concept of caring, as embedded in Ubuntu, is not uniquely African because humanity and interconnectedness also exist in various Eurasian philosophies. Wilhelm von Humboldt was the German scholar who developed the theory of Bildung in 1793. He argues that Bildung is about linking the self to the world and it encourages interaction between individuals. A person is a social being and he/she needs other people in his/her life.

Letseka (2011) contends that Bildung encourages relations between the individual and the world and this relationship is necessary for the success of an individual and the entire world. Bildung emphasises that the world is for all persons who, in a way, depend on the existence of another (Letseka, 2011). Therefore, the theory of Bildung and Ubuntu both confirm the need for dependability of an individual on others. The theory of Bildung encourages the interaction of vulnerable learners with other learners and with educators. It also encourages social cohesion within a school community. Vulnerable learners see themselves as part of the school, which in turn is part of a larger society, and they depend on the school community, in particular educators, for care and support.

One of the principles of Ubuntu is interdependence (Khoza, 2006; Magadlela, 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to look at the relationship between Ubuntu as a theory and the theory of interdependence. Kelley and Thibaut (1978) developed four building blocks which make up the Interdependence Theory. *Level of dependence* describes the extent to which an individual's success in life is influenced by another's actions; i.e. according to Mbiti's maxim (1970), 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am'. This means that as the learner depends on the educator, the presence of a caring and loving educator will shape the person that the learner will be.

Mutuality of dependence describes the extent to which people are equally dependent on one another. Ubuntu highlights the principle of respect of the vulnerable learners irrespective of background. Ubuntu is about reciprocity and mutuality where all learners, whether vulnerable or not, are treated with dignity and humanity. *Basis of dependence* describes whether the educator will feel powerful and can control the vulnerable merely because the vulnerable

learner depends on him/her. Like Ubuntu, the theory of Interdependence stresses co-dependence between the educator and the vulnerable learners. *Co-variation of interests* describes shared success where the educator thrives when the learner succeeds. It is the extent to which a partner's success in life corresponds and whether events that benefit one person are similarly beneficial for another. Ubuntu highlights selflessness where the needs and rights of both the educator and the learner are treated as important.

A person thrives and succeeds not in isolation, but with the people around him/her (Magadlela, 2013). Aligning this notion to the theory of Interdependence, a person succeeds with the help and support of other people. Although the level of dependence might differ, human beings depend on one another to survive. Mutuality is another principle that embodies Ubuntu. The Interdependence theory highlights mutual interdependence where one person is as dependent on another as the other person is on the first person. In line with Ubuntu, mutual dependence is about the balancing of power where no one controls the other. The underlying goal in Interdependence theory and Ubuntu is mutual care and support for all, such that both the educator and the learner can achieve the best quality of life.

The African culture describes Ubuntu as the capacity to express empathy, compassion, dignity, humanity, and mutuality in the interests of justice and mutual caring within the community (Khoza, 2006; Mandela, 2006). Although the term is more popular in Africa, the values embedded in Ubuntu are practiced universally and the concept is beginning to resonate with people all over the world (Letseka, 2011; Magadlela, 2013). Broodryk (2006) expounds that Ubuntu is used in schools to refer to an attitude of concern for human dignity and that it perceives human needs and interests as important to all. Letseka (2011) and Lefa (2015) postulate that the whole education process should centre on Ubuntu (humanness) as a South African ethical principle that embodies mutual concern among individuals. In the context of this study, Ubuntu is viewed as the provision of support and emotional strength to vulnerable learners in a manner that will empower them to cope with their daily challenges.

When caring for vulnerable learners, the community, and in this case the school, may implement the Ubuntu philosophy which unlocks the capacity of an African culture in which individuals build and maintain schools as Centres of Care and Support (Poovan *et al.*, 2006). Bekker (2006) further posits that Ubuntu forms the value base of the Constitution, especially Chapter 2 the Bill of Rights Sections 10 and 11 which affirms the right to respect and protection of everyone's dignity and the right to life.

Aligned with the Constitution, the Bill of Responsibilities was then launched in 2008 by the Department of Basic Education in partnership with the National Religious Leaders Forum. The Bill of Responsibilities provides a basis of values that come from the ethos of the New South Africa. In addition, South Africa's Department of Education's (2001) Manifesto on Values - Education and Democracy Report identifies 10 fundamental values in the South African Constitution that pertain to education. These are democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, Ubuntu (human dignity), an open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect, and reconciliation. Of the 10 values listed in the Manifesto on Values - Education and Democracy, this study focused on Ubuntu as a moral theory and a value that is embedded within the pastoral role of educators as reflected in the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000).

Lefa (2015) and the Values, Education and Democracy Report (Department of Education, 2000) state that schools are influenced by Ubuntu principles such as caring, forgiveness, sharing, generosity, equality, sympathy, empathy, compassion, respect, tolerance, humanness, and harmony for others, and educators have to take the lead in that regard. Consequently, educators are expected to respond positively to the changing educational, social, and economic environment so as to provide care and support for the vulnerable learners (Ogina, 2010). According to Clarke (2008), educators are both 'duty-bearers' and 'rights-holders' who have an obligation to uphold the rights of the children who are in their care and also to ensure their safety and well-being.

Due to the diverse needs of children who spend most of their time in school, there is a need for schools to be Centres of Care and Support for all; and more particularly vulnerable children (MIET, 2010). Furthermore, Drewery (2007) states that by law, schools are required to be '*in loco parentis*'. '*In loco parentis*' means in place of the parent (Mohammed, Gbenu and Lawal, 2014). The phrase '*in loco parentis*' implies that schools should be mindful of the learners' psycho-social needs in the absence of their parents/guardians. Beyond academic activities which the educator is expected to execute in the school, all other roles in the school for the educator are geared towards ensuring the holistic development of the learner in respect of the psychological, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of the learner, including discipline and morals. This makes the job of the teacher an enormous one considering that learners come from different backgrounds and they also have different attitudes. In order to optimally act in this role, the educator needs to be multi-skilled in fields such as psychology, sociology, and human relations so that he/she can be able to act *in loco parentis* to all learners; especially the vulnerable learners (Mohammed *et al.*, 2014).

Whilst a child is in an educator's care, the educator assumes some of the privileges and responsibilities, both legal and moral, of the parents. *In loco parentis* emphasises that the school should be seen as the second home of the learner whose well-being and care should rest on their shoulders of all staff members, especially the educator under the leadership of the principal. *In loco parentis* therefore requires of the educator to be caring and subtle in their approach to the learner's needs and issues. The educator should then act as an advisor and caregiver, and above all, play the role of the child's parent. As educators stand *in loco parentis* to learners by upholding Ubuntu for vulnerable learners, they will be addressing the vulnerable learners' needs, dignity, and interests; thereby developing them holistically (Broodryk, 2006).

2.6. The roles of the educators

Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) purport that nowadays educators' biggest challenge is the support of vulnerable children. The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) stipulate seven roles of educators. However, this study will only focus on the educators' pastoral role. This role requires an educator to display and promote a critical, committed, and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others. The pastoral care role requires an educator to uphold the democratic values of the country as embedded in the Constitution.

The educator is also expected to enable an environment that is supportive and empowering to the learners' holistic needs. The educator should also maintain supportive relations with his/her fellow educators, parents, and the entire community. One critical dimension of the educators' supportive role is HIV/AIDS and its rippling effects. In this instance, the educator is expected uphold the Constitution and promote the value of Ubuntu (humanness) through providing care for vulnerable learners by showing respect and providing support; thus, empowering and developing them in totality.

However, in the study conducted in Bulawayo, Phuthi (2014) concludes that educators feel inadequate because they are not professionally trained to identify and handle vulnerable learners' needs. Furthermore, educators are not even aware of the challenges that vulnerable learners face unless the learners come to the fore themselves, and as a result, educators become demoralised. Although educators have a key role to play in addressing the learners' cognitive, emotional, social, and psychological needs, they have not been properly capacitated to deal with such needs (Ntaote, 2011; Mohlakwana, 2013; Oleke, Blystad, Fylkenes and Tumwine, 2007).

Ntaote (2011) and Parag (2009) further state that in order for educators to meet all learners' needs, they need to be trained in guidance and counselling, life skills, psycho-social support, and HIV/AIDS. Bhana *et al.* (2006) and Ntaote (2011) add that educators are expected to work as social workers, counsellors, caregivers, advisors, and education specialists for learners with special education needs and it seems that they are not coping with the multiple roles that they have to play. Most educators perceive the pastoral role as an added role and many educators experience stress due to high expectations and role conflict as a result of the diverse demands of caring for vulnerable learners (Bhana *et al.*, 2006; Wood and Goba, 2009).

Smit and Fritz (2008) further state that the non-teaching expectations confronting educators exceed those of teaching and learning, and the demands attached to the pastoral care role can be too overwhelming for educators. Therefore, learners end up being sent to social workers and hospitals without proper support from the school. According to Parag (2009), the socio-economic factors that educators are expected to deal with are too complex and widespread and this limits the educators' ability to take action in supporting vulnerable learners. The factors hindering proper care for vulnerable learners include the overwhelmingly number of vulnerable learners in schools; the limited or lack of knowledge, understanding and skills to deal with vulnerable learners' needs; overcrowding; lack of functional systems in the school; and the educator's conflicting roles of being a teacher and a pastoral caregiver or social service provider (Parag, 2009). Parag (2009) and Andersen, Nyamukapa, Gregson, Pufall, Mandanhire, Mutsikiwa, Gawa, Skovdal and Campbell (2014) concur and further highlight that another hindrance to educators providing proper pastoral care is the escalating numbers of needy learners in schools.

Unlike in the 'elite' schools, Murphy (2011) attests that most schools have no staff appointed to provide support and counselling for vulnerable learners. Although Life Orientation/Life Skills subject was introduced in schools with the aim of providing life skills to all learners, including vulnerable learners, most of the educators responsible for teaching the subject have little or no training to deliver the subject successfully (Bhana *et al.*, 2006; Theron, 2012; Diale *et al.*, 2014). Training deficiencies have a significant implication for the provision of pastoral care in schools because other educators refer learners to them hoping that they will be able to assist the learners. Without proper training, most educators only attend to the material needs of the vulnerable learners by providing them with food and clothing. In spite of this challenge, educators do their best to perform their care work.

Unfortunately, educators feel that their efforts go unnoticed and unrecognised because the work carries no weight in the processes of promotion or reward. Educators also complain that pastoral care infringes on their teaching time in the classroom and that it creates a 'lose-lose' situation wherein other learners are deprived of the educator's attention and their time for learning (Wood and Goba, 2009). Crowe (2006) and Parag (2009) add that educators are less available to undertake the pastoral care role because of their teaching workload. With the noted challenges that educators face in providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners, Murphy (2011) and McKinley, Madjar, Van der Merwe, Smith, Sutherland and Yuan (2009) point out that there is a relationship between learners' social and emotional well-being and their academic achievement, and also between psycho-social well-being and discipline. The study conducted by Murphy (2011) in New Zealand confirms that most vulnerable learners find it difficult to cope academically and most are ill-disciplined.

Without proper knowledge, understanding, and skills to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners, educators perform the pastoral care role differently (De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek, 2007; Phuthi, 2014; Calvert, 2009). The study by Ogina (2010) shows that some educators only provide for the material needs of the learners; others just refer them to social workers and the police, while others refer them to those educators who attempt to provide for their emotional needs as well. Calvert (2009) adds that due to a lack of knowledge and skills, United Kingdom educators rely on paraprofessionals when it comes to pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Lack of knowledge and skills to provide pastoral care could be due to a lack of training which then creates a gap of pastoral support for vulnerable learners. Local and international studies on vulnerable learners and pastoral care provided insight on how schools provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners but none of these studies do not show the relationship between pastoral care and Ubuntu as an African moral value.

2.6.1 School and government support for vulnerable learners

Phuthi (2014) postulates that schools should provide for the physical, intellectual, emotional, and psychological needs of all learners. Phuthi (2014) states that schools are inundated with vulnerable learners which warrant that guidance and counselling be increased so as to address the needs of these learners. Mapfumo and Nkoma (2013) assert that proper implementation of the guidance and counselling programmes benefits learners and develops their attitude towards school, their performance, and their emotional and psycho-social stability. Oleke *et al.* (2007) further observe that schools fail to offer psycho-social support because teachers lack the special skills to carry out the task. As a result, different schools and countries have developed programmes to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable

learners. For instance, the Department of Education in South Africa has launched the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) as a strategy for poverty alleviation. In order to improve access to schools, the Department of Education has also established a scholar transport programme with the aim of assisting learners who stay far from schools. Learners who do not have school uniforms are identified and assisted through the partnership between the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development. The introduction of the Life Skills/Life Orientation subject is another strategy that is meant to empower vulnerable learners with life skills. However, Bhana *et al.* (2006), Theron (2012), and Diale *et al.* (2014) concur that Life Skills/Life Orientation as a subject has not borne the intended fruits because most educators allocated to teach this subject are not qualified or competent and most schools do not take the subject seriously because it is not examinable at the end of the year.

The Department of Education also introduced the School Based Support Teams (SBST) and the District Based Support Teams (DBST) whose primary role is to provide psycho-social support for vulnerable learners (White Paper 6 of the Department of Education, 2001). Stofile (2008) and Stofile, Raymond and Moletsane (2013) mention that the more training the SBST members receive, the more confident they become to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Masango (2013) adds that the Department of Education has organised workshops to capacitate educators on the pastoral care role. However, Masango (2013) attests that most SBSTs are not fully functional. Rulwa-Mnatwana (2014) concurs and mentions that the working conditions and workload of educators are not realistic to enable them to fulfil the pastoral care role effectively. Most of the functional programmes that are organised by government to address vulnerable learners' needs are only limited to material support, and the non-physical needs thus are often neglected. Non-physical challenges need people who are experts in the field and clearly, educators, including the SBST, lack skills in this regard.

The Botswana Ministry of Education has adopted a guidance and counselling programme for schools to address the counselling needs of learners (Molefe, 2007). In doing so, the Botswana Ministry of Education has infused life skills across the curriculum in secondary schools. Nonetheless, Molefe (2007) confirms that the need for basic needs such as food, clothes and shelter, i.e. the physical needs, have precluded the psychological and social needs of learners.

One of the key strategic objectives of the orphans and vulnerable children's programme in Kenya is to mobilise and strengthen communities to support these children and train service

providers, including educators, who can assist learners while they are at school. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), NAC and UNICEF launched a programme called Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) in 2001 which caters for orphans and vulnerable children's (OVC) school fees. The programme involves the community and each school has a BEAM selecting committee for learners who qualify to be supported with school fees. The committee consists of four parents and three educators and it serves to choose orphans and vulnerable children who are already in school and are very needy. Rispel, Palha de Sousa and Molomo (2009) report in the Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC) and Zimbabwe Teachers' Association (ZIMTA) report of 2012 that the BEAM programme covers the entire tuition for orphans and vulnerable children. Although some international countries have programmes in place to support vulnerable learners, the researcher is of the opinion that the need for the fulfilment of basic needs of food and clothing overshadows the functionality of such programmes. However, it is worth noting that international countries show commitment to addressing vulnerable learners' needs. Pastoral care provisioning is a huge task which needs a concerted effort, drawing skills from the schools, the community, and government.

2.7. International models to support vulnerable learners

New Zealand has long established pastoral care networks and teamwork as well as guidance programmes, such as Peer Support, in schools which still need to be strengthened due to the increasing demands of pastoral care in schools (Crowe, 2006).

Hearn *et al.* (2006) conducted studies in different countries with the aim of exploring the provision of pastoral care in schools. Scotland is one of the leading countries on pastoral care and their key focus areas are the school ethos and environment; an inclusive curriculum; and the establishment of partnerships among the wider community. The key focus area is the need for a school to create and uphold a conducive environment where learners feel safe and cared for. Educators are trained and developed to provide pastoral care, and the curriculum, which infuses pastoral care provision, is structured in a way that it enables educators to provide pastoral care whenever the need arises. The wider community is also actively involved in matters relating to pastoral care in schools (Hearn *et al.*, 2006).

Hearn *et al.* (2006) indicate that pastoral care in Canada is reflected in their framework on Comprehensive School Health (CHS). The CHS framework uses a collaborative approach which involves the school and the broader community. The CHS framework enables learners to learn how to cope with daily challenges. At the same time, support services from all

departments such as health and social development, and psychologists, are made accessible to learners who need such services.

Lastly, according to Hearn *et al.* (2006), the United States uses a two-pronged approach to deal with pastoral care with the aim of developing the vulnerable learners' resilience and competency. The *external developmental* component accentuates teaching and support for all learners from the family, school and community; and the *internal developmental* component heightens the learners' commitment to learning, decision making and upholding positive values. The lessons from international studies are that learners are taught life skills and to take responsibility for their lives. The approaches used internationally are proactive rather than reactive. Pastoral care is a societal problem and all structures within and outside the school need to work jointly to address vulnerable learners' needs.

2.8. Summary of the chapter

This chapter highlighted the literature on the concepts of Ubuntu and pastoral care. It also reflected the challenges that both educators and vulnerable learners' experience. Literature highlighted that most township school learners have psycho-social needs that make them vulnerable and most of them rely on educators to provide for them. However, most educators have not been trained to perform the pastoral care role which hinders proper provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners. Different countries follow different models to supporting vulnerable learners and these ideas have been incorporated in the support framework the researcher developed; detailed in Chapter 5.

The following chapter discusses in detail the research methodology used in order to generate information-rich data to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the literature pertaining to the legislation relating to Ubuntu and pastoral care, and the concept of Ubuntu and pastoral care. In the discussion, the researcher also made reference to other theories that support Ubuntu as a moral theory, and the criticisms and responses to Ubuntu as a moral theory. The experiences of vulnerable children and the roles of the educators, including caregiving expectations, were also discussed. This chapter provides details of the research methodology that the researcher applied to gather data for this study.

3.2. Research methodology

In the following section the researcher details the research methodology, i.e. how the researcher collected and analysed the data (Bryman, 2008).

3.2.1 Research approach

In answering the research question, *How do primary school educators manage the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?* the researcher used a qualitative research method because it enabled her to collect thick and rich descriptive data such as emotions, feelings, and thoughts which cannot be obtained through a quantitative research method. Another reason for choosing the qualitative research approach was that the research was conducted in the participants' natural setting, which provided a holistic understanding of the practices of the educators and encouraged the educators to open up about their perceptions and opinions (Babbie, 2110). By using data collection methods that were flexible and sensitive to the underlying meaning of the educators' experiences, the educators were able to freely express their understanding and meaning which they attach to their lived experiences and practices of providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners (Maxwell, 2013).

One of the weaknesses of qualitative data, as raised by Creswell (2008) and Neuman (2007), is credibility. In order to address credibility, the researcher used triangulation to heighten data credibility. Data that were collected through interviews were corroborated through document analysis.

Generalisation is a concern when using the qualitative approach (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Baxter and Jack, 2008). Baxter and Jack (2008) question how applicable theories and findings which are generated in one setting can be generalised to other settings. However, this study did not generalise the findings; rather it restricted the findings to the experiences of the educators in the sampled schools. While collecting rich descriptive data from the educators, the process was time-consuming because the documents were not readily available and the process was stalled time and again (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2009). To save time, the researcher multi-tasked by continuously analysing the data while continuing with data collection; thus, the process was iterative. Corbin and Strauss (2008) warn that a qualitative approach may be biased due to a lack of rigour in the research process. The researcher also searched for discrepancies in the collected data and searched for alternative explanations.

3.3. Research paradigm

The methodological approach in this study was interpretivism. One of the characteristics of qualitative research is that it is interpretive and naturalistic to its subject (Creswell, 2008; McMillan and Schumacher, 2014). The interpretive and naturalistic approach allowed educators to construct and interpret meaning and understanding of their practices and experiences as pastoral caregivers.

Within the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, reality is subjective and constructed (Bryman, 2008, Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The researcher in this study blended insights from the interpretivist and constructivist paradigms because the two paradigms are focused on the process of interpreting and creating meaning from the participants' unique lived experiences. The interpretive and constructivist paradigms that guided this study complemented each other when it came to the researcher-participant relationship. The interpretivist approach enabled a trusting relationship between the researcher and the participant, which afforded the researcher an opportunity to explore the participants' experiences (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014). The constructivist paradigm on the other hand, recognises mutual interaction between the researcher and the participant in constructing meaning (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). As an interpretivist and constructivist researcher, the researcher in this study combined both strategies by taking an active role in co-creating meaning during the data collection and analysis processes, and the interpretation of the data.

The interpretivism-constructivism approach allowed the educators to develop continual subjective meaning to their lives and resulting behaviour, thereby actively constructing their social world (Bryman, 2008, Maxwell, 2013). The subjective aspect of the

interpretivist/constructivist paradigm allowed individual educators to share their personal views and beliefs about pastoral care provision, and this differed from one educator to the next. The researcher was also able to deconstruct the individual realities of the educators' experiences and practices as they performed the pastoral care role. To deconstruct and understand the realities as constructed by individual educators, the researcher listened to each participant's own voice as they presented their personal experiences and realities and used those realities to identify diverse perspectives of their experiences (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Best and Khan, 2006).

Therefore, the researcher used her expertise and skills to guide the research process, thereby identifying the strengths, interests, and biases of the participants and ensuring that they did not spoil the data. The researcher weighed different versions of reality to gain a balanced perspective, then built up a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon from the different versions as presented by the educators. After the data collection, the researcher, as the primary instrument of the process, used her sensitivity and ability to give meaning to data and also separated pertinent and valuable data.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) warn that the researcher should be able to differentiate between the *emic* – mine and *etic* – their perspectives. In essence, the researcher should try to understand the phenomenon through the participants' eyes and then locate it within his/her theoretical framework in order to unravel the participants' perspectives of the phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In order to achieve theoretical sensitivity in this study, the researcher recorded and transcribed the raw data as they were presented while ensuring objectivity and fairness.

3.4. Research design

Neuman (2006) describes research design as a plan, a protocol, or a structured framework of how the researcher intends to conduct the research process. The researcher used the case study research design because it presents a real-life situation which may not be captured through experimental or survey research. A case study also provides a holistic account of the phenomenon and insights therein. Data collected were based on the real-life experiences of the educators and their practices as they provided pastoral care to vulnerable learners (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014).

Five schools were sampled and the case study design was applied to each school according to their context. In so doing, the researcher traced trends that were prevalent across the data

collected from the participants in each school, and thereafter the data were compared in terms of the positions that educators held in each of the five schools. The researcher was also able to identify pertinent and valuable data within the school and then compared them with data from the other schools.

The researcher chose the case study as a research design as it enabled the researcher to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the educators' practices on the topic of pastoral care provision. This research technique allowed the researcher to answer the questions of 'how' and 'why' in relation to the provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Scott and Usher, 2011). Baxter and Jack (2008) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010) note three categories of case study; namely, exploratory – as a pilot to other studies or research questions, descriptive – providing narrative accounts, and explanatory – testing theories. The descriptive case study used in this study allowed the participants to describe their experiences in the real-life context in which it occurred (Baxter and Jack, 2008). The participants described how they identify the vulnerable learners in their schools, how they provide for them, and the factors that enhance and/or hinder their performance in the pastoral care role.

In line with the sentiments from Lofland, Snow, Anderson and Lofland (2006), a case study allows for the participants to be studied at their setting and on their terms. Each school was dealt with in isolation due to their context and circumstances, and thereafter the data were consolidated to highlight common trends in all schools. The researcher used the data collected from each school to generate data that provided the holistic experiences of the participants regarding the care they give to vulnerable learners.

One of the disadvantages of a case study is the possibility of bias in that research is conducted in a specific environment within a specific context (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). Therefore, generalisation becomes a limitation in that the findings are only applicable to that specific environment. In this study the researcher's aim was not to generalise but to explore the pastoral care practices of educators in the sampled schools, thus making the findings applicable to the context of the study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

3.5. Population and sample

In a qualitative case study, the process of sampling is important for data collection, interpretation, and presentation of findings (Flick, 2009). The sample site was Soshanguve township within the Tshwane North District Office, Gauteng province. Of a population of 20

primary schools in the Soshanguve township in the Tshwane North District Office, Gauteng province, the researcher sampled five primary schools which had the same characteristics as the entire population (Creswell, 2008; Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

The researcher used the non-random sampling method to select the schools and the criterion that was used to select the schools was that the sample was to consist of primary schools in Soshanguve township, all of which have a high number of vulnerable learners. This sample accounts for a sample size of 25% of schools in the area (five out of 20 schools). The schools were easily accessible to the researcher as they were in the education district office that is next to the one that the researcher was working in; hence the researcher could make multiple visits for data collection (Creswell, 2013).

Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) are of the opinion that the best sources of information in research are the participants who have experienced the phenomenon under study. The sample in this study comprised five schools from which four educators in each school with rich in-depth information about providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners were selected (Babbie, 2010). The researcher followed the non-random, purposive sampling method to select schools and participants. The rationale for purposive sampling was that it allowed the researcher to identify the participants that had detailed and rich information on the topic under study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Babbie, 2010). Purposive sampling was then used with a deliberate aim in mind, and the emphasis was on the schools and educators with detailed, quality information of experience of the topic of pastoral care for vulnerable learners (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Babbie, 2010).

In order to elicit rich data, the researcher asked leading questions such as *what*, *how* and *why* which were followed-up with more probing questions (Creswell, 2013). Neuman (2007) contends that purposive sampling does not draw a sample from a huge population; instead it is based on the knowledge of the population from which the sample will be drawn. The aim of the research was not to elicit information from a huge population, but rather to explore the experiences and practices of educators when dealing with large numbers of vulnerable learners in specific schools (Johnson and Christensen, 2012; McMillan and Schumacher, 2014).

Braun and Clarke (2006) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010) caution that purposive sampling is prone to bias in that the researcher may have pre-judged the participants and some knowledge about the sample and the suitability of the participants. Another concern raised by Babbie (2008) and Fraenkel and Norman (2006) is that due to its nature, i.e. small

sample, purposive sampling findings cannot be generalisable, transferred or representative. The findings from this purposive sampling were restricted and made applicable only to the sample and the population from which the sample was drawn. Thus, the findings were not used for generalisation but to explore the management of pastoral care of vulnerable learners in the sampled schools.

Fraenkel and Norman (2006) and Braun and Clarke (2006) contend that since it is the responsibility of the researcher to choose participants who are able and willing to provide the relevant data, there is a possibility that the researcher could be wrong in choosing suitable participants for the study. Taking this limitation into consideration, the researcher in this study explained the need for knowledgeable participants to the principals and the SBST coordinators and relied on them to select participants who would add value to the research. To intensify the data collection methods, the researcher also used more than one data collection method to elicit the in-depth information required in this study. Document analysis was used to triangulate data from the interviews (Gill *et al.*, 2008).

The researcher in this study targeted the principals and the SBST coordinators as the entry point. The principals and the SBST coordinators were selected based on being information-rich and knowledgeable. The information-rich cases were the participants who had the most information and who provided insight and deep understanding regarding the provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners in Soshanguve primary schools. Therefore, the participants were educators who were involved in caring for vulnerable learners on a daily basis. Participants did not represent the wider population and findings were thus not generalised (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

Upon receiving permission from the Department of Education and the school governing bodies, the researcher held separate briefing meetings with all principals and SBST coordinators to explain how the research process would be conducted and other ethical issues. The principals and SBST coordinators in turn selected two more educators to partake in the study, the deputy principals and the class teachers, because they were presumed to have more information about the vulnerable learners, their needs, and how they provide for them.

Table 3-1: Educators' selection criteria

Educator Position	Reason for selection in the study
Principals	The principals were selected for their role as the accounting officers in the school who ensure that all learners progress as expected.
SBST coordinators	The SBST coordinators are the ones who oversee the processes of the SBST. They are the ones who attend more workshops so that they can teach, guide, and support other educators.
Deputy principals	The deputy principals were selected by the principals and the SBST coordinators because the SBST coordinators report directly to them.
Class teachers	The deputy principals were selected by the principals and the SBST coordinators because they felt that they engage with learners daily and they have first-hand information about vulnerable learners. Class teachers are the ones who provide the first level support.

3.6. Data collection method

The researcher in this study used semi-structured interviews to explore the views and opinions of the participants about pastoral care provisioning. The semi-structured interview yielded rich, deep and trustworthy knowledge as it enabled the researcher to elicit in-depth information about Ubuntu and pastoral care in schools and to pose follow-up questions where necessary (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Lofland *et al.*, Snow, 2006). The researcher was also able to probe and prompt for clarifications and explanations from participants that ultimately provided holistic information. The participants narrated their understanding and interpretation of their practices as they provided pastoral care for vulnerable learners and they also revealed their intentions, beliefs, values, and reasons pertaining to how they make sense of their pastoral care experience (Flick, 2009; Johnson and Christensen, 2012).

According to Scott and Usher (2008), good rapport yields constructive dialogue and data of good quality. The rapport in this study was established during the briefing session wherein the researcher was familiarising herself with the participants and gaining their confidence and trust by explaining to them the purpose of the study and assuring them of the confidentiality of data. When conducting the interviews, the researcher maintained a good rapport by establishing the participants' language style, speech, and posture which allowed the participants to express themselves more comfortably (Scott and Usher, 2008; Atkins and Wallace, 2012).

During the interview, the researcher was always relaxed which allowed her to probe for more information from the participants and they in turn became more relaxed and provided more valid responses to the questions asked. The researcher responded to the situation by asking supplementary and probing questions, or leaving out questions that had already been answered sufficiently (Best and Khan, 2006). Due to the fact that the interview could have been stressful for the interviewer and interviewees if carried out over a long period of time, the interviewer remained an active and interested listener and did not go for too long during the interview (Bryman, 2008). Interviews were limited to 45-60 minutes.

The interviews were held at the schools after school hours when all learners had left. Conducting interviews at the schools also allowed educators to avail themselves of supplementary documents as evidence for document analysis (Maxwell, 2013). Some of the documents were perused in the presence of the participants and clarity was provided by participants where necessary.

Though a semi-structured interview is flexible and allows the interviewee to share his/her experiences freely, it is prone to subjectivity and bias in that the researcher may influence data and its interpretation through his/her views, feelings and perceptions (Bryman, 2008; Cohen *et al.*, 2011). To address this concern of bias, the researcher in this study used the same standard questions for all interviewees (Bryman, 2008). A semi-structured interview can be time consuming and so Gill *et al.* (2008) recommend that the researcher choose a small sample and manage the time well during the entire process of interviewing, transcribing the data, and data analysis. As a result, four participants per school were sampled and a timetable was drawn to manage time during the research process. An iterative approach to the research process was also adopted wherein data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously and this also saved time (Atkins and Wallace, 2012).

Data collected from the interviews were corroborated and triangulated through document analysis in order to eliminate bias and enhance credibility (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The researcher used document analysis to review and evaluate documents in order to seek convergence, elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge on pastoral care provisioning (Hesse-Bieber and Leavy, 2006). Both printed and electronic material pertaining to management of vulnerable learners' needs from each school were examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. Documents that were analysed included public records, personal documents, and written evidence (Hesse-Beiber and Leavy, 2006; Baxter and Jack, 2008).

The researcher studied the records of the schools on pastoral care management - plans, lists of committee members, policies, learner profiles, observation and intervention books, minutes of the SMT and SBST, screening and support needs assessment (SNA) forms, reports from educators to the SBST and from the SBST to the DBST, and school correspondence with parents and also with external support structures. The researcher also went through the educators' incidents, observations and intervention books in which they record incidents such as ill-behaviour or any observations about a particular learner.

However, not all educators kept incident books; some just referred learners to the SBST using the SNA forms without any record. The participants also presented material that they use for workshops, such as posters and handbooks. Documents analysis helped the researcher to gain historical insight about how the schools manage vulnerable learners' needs and this enabled the researcher to generate new interview questions that assisted the researcher during probing when some documents were provided before the interview. Some schools gave the researcher documents to peruse after the interviews and these documents were used to clear the misunderstandings, close the gaps that were discovered during the interviews, and to obtain data from the interview. For documentary evidence that was found to be contrary rather than corroboratory with the collected data, the researcher investigated further. On the other hand, converging information from the interview and documents analysis provided heightened confidence and trustworthiness of the data and the findings.

Document analysis in this study was found to be more efficient and effective in that it was less time-consuming. The researcher was permitted to take the documents away for perusal in her own time. Most of the documents to be examined were readily available and accessible in schools and they covered a long span of time which allowed the researcher to trace changes over time (Creswell, 2008; Scott and Usher, 2011). The other advantage of document analysis, as suggested by Creswell (2013), is that documents lack obstructiveness and reactivity because they are stable and 'non-reactive' data sources. The researcher in this study was able to read and review them multiple times and they remained unchanged by the researcher's influence or research process. Documents remained exact and stable because the presence of the researcher did not in any way alter what was already recorded (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

Although documents analysis has several advantages, it also has weaknesses. Some weaknesses of document analysis, as stated by Corbin and Strauss (2008), are that some documents might provide insufficient detail because they were created independently of the research agenda. Some documents in this study only provided a small amount of useful data

or sometimes none at all. Other documents were incomplete and their data were inaccurate or inconsistent. Sometimes there were gaps or a sparseness of documents, but the researcher in this study kept on searching for more information and used additional documents to close the gaps. Documents are also prone to bias selectivity (Scott and Usher, 2011). Without proper knowledge of what is available, the researcher is likely to collect incomplete documents which might affect data completeness.

However, where there were no data recorded or data were not detailed enough, the researcher probed further from the participants and other documents. Corbin and Strauss (2008) mention that documents have low retrievability as they may not be available or easily accessible, as it was the case in this study. The researcher dealt with this concern by going back to the schools for more documents and also probed for more information during interviews. To avoid bias in the document analysis, the researcher thoroughly evaluated and investigated the subjectivity of documents and her understanding of the data in order to preserve the credibility of the research (Creswell, 2013).

3.7. Data analysis

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the data. Thematic data analysis is the grouping of data into themes to identify common patterns or recurrent themes from transcribed data (Maxwell, 2013). The researcher in this study used a tape recorder to record the discussions from each of the participants during the interviews. The next step was to transcribe the recorded data by converting audiotape recordings into text data (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013).

The researcher then organised the data by reading and re-reading the data to make sense of the material from the interviews. At the same time, the researcher was skimming, reading, and interpreting information from documents (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In order to save time, the researcher transcribed the data promptly after recording (Creswell, 2008). Prompt transcription of data enabled the researcher to note down observed body language and non-verbal cues while they were still fresh in her mind.

The researcher identified pertinent information from the transcripts and then organised the information into segments. Segments were made up of information that the researcher felt to be valuable and relevant to the study. From the segments, the researcher then used lean coding wherein a few codes were assigned the first time the researcher analysed the text

(Scott and Usher, 2011; Babbie, 2010). Lean coding was conducted through organising data into categories which were key points from the segments.

Categories were then organised into themes and sub-themes, in line with the research questions. The list of codes was then reduced to a manageable number of four emerging themes until saturation was reached. The researcher opted for themes so as to capture the main ideas (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014). The themes were then coded and this assisted the researcher when summarising the data for analysis purposes.

From the emerging themes, the researcher was able to draw the necessary information and insight that led the researcher to the reporting process. To avoid leaving out vital data when forming themes, the researcher combined overlapping data to design meaningful themes for analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The process of data analysis was always iterative and simultaneous (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). Therefore, the researcher analysed data as it was being collected, also going back and forth to interviews and document analysis in order to fill the gaps that were discovered as data were analysed.

Table 3-2: Questions/sub-questions and themes/sub-themes

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/Sub-themes
1. <i>What is your understanding of Ubuntu, pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts?</i>	
a) Ubuntu	Sub-theme: The meaning of the concept of Ubuntu Sympathy and empathy Caring relationships Support (guidance, nurturing, discipline, motivation, giving and sharing) Friendship (listening, confidante) togetherness, neighbourly Humanity (respect, kindness, helping, love, acceptance, acknowledgement, justice)
b) Pastoral care	Sub-theme: The meaning of the concept of Pastoral care Support (parenting, taking action, pastoring) Caring for others (showing interest, showing concern, knowing others' life, putting others first) Humanity (inherent, instinct)

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/Sub-themes
c) Relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care	<p>Relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care</p> <p>Ubuntu is a value/ feeling and pastoral care is acting on it</p> <p>Ubuntu is an intrinsic driving force that leads to pastoral care</p> <p>Ubuntu is an inherent/intrinsic drive/force that leads to pastoral care</p> <p>Same goal of caring (inseparable)</p> <p>Pastoral care is part of Ubuntu</p>
<i>2. What are the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?</i>	
Pastoral needs of vulnerable learners	<p>Pastoral needs of vulnerable learners</p> <p>Support (parental, material, physical, emotional, psychological)</p> <p>Love and Care</p>
Identifying vulnerable learners	<p>Identifying vulnerable learners</p> <p>Physical appearance (neglected)</p> <p>Performance (lack of concentration)</p> <p>Discipline (bully, late coming, rebellious, stealing, use of vulgar language)</p> <p>Behaviour (disruptive, naughty, sleepy/tired, no interest in school work)</p> <p>Emotional instability (withdrawn, cry, inferiority complex, low self-esteem)</p> <p>Network (previous school)</p> <p>Interviews (learners, parents, peers)</p> <p>Sickly (hunger)</p>
<i>What is the impact of vulnerability on learners?</i>	
Academic performance	<p>Relationship between vulnerability and performance</p> <p>Direct relationship (not doing homework, no parental support, emotionally disturbed from home, social problems, low concentration span, sleeping in class, refuse to write, low self-esteem)</p>
Discipline	<p>Relationship between vulnerability and discipline</p> <p>Steal, insult, bully, violent, naughty, truancy, use drugs, emulate bad behaviour from parents, anger issues)</p>

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/Sub-themes
	Attention-seekers
Behavioural problems	Behavioural/Discipline problems Backchat to educators Anger Disruptive Attention-seekers Bully
<i>3. What support do you give to vulnerable learners?</i>	
Kind of support	Support provided Teachers interview learners and then intervene Material (food, clothes, seek donations) Emotional (comfort, teachers 'adopt' learners, home visits, pastors) Spiritual (pastors) Academic (extra classes) Referrals (nurses, police, social workers, psychologists, SBST, DBST, schools for learners with learning barriers) Engage parents
Programmes for vulnerable learners	School programmes Sponsors (NGOs, companies, individuals, community) Pastors SAPS SANCA NSNP (Dept. of Education) Department of Health Department of Social Dev. SBST DBST (Psychologists) Extra classes No remedial classes No structured programmes
SBST functionality	SBST functionality Support (material, physical needs) Functional (referrals to DBST for learners with learning

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>barriers, psychological support, submission of forms, capacitates other teachers)</p> <p>Not functional (Just refer to DBST without intervention, does not have knowledge and skills, not trained, cannot support on emotional and psychological needs)</p>
<p>4. How do educators perform their pastoral role?</p>	
<p>Educator's view on pastoral role (Norms and Standards)</p>	<p>Educator's view on pastoral care role</p> <p>Fair/ Reasonable/ Important expectation (holistic development)</p> <p>Duty and responsibility (inherent to the job, obligation)</p> <p>Loco parentis (School as a home, care, love and support)</p>
<p>Educator's responsibility</p>	<p>Educator's responsibility</p> <p>Principals (put systems in place, provide pastoral care and encourage teachers to do the same, teach and interact with learners, educators, parents and external support providers, ensure that the SBST is functional)</p> <p>Deputy principals (establish networks for support, motivate teachers)</p> <p>Class teachers (know the learners and identify the vulnerable ones, provide love and pastoral care, create a homey school environment, seek help for them, parent them, refer them to the SBST and support providers)</p> <p>SBST coordinators (provide pastoral care and seek help from support providers, encourage teachers to provide pastoral care, ensure that teachers perform their pastoral care role, provide training for teachers, oversee the functioning of the SBST)</p>
<p>Pastoral care practices</p>	<p>Pastoral care practices</p> <p>Not all teachers provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners</p> <p>Some teachers are negative</p> <p>Some teachers are not committed</p>
<p>Ubuntu practices</p>	<p>Ubuntu practices</p> <p>Support (material, emotional with limits, grief, adopt)</p> <p>Lessons (morals, values and discipline)</p>
<p>Educator's positive response to pastoral role</p>	<p>Educator's positive response</p> <p>Life experience (background, culture, religion, studies)</p>

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>Empathy, caring and compassion</p> <p>Humanity/Inborn/Inherent (passion, love, fulfilment, make a difference)</p> <p>External motivation</p> <p>Teaching is a calling</p>
Enhancers to positive response	<p>Enhancers to positive response</p> <p>Learning from others</p> <p>Inherent (love, passion, care, making a difference)</p> <p>Extrinsic motivation</p> <p>Religion</p>
Educators negative response to pastoral role	<p>Educator's negative response</p> <p>Bad attitude (don't care, ignorance, lack of love, passion and humanity, self-centeredness, bitterness)</p> <p>Complains (workload, time, not trained, lack of knowledge and skills, inexperience, not my duty, personal stress, pressure to perform academically)</p>
Hindrances to positive response	<p>Hindrances to positive response</p> <p>No humanity (Bad attitude, self-centeredness, don't care)</p> <p>Labelling</p> <p>Complains (workload, time, not trained, inexperience, personal stress, poor support from parents)</p>
Additional Information	<p>Additional information</p> <p>Lack of knowledge and skills</p> <p>Need for remedial classes and teachers</p> <p>Need for training for SBST members and all teachers</p> <p>Allocate social workers and psychologists for schools</p> <p>Revisit the function of the DBST</p>

3.8. Trustworthiness, credibility and dependability of the study

3.8.1 Trustworthiness

As suggested by Neuman (2007) and Creswell (2013), the researcher in this study increased the credibility of data by cross checking data using multiple sources. The researcher used

interviews and triangulated them using document analysis. Gill *et al.* (2008) define trustworthiness as a research instrument that measures what it is supposed to measure and the extent to which the findings reported by the researcher can be trusted.

To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher kept an audit trail of all the proceedings during the research which represented a means of assuring quality in this study (Neuman, 2007, Carcary, 2009). The researcher in this study provided an account of all research decisions and activities throughout the study and kept records and evidence of all the proceedings (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Baxter and Jack, 2008). The researcher also kept records and a trail of evidence of the entire research process, such as records of interviews with participants and some of the documents that were analysed during the data collection. All records pertaining to the research process were kept and available to the supervisor, external examiner, and critical readers for comment and guidance.

3.8.2 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Anney, 2014; Cohen *et al.*, 2011). McMillan and Schumacher (2014), Anney (2014) and Creswell (2013) further attest that credibility establishes whether or not the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views.

Credibility of data were ensured during the briefing meeting because the participants were made to feel at ease and they understood that their responses were meant to contribute to the literature on pastoral care for vulnerable learners. In order to further enhance credibility in this study, the researcher used member checking. Maxwell (2013) states that member checking is the process whereby the researcher involves the participants in the study to check for the accuracy of research findings and data analysis in order to rule out the possibilities of misrepresentation and bias.

The researcher also used member checking wherein the participants were given transcripts and drafts of the findings for them to check for accuracy, truthfulness, and legitimacy of research findings and data analysis in order to eliminate the possibility of misrepresentation and/or misinterpretation (Maxwell, 2013). Although it was time consuming, member checking allowed the participants to reflect on the data provided and provide feedback. The participants in this study were satisfied and they confirmed that the data were correctly captured, interpreted, and analysed.

3.8.3 *Dependability of the study*

Cohen *et al.* (2011) define dependability as how one can determine whether the findings of a study can be repeated with the same participants under the same circumstances. Simply put, dependability refers to the stability of findings over time (Babbie, 2010). However, qualitative researchers recognise the difficulty in reproducing social phenomena because of the challenges involved in replicating the precise conditions under which evidence was originally collected (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). Moreover, it is unlikely that even the same participants in a study would provide the identical responses they provided before, due to the fact that the participants would have reflected on the initial research process and the issues may have further developed and/or changed.

In order to ensure the dependability of the results, the researcher recorded the interviews on audiotape. The researcher also made additional notes in the reflective journal which contained non-verbal communication, decisions taken during the interview, and the reasons for taking those decisions. The audit trail of the entire research process was kept as it is essential for determining dependability (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

3.9. *Ethical issues*

Maxwell (2013) states that research can have both benefits and/or burdens for the participants and the community; hence the need for ethical clearance. Ethics in research aims to ensure that the participants in the study are not harmed or exploited by the researcher. Dickson-Swift, James and Liamputtong (2008) define ethics as a set of moral principles that aim to prevent the researcher from harming those they research.

The researcher considered ethical issues throughout the research process; that is, from defining the problem, advancing the research questions, collecting and analysing the data, up to writing the final report. She concerned herself with the values and the integrity of the research (Bryman, 2008; Hesse-Bieber and Leavy, 2006). To enhance ethical values, participants were called to a meeting where information regarding the study, its purpose, and their role in the study was explained (Creswell, 2008). Furthermore, the ethical considerations of informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation were adhered to (Bryman, 2008).

Flick (2009) and McMillan and Schumacher (2014) emphasise that the code of ethics in research requires that deliberate measures be taken to protect the identities of participants

against unnecessary exposure. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher assured the participants that their identities and information would be treated as confidential. The researcher also used pseudonyms when reporting the findings in order to conceal the participants' true identities. In order to build the participants' confidence and trust in the researcher, the researcher first established a good rapport with the participants and chose research questions and techniques that were relevant to the study, and also analysed data in terms of the participants' definition of the situation (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The researcher sought informed consent from the participants and the forms clearly indicated the purpose of the research and what the findings would be used for (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014).

On the issue of gaining access, Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that the researcher should seek permission from the gatekeepers in order to be ethically compliant. In this study, the researcher sought permission from the Gauteng Department of Education, the District Office under which the schools fell, the School Governing Bodies of all the schools, and she also requested ethical clearance from the ethical committee of the University of Pretoria. In order to gain access to the participants, the researcher informed them about the nature and the consequences of the research (Creswell, 2008).

Participants were assured that participation was voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time (Bryman, 2008). The researcher also assured the participants that the findings would not be used in any way to victimise them but only to contribute to the body of literature on the topic of pastoral care and Ubuntu in schools. Complete anonymity is usually a challenge during interviews as the interviewer and the interviewee are meeting face-to-face (Babbie, 2010).

3.10. Summary of the chapter

This chapter outlined the research approach, research paradigm, and research design. The researcher also discussed the data collection methods as well as the data analysis procedures. In this qualitative study, the researcher obtained information-rich data from purposively selected educators through interviews and data were corroborated through document analysis. Ethical issues were also addressed in this chapter.

In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the research findings emanating from the data collected and the interpretation thereof.

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research approach, design and data collection methods used in this study. Qualitative data analysis methods that enabled the researcher to explore the multiple perspectives of the participants were discussed. The strengths and weaknesses of the selected research approach and design were highlighted, as was how the researcher attended to the methodological weaknesses. The strategies that the researcher employed to ensure quality in the study were also discussed in the previous chapter.

This chapter discusses the research findings in terms of how the participants responded to the research questions. The themes presented in this chapter are aligned with the research questions. Verbatim quotations are used to support the themes and sub-themes.

4.2. Description of the participants

KEY:

Schools: A, B, C, D, E

CT - Class Teacher

DP - Deputy Principal

P - Principal

SBST - SBST Coordinator

Table 4-1: Biographical information of the research participants

Participant		Gender	Age	Experience in teaching	Experience in position	Qualification
School	Key					
A						
	CT - A	FEMALE	46	8	8	NPDE

Participant		Gender	Age	Experience in teaching	Experience in position	Qualification
School	Key					
	DP - A	FEMALE	51	27	4	M. TECH
	P - A	MALE	44	20	3	B. ED.
	SBST -A	FEMALE	52	26	4	B.A.
B						
	CT - B	FEMALE	44	24	24	BED
	DP - B	FEMALE	52	24	6	ACE
	P - B	FEMALE	53	25	4	BED. HONS
	SBST -B	FEMALE	58	34	3	BA. HONS
C						
	CT - C	FEMALE	61	32	32	ACE
	DP - C	FEMALE	47	21	2	BED. HONS
	P - C	MALE	49	23	5	BED. HONS
	SBST - C	FEMALE	53	25	2	SPTD
D						
	CT - D	FEMALE	48	12	12	BED. HONS
	DP - D	FEMALE	54	31	2	BA
	P - D	MALE	48	24	8	MED
	SBST - D	FEMALE	49	22	4	BED. HONS
E						
	CT - E	FEMALE	50	27	27	BA. HONS
	DP - E	FEMALE	43	20	2	BED. HONS
	P - E	MALE	46	20	3	BED. HONS
	SBST - E	FEMALE	48	25	1	ACE

Table 4-2: Research questions, themes and sub-themes

Questions and sub-questions	Themes/sub-themes
<i>1. What is your understanding of Ubuntu, pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts?</i>	<p>Theme 1: Ubuntu and pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts.</p> <p>Sub-theme 1: The meaning of the concept of Ubuntu</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: The meaning of the concept of Pastoral care</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care</p>
<i>2. What are the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?</i>	<p>Theme 2: Pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Sub-theme 1: Material and physical needs</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Emotional and psychological needs</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Identifying vulnerable learners</p> <p>Sub-theme 4: The impact of vulnerability on learner performance</p> <p>Sub-theme 5: The impact of vulnerability on learner discipline</p>
<i>3. How do educators perform their pastoral role?</i>	<p>Theme 3: Educator's view on pastoral care role.</p> <p>Sub-theme 1: Educator's view of pastoral care role in relation to Norms and Standards</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Educator's view of pastoral care role in relation to their responsibility</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Educator's views on Ubuntu practices in the school</p> <p>Sub-theme 4: Educator's views on pastoral care practices in the school</p> <p>Sub-theme 5: Educator's view on the functionality of the SBST</p>
<i>4. What are the factors influencing educators' ability to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners?</i>	<p>Theme: Factors influencing educator's ability to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Sub-theme 1: Educator's positive response to pastoral role</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Enhancers to educator's positive response to pastoral care</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Educator's negative response to pastoral role</p> <p>Sub-theme 4: Hindrances to educator's positive response to pastoral care</p>

4.3. Research findings

The following section presents the identified themes from the interviews and document analysis data. The findings are presented in four main themes and 12 sub-themes. Four educators per school; that is, the principal, the deputy principal, the school based support team coordinator, and the class teacher from the five selected schools were interviewed individually.

The responses from the interviews were analysed and the significant emerging themes are presented collectively in this section of the findings. The following paragraphs discuss the themes and sub-themes and the interpretations thereof.

4.3.1 *Conceptualisation of Ubuntu, pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts*

This theme sought to explore the participants' general understanding of the concepts of Ubuntu and pastoral care. The theme also included the participants' understanding of the two concepts in relation to vulnerable learners in schools. The relationship between the two concepts; that is, Ubuntu and pastoral care, is presented.

4.3.1.1 *Sub-theme 1: The meaning of the concept Ubuntu*

This sub-theme sought to discover how the participants understood the concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is understood as caring for other people and providing for their needs. The participants in this study also believed that once a person identifies the needs of another person, action must be taken to provide for that need. It is assumed that people who practise Ubuntu are generous and they have empathy and sympathy towards people who are in need of help. The participants identified love as a key principle of Ubuntu and it is believed that love should be shown through action. One participant relates Ubuntu to humanity, kindness, respect and justice, and it is only when another person's life is improved through the intervention of others that justice can be achieved. The participants said the following:

Ubuntu means caring for one another and providing whatever the person needs. It won't help to just care but not assist, if a person is in need, you need to do all that you can to help that person. Ubuntu is about identifying the need that the other person has and closing that gap so that the other person can feel that they are cared for (DP-D).

Ubuntu is about love. As people we need to love one another and when we love one another, we will also care for others. So, as teachers we need to love these learners irrespective of their background, we need to show that we care and support them to be better people who can rise above their trying situations. When learners come to you with any needs, be it food, clothes or maybe problems at home, as a teacher you need to intervene and help the learner (DP-C).

Ubuntu for me is about caring... not being selfish...eh! putting other people first... also thinking about how other people feel whether they are in need of something or they have challenges. Then you put yourself in their shoes and you think of what it is that you can do to accommodate them or to assist them... having empathy towards other people (CT-D).

One participant viewed Ubuntu as humanity which highlights the values of respect, generosity, solidarity, kindness, love, helping, and acknowledgement of the other person's needs and putting the other person's needs first. The following is what that participant said:

I think Ubuntu uh! Is to have humanity, to be human enough to a certain situation that might arise from another person and then helping that person to get out of that situation...it is a free will. I think Ubuntu is also about kindness, someone has to be kind enough to put himself or herself into someone else's shoes and also respecting the other person as a human being... If you really want justice in someone's life, I think it'll make you to practice Ubuntu. Ok. You see if I talk about justice, justice will move you to take some steps to see people living a better life (SBST-B).

The findings suggest that schools have learners who are vulnerable and whose needs are not being met at home. The findings show that vulnerable learners feel susceptible and weak due to their socio-economic background. Ubuntu seems to be perceived as an intrinsic and unselfish love and concern for ensuring that the welfare of others is promoted. Although the findings assume that Ubuntu is inherent in all people, it appears that Ubuntu becomes practical/evident only when action is taken to help the person who is in need. While the findings give the impression that Ubuntu is a driving force that pushes people to show care and support for vulnerable learners, it seems as if some people are not driven by the Ubuntu force. The document analysis showed that the principal always encouraged educators to show Ubuntu by addressing the vulnerable learners' needs in totality.

4.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: The meaning of the concept of pastoral care

The most common description of pastoral care from the participants in this study was that pastoral care is the holistic care and support for other people; learners in this instance. The participants believed that learners' academic, material, social, emotional, and spiritual needs should be addressed at the school, and educators ought to be available to assist in this regard.

The participants responded that learners should be developed in totality. The participants also perceived pastoral care as the empowering of learners to face the challenges that they experience in their lives. They related pastoral care with parenting whereby the educator shows concern and interest in the learners' well-being. As parents, the participants stated that pastoral care comes naturally and it means that they need to show concern for the socio-economic status of the learner and his/her family background and also must treat these learners as their own children. The participants mentioned that the spiritual needs of the learner should also be addressed. One participant understood pastoral care as pastoring, whereby the educator has to groom the learners morally while also developing their self-esteem. This is how the participants responded to the concept of pastoral care:

It refers to caring and supporting of the needy people. The person who offers pastoral care does it voluntarily to anyone who may be in pain or who may be in anxiety or in unstable emotions. If a person needs food, you need to provide food for them. If a person needs clothes, you need to provide clothes for them. If a person needs emotional support, you need to provide a shoulder for them to cry on or assist them to get professional help. It is about being supportive to whatever need a person has. (P-B)

Pastoral care is being there for the learner in totality, meaning not just the academic side but also giving emotional support and maybe giving them food and clothes. To me it is taking care of the learner in totality in whatever the learner needs, emotional needs, physical needs, spiritual needs as well. As teachers, we have a duty to make sure that the whole personhood of these learners is developed, we need to make sure that we empower them in all aspects of life so that they can deal with life challenges in future. (DP-E)

My understanding of pastoral care, eh! Whilst I'm the teacher, I am also a parent. When I look at these children as a teacher, I must also know that I am a parent. And I am not only focusing on the academic part, also on the socio-economic challenges. These children have some family challenges. So as a teacher I must know so that I can treat them accordingly. For example, you find that the child is underperforming. Looking only on the academic part, eh! at face value, you will take that the child is underperforming but if you can go deeper into the situation of a particular learner is then that eh! Pastoral care can come in. (P-A)

Some participants link pastoral care with the word 'pastor' and spirituality. Pastoral care is about being trustworthy such that learners can come to share their secrets and fears with others:

My understanding of pastoral care is that it has to do with the spiritual being. I need to ensure that as a teacher I need to support these learners in totality. I should also ensure that I am available for that person to confide in me about their secrets so that I can assist that particular individual. (P-E)

I think pastoral care comes from the word 'pastor' which means to look after or to take care of others. So, when you have kids under your care, you need to look at them in totality not just academically. Learners do not come to school just to be taught about curriculum issues, they come so that the teachers can groom them in totality. By that I mean that as teachers we should make sure that the learners are taught morals, their self-esteem is developed and also empower them with techniques of dealing with the challenges that they face in their lives. They need to be taught how to think and make right decisions for them...You need to put motherly love or parental love into what you are doing, taking care of them and making sure that they are well taken of. If you have to, visit their families, talk to them and visit where they stay. By motherly or parental love, I mean that whatever you do, you should think of these learners as if they are your own. In that way, you will just help without asking for recognition or to be paid. If you regard these learners as your own children, you will not rest until you find help for them (CT-A).

The findings in this sub-theme suggested that vulnerable learners are not well prepared and empowered to handle life's challenges which results in a gap in parenting. Pastoral care is perceived to be about providing for the learner's needs in totality and also developing their resistance such that their 'whole personhood' may be developed. Compassion, sharing, nurturing, parenting, and openness are assumed to be the most prominent principles of pastoral care.

From the findings of this sub-theme, it appeared that learners do not come to school for academic reasons only, but also have needs that emanate from their social life that could be fulfilled by educators in the school. It reveals that schools ought to have trained educators to handle the needs of vulnerable learners. However, schools may not be well equipped to provide the necessary support for vulnerable learners. While the impression may be gained that pastoral care provision brings self-fulfilment in educators, the apparent expectation for

educators to provide for both the pedagogic and non-pedagogical needs of vulnerable learners may result in negative consequences such as fatigue and emotional burnout.

4.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3: *The relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care*

All the participants in this study tended to agree that there is a relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care. They mentioned care, compassion, generosity, and love as attributes that are central to both concepts of Ubuntu and pastoral care, with the aim of supporting vulnerable learners at school. The participants were of the opinion that the material, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of a learner should be fulfilled. Other participants believed that Ubuntu is an inborn force that enables a person to provide pastoral care. The participants also viewed Ubuntu as an inherent force which compels one to provide pastoral care by supporting needy persons. Generally, the participants see Ubuntu as a feeling inside a person and pastoral care as the action that one takes as a result of that for vulnerable people. The participants said the following as they responded to the relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care:

I think they relate in the sense that they all focus on vulnerable people and in the school, it will be vulnerable learners. They speak about support, care, encourage the society to share what they have to share with those vulnerable learners. In a way I would say they both seek to provide care and support for vulnerable learners in the school. (P-C)

To me they are the same except that you can have Ubuntu in you but you need to take action to take care of someone and that is pastoral care. Ubuntu should push you to act. You cannot just say I care but close the door in the face of someone who needs care... you need to take steps to help that person and that is pastoral care. (CT-D)

The relationship is that because you've got Ubuntu within yourself, you've got this thing of saying someone is like that and I'm like this, I must take care of this person, I must see to it that this person is taken care of in different ways. That is because of what you have within you, the issue of Ubuntu is something that is inculcated in a person and I feel that what I have in me leads me to take care of other people and to provide this pastoral care for others... I think they relate because you must first have Ubuntu and then display it by applying pastoral care. (P-D)

Ubuntu for me is a vehicle that will lead you to pastoral care. Ubuntu will lead you towards taking care of someone pastorally. So, it means one needs to have Ubuntu so that they can give pastoral care. I don't think one can give pastoral care to anyone if they do not have Ubuntu. If you have Ubuntu, you can see when there is someone who needs your support and when you provide that support you are doing pastoral care (DP-A).

Ubuntu appeared to be a driving force in providing pastoral care. The findings presume that Ubuntu is an inner feeling and pastoral care is an action that one takes because of that feeling. It seems Ubuntu is evident through pastoral care. While the participants tended to agree that Ubuntu and pastoral care are interrelated, some were of the opinion that they were the same, while others thought that pastoral care depended on the existence of Ubuntu. Pastoral care is perceived as a consequential effect of Ubuntu. That is to say, if there is no Ubuntu, there will not be pastoral care. The findings give the impression that because all people have Ubuntu, they will automatically provide pastoral care, and this might not be the case in all people. Although it seems as if all people are aware of Ubuntu, some people may not have the urge to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

4.3.2 *Theme 2: The pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners*

The aim of this theme was to explore how educators identify and describe the needs of vulnerable learners and how they are addressed in schools. This theme also discusses the diverse needs of the learners in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs; namely, physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation needs.

4.3.2.1 *Sub-theme 1: The pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners*

The participants in this study suggested that vulnerable children have material needs such as food and clothing, and that the learners are also emotionally and psychologically traumatised resulting from neglect, physical abuse, verbal abuse, fights between their parents, as well as unstable families. The participants also believed that vulnerable learners are the ones who mostly come from informal settlements. Other needs that the participants identified are love and care in the home.

In the absence of biological parents, the participants suggested that most learners have social challenges because they stay in child-headed homes while others stay with their grandparents or relatives. For some of the learners, the participants implied that the child

support grant is not used to benefit learners; instead caregivers use it to please themselves. While some of the learners have parents, the participants insinuated that some of the parents are unable to offer proper support for their children, either materially or emotionally. The participants in this study said the following when asked about the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners:

I can say some learners' needs are for clothes and food, some could be facing problems at home where the parents are always fighting and they are neglected and they don't get the love that they need from their parents. Some learners are abused physically and they are even beaten and some it is emotionally where parents would just insult them or say very offensive things to them. (DP-B)

Most learners in our school come from informal settlements and the parents are still young. Most of the parents are not employed and most stay alone in the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses. Unfortunately, the single mothers do not have any source of income and they rely on boyfriends to support them financially... Sometimes they even observe their mothers being abused and beaten by these boyfriends and it affects them emotionally and psychologically. So, they come to school with that lot of burden and sometimes when you interview them, they tell you they feel like they can die because nobody cares about them, they have given up in life... So, it is not just poverty that these learners face, it is also emotional distress. (CT-C)

Most of our learners come from homes where they are struggling. You find that they do not have food at home and they come with torn clothes. If you interview them, they will tell you that they did not have any food at home, the last meal they had was the food they ate from the school. Some learners do not have parents and they stay with their relatives and some relatives take their grants but they neglect them. They do not buy them clothes or food instead they use the money for their own benefit. You can see, sometimes they come to school not clean and they end up being shy in class. They withdraw and do not want to play with others. You can see that they are not only physically deprived, they are also emotionally disturbed. (DP-C)

The above quotations suggest that most learners have needs that run across the five stages Maslow's hierarchy of needs which can be classified as follows:



Figure 4-1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The findings suggest that most vulnerable learners come from informal settlements which seem to be characterised by poverty and it seems most of their parents are not employed. The findings also give the impression that most of the vulnerable children's homes are dysfunctional as most of these learners are neglected and abused physically, emotionally, and financially.

There is a perception that most vulnerable learners do not receive care and love from their parents or caregivers. The findings show that vulnerable learners' basic needs are not met which affects their behaviour, self-esteem, and desire to reach the self-actualisation level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It appears that some learners stay in child-headed households and those children seem to struggle to fend and care for each other. While there is the assumption that some of the vulnerable learners' caregivers receive child support grant on their behalf, the findings show that the caregivers care less about the well-being and education of these learners some caregivers use the child support grant money for their own benefit. A possible reason for the misuse of the child support grant could be as a result of lack of accountability and oversight from the grant recipients and/or a follow-up on the use of the grants from the government agencies.

4.3.2.2 *Sub-theme 2: Identifying vulnerable learners*

The participants stated that they identify vulnerable learners when they interview them or their parents, or when they complete the school form about the learner's home background

and status. While some participants stated that some learners are identified through their physical appearance, that is, learners who appear dirty, wear torn or dirty clothes, have no proper uniform or are without warm clothing, some of the participants also proposed that some learners' books are neglected which to them is also a sign of learner vulnerability. The participants also suggested that an educator who knows his or her learners well is able to identify the learners easily because he or she can pick up on unusual conduct from the learner or when the learner is sick.

The behaviour and health status of learners seems to be associated with vulnerability, which may not always be the case since non-vulnerable learners may also have behaviour and health problems. The participants also identified vulnerable learners through poor learner performance, late-coming, not doing homework, or not showing any interest in the school work. The lack of academic rigour is assumed to be a reflection of the lack of adequate care in the home. Other signs of vulnerability as listed by the participants were when the learner always sleeps in the classroom, or is ill-disciplined, disruptive, withdrawn, or emotional most of the time. The following are the responses of the participants on how they identify vulnerable learners:

- Physical appearance

Eh! In the beginning of the year, class teachers interview learners about their home situation and then we complete that information in the forms and we refer from that list when we provide support. We ask about learners who have one or no parents; child-headed families; those staying with grannies... We can see them, although some are shy to say they do not have parents, from appearance where you can see that he or she does not have a jersey or shoes. As we interact with them we can see that there are challenges. You can also see from the books... you can see that the books are not covered, they are clumsy and dirty. When you ask them why the books are not covered, some will just say I do not have a mother who can cover my books. (P-A)

Another way of identifying them is through their appearance. You find that their trousers do not have zips. Their shoes are dirty, even themselves are dirty and you can see that they did not bath and no one took notice that the learner has not bathed or the clothes are dirty and when you ask the child where is your mother when you left for school, the child will tell you that the mother was sleeping.

Sometimes even when it is cold, they come to school without anything warm. (DP-A)

The presumption from the findings is that educators identify vulnerable learners by their physical appearance. It is likely that some educators might have seen most vulnerable learners without proper school uniform or warm clothing during winter which might sometimes be deceiving because there might be learners who are well dressed but still vulnerable. Again, there might also be other learners who are not vulnerable but are not well dressed or clean merely because their parents are too careless or lazy to check on the learners before they go to school. Vulnerability is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon which cannot be accurately assessed through physical appearance.

- Academic performance

I remember, there was this learner who had lost her mother. She stayed with her aunt but the aunt was not employed. The child would not concentrate in class and her performance was dropping. She no longer did her homework and she did not show any interest in her school work anymore and most of the time, she came late to school. It pained me a lot because I knew her to be one of my best learners in class. But since her mother passed on, her performance started dropping, the death of her mother affected her a lot because she was both a mother and father to her. (CT-A)

Most of them they write things you cannot read. Sometimes a learner in grade 3 or in grade 4 and you expect the child to be able to write some basic words such as his name or her name or the name of the school but the child will write something that you cannot read. That's when the teacher is able to pick up that this child is having a serious problem. And when you call him, he would cry... they often cry. And the other thing is that they do not submit the books to the teachers. They hide the books from the teachers. I think they are aware that they are unable to write or read and that is why they would hide their books...they know that they will be exposed. (P-B)

The findings suggest that vulnerability negatively affects learners' academic performance. Some vulnerable learners may not be able to concentrate in class because their minds might be preoccupied with what is happening in their homes. It also appears that some vulnerable learners cannot focus on their school work while at home because they have chores that

they need to perform. This perception might be a result of educators' inadequacy to understand vulnerable learners and how their vulnerability affects them academically. It seems parents of vulnerable learners do not provide them with the necessary support regarding school work. It also appears that some parents do not afford learners time to do their school work after school. The impression is that some parents do not care about their children's education and academic success.

Another possible explanation is that vulnerable learners seem not to have the skills and ability to cope with their situation at home as well as the academic demands at school. Similarly, the teachers may not have the knowledge and skills to help the vulnerable learners manage the home situation and what is expected of them at school. While it was found that most vulnerable learners perform poorly, it can be presumed that not all vulnerable learners perform poorly and that not all poorly performing learners are vulnerable.

- Learner behaviour

Eh! We usually identify vulnerable learners in various ways and in many ways. The first one, as an educator you need to know your learners, isn't it? Then the first one will be through observation as a class teacher and you can see that this learner is behaving in a different way. Maybe the learner is so reserved and maybe you can also see that physically that there is something wrong. It might be from the way that he or she is conducting him or herself among other learners... Some would always cry of stomach cramps and when you interview them you find out that they since ate the previous day at school... Some are very disruptive and they bully other learners, stealing their belongings... food and pens and such. (SBST-B)

Ja. Sometimes you find that the learner always sleeps in the class and as a teacher you can detect that the learner must be having problems... Sometimes the learner cannot sleep well because the parents are there but they are always fighting and shouting in front of the children. So, then the learner is always tired and he sleeps immediately he sits in class or is always withdrawn. Sometimes you find that there is no food at home and the learner comes with a hungry stomach so the learner cannot concentrate in class and that is when now, the learner will always sleep in the class. Sometimes you find that the learner is sick but because he needs food from school, he still comes to school. Some of the learners take pills before they come to school and the pills then make them to sleep in class. (SBST-D)

Yes. Most of the learners who are neglected from home and not cared for misbehave when they come to school. If I can pick up all the learners that are giving us problems you will find that the child does not have parents, sometimes the parents do not give guidance and support to the child and the child has even defeated the parents... And with discipline you will see learners who are problematic even from lower grades and you can see that the child's background is very bad, their parents fight all times and the learner copies that bad behaviour. Such learners have given up...the child is saying Ai! There is nothing that I can do, I'm different from other learners... This shows that these kids their background affects them psychologically that they don't feel anything or even the necessity of living, they've given up. (P-D)

The findings suggest that most vulnerable learners are ill-disciplined or withdrawn. It appears that vulnerable learners misbehave because they do not get attention from their parents; hence they misbehave in order to get attention from the educators. The findings suggest that some parents go to work early and come back late which then limits their time with their children. The findings indicate that learners who stay alone do not have adequate adult caring, love, supervision, and guidance and they seek such emotional support from the educators.

It can also be presumed that most vulnerable learners are not disciplined at home and some even copy violent and bad behaviour from their parents. These findings show that the environment and role modelling plays an important role in the behaviour of the learners. It also seems most vulnerable learners are teased by other learners; hence they isolate themselves. The learners' lack of empathy with regards to vulnerable learners indicates a need for establishing a caring environment that encourages support from the teachers as well as the other learners. Withdrawal could be a sign of anxiety, depression, or regression and a lack of the fulfilment of emotional and social needs.

One of the participants responded that it is difficult to identify the emotional and psychological needs of vulnerable learners:

In the school context... because we are dealing mostly with learners, eh! from the outside, they seem to cope well unless you interview them it is then that you will find out that there is something. Maybe lack of parental support...emotional so but from outside it is difficult to detect because they are well dressed. You can identify physical needs easily but It is not easy to pick up on emotional and psychological

needs. The other way of identifying them is academic performance, most of them perform poorly... (P-B)

While it appears easy to identify vulnerable learners from their appearance, the findings suggest that educators struggle to identify the emotional and psychological needs of learners. This finding gives the impression that educators are not skilled to identify the emotional and psychological needs of vulnerable learners. A possible reason could be that educators are not trained to identify such needs in pre-service and in-service training. Although from the document analysis it appears that schools complete the screening and support needs assessment forms, it also appears that most of the learners who are deemed vulnerable are those with behavioural issues such as ill-discipline and learners who are withdrawn. The learners with emotional needs are not captured in the forms and this is a gap in the documentation of vulnerable children which is as a result of the inability of the teachers to identify such needs.

4.3.3 *Theme 3: Educators' provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners*

This theme explored the responsibilities and practices of the principal, the deputy principal, the SBST coordinator, and the class teacher in providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners. The theme also discussed Ubuntu and pastoral care practices in the school in relation to providing support for vulnerable learners. This theme also examined the support that schools provide for vulnerable learners and the functionality of the School Based Support Teams (SBSTs) in schools.

4.3.3.1 *Sub-theme 1: Educators' responsibility in providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners*

This sub-theme addressed the responsibilities of the principals, deputy principals, class teachers and SBST coordinators on the provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The participants saw the responsibility of the principal as that of making sure the SBST was functional, as well as organising and putting systems in place for the support of vulnerable learners. It appears that the principal's role is also to advise, encourage, and make sure that all educators perform the role of pastoral care.

It arises from the quotations that the principals also have a responsibility to liaise with external people and structures to elicit extra support for these learners and also to interact with the SGB and the parents about the challenges that affect these learners and the

support programmes that the school offers. The participants proposed that in case of referrals, it is the responsibility of the principal to liaise with the district office for support and placement of these learners in special schools.

The participants viewed the responsibility of the deputy principal as similar to that of the principals. When it comes to class teachers, the participants believed that class teachers are the first point of contact with the learners. The participants believed that while the class teachers' responsibility is to create a conducive environment for learning, the class teachers are expected to also love and know their learners such that they can identify any unfamiliar conduct which calls for support, and should be approachable to enable learners to talk to them about their lives. The participants suggested that the responsibility of the SBST coordinator is to ensure that vulnerable learners' needs are addressed in totality and also to motivate educators to provide the necessary support for learners. The other responsibility of the SBST coordinator seems to be to oversee pastoral care processes and that the SBST is functional. This is how the participants responded:

As a principal, I need to make sure that systems are in place to ensure consistency and fairness. Systems such as duty rosters, policies, procedures. All these provide a framework for teachers to address issues relating to learners in the school. I have also taught my teachers that if they encounter learner challenges, they must report them to me... I interact with the parents. There is a book that we record incidents in and when we have invited the parent, we also write and agree together with the parent what the way forward would be and the parent signs. (P-A)

As a principal I need to ensure that the SBST is functional because that is the vehicle to make sure that vulnerable learners are catered for because if it not functional, most learners will be left behind and it is going to work for their disadvantage. I ensure that from time to time we liaise with the district office in terms of the referrals of learners, we also follow up in terms of progress for those learners. I also ensure that we support them academically and some of them I'll liaise with one principal from another school which is a special school and if I realize that a learner does not cope in the mainstream. My other responsibility is that I visit their homes or invite their parents and make them aware about their children to say all learners have potential as long as they are rightfully placed. (P-E)

Deputy principals are next in line from the principal, and according to the Personnel Administrative Measures (2015), they perform the duties of the principal in his/her absence. This is how deputy principals responded to their responsibilities in providing pastoral care:

As a deputy principal, I do the job of the principal and the principal also delegates some of his duties to me. So, in terms of pastoral care, I motivate teachers, I go all out and seek outside assistance to support learners and I also engage with both learners and their parents in case there is a need for intervention like maybe placing a learner in a special school. The most important thing is to make sure that the SBST is functional. (DP-B)

I see my role as being similar to the one of the principal. I need to establish networks with external people so that they can lend a hand for these learners and also provide motivation and support for the teachers who are doing their best to help these learners. I encourage the entire staff to work together to support these learners so that they can pass and do well in their lives. I also meet with parents to discuss their children's progress in school and provide them with advice if the learner needs to be referred. (DP-E)

Class teachers perceived their role as follows:

I have to love my children such that they can come to me with any problem they have. Even if they do not come to me, I should also know them and I can tell if any of my learner is not well. I know their behaviour and I can see if anyone of them is acting in a way that is not familiar. So, I would intervene and try to find out what is wrong. I have a wealth of experience in the system and I can identify learners who have problems very easily. Then I refer them to the SBST if I cannot get help for them. (CT-A)

Simple, to be a mother and love these children like I love my own children. As a class teacher I need to know my children and identify those that are not themselves on that particular day. Then you call the child aside and talk to the child. In my class, they all know that I am their mother and they also refer to me as 'mme' (mother). So, they know they can tell me anything that is bothering them and I do my best to help them. You see, if the learners can know that if they tell you something, you do your best to help them, they develop trust in you and they come to you voluntarily... When I see my children happy, I become happy too. (CT-B)

I should be able to screen and identify the vulnerable learners, refer them for assessment and support where necessary... My responsibility in pastoral care is to make sure that the learners can learn in an environment that is conducive for learning and with the minds that are free to learn without any problems hanging on their shoulders. (CT-C)

The SBST coordinators had this to say about their responsibilities with regard to pastoral care provision:

I think my responsibility is to call meetings with my colleagues and make them aware that we have learners who come from different backgrounds. I am the coordinator and we have a committee and so our responsibility is to encourage the learners that through education, they can achieve a lot in life... I also encourage the teachers to look for the root cause of the problem why learners behave the way they do instead of just shouting at them. When teachers refer the children to me, I ask them what it is that they have done to intervene and I need to see from the observation forms what they have recorded. (SBST-A)

I think my responsibility is to make sure that educators eh! ... are responsible enough in their duties regarding taking care of learners. I mean when I'm talking about SBST duties I'm referring to taking care of the challenges that surround a learner. I mean, maybe I can say in a proper way whereby we need to be aware of all the issues that surround the learner... the total life of the learner. By that I mean, you will be aware of everything that is happening in a child's life... you will aware of everything that challenges a learner, everything that will become a barrier to a learner. (SBST-B)

As the coordinator, my responsibility is to oversee everything in the school that has to do with ensuring that the SBST is functional and learners are supported. We ensure that the learners are helped, learners are supported and make sure that even when learners are fighting, there should be somebody who is intervening. Academically, every term after seeing the performance, as educators we need to make sure that all the protocols are followed, the procedures are followed so that at the end we support the learners that are at risk of failing at the end of the year. I also make sure that the other stakeholders are involved to support the learners. And in terms of the submissions to the district, I need to make sure that we do

things in time so that we can meet the submission deadline. So, I oversee that the SBST is functional. (SBST-D)

The findings suggested that while most educators acknowledged that pastoral care, as reflected in the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), is their role to perform, it appears that their roles were not clearly defined. The findings also suggest that neither the SMT, the SBST, nor the educators seem to be well conversant with the roles of educators on the different levels on pastoral care, and the findings also implied that the general management of pastoral care, as well as reporting and accountability lines, is not clarified. Analysis from documents gave the impression that schools have SBST policies and committees, but the policies are not clear in terms of the roles for different stakeholders such as class teachers, SBST coordinators, deputy principals, and principals. Document analysis also suggested that most of the school policies are silent in terms of procedures to identify and support vulnerable learners, hence the implementation thereof seemed to be a problem for most educators.

4.3.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Support for vulnerable learners

The participants tended to classify learner support in four ways, material/physical; emotional/psychological; spiritual; and learners with special education needs. The participants suggested that together with external structures, schools provide material support and conduct home visits for the learners and their families. The participants believed that schools manage to provide material/physical support but they are unable to provide emotional/psychological, spiritual support, or support for learners with special education needs. For emotional and psychological needs, it appeared that the educators refer the learners to the social workers, SBST and psychologists from the district office who then provide counselling.

Although educators refer emotionally distressed learners to the social workers, the participants proposed that the social workers were not always available at schools. It seems that the intervention of the social workers was mainly on social matters and in that case, they conduct home visits. The participants highlighted that the District Based Support Team (DBST) is the structure within the district that employs psychologists to deal with emotional needs and learners with barriers to learning. The identified problem is that when educators refer learners to the district psychologist, it takes a long before they come to the school, which then derails learner support. In such cases educators are faced with the challenge of trying to support the learner without them having the necessary psychological knowledge

and skills. There were cases of educators helping learners through bereavement periods in cases of death in the family. In terms of the spiritual needs, the participants mentioned that they do not know how to identify such needs but they involved pastors to pray for learners that they think need such intervention. The participants also posited that most parents are reluctant to give consent for their children to be referred to special schools.

The following were the participants' responses on the question of support for vulnerable learners:

...most learners come from poverty stricken homes and for them we provide them with food from the Nutrition programme and vegetable gardens in the school and we also give them clothes and food parcels from the Social Development Department and other NGOs that we have partnered with... we are helping their families with food sometimes and visit their home when there is death in the family... Some of these learners have serious emotional problems and the only thing we can do as teachers is... some would try to comfort them or if the situation is bad, we refer them to the social workers who would also try to intervene, some teachers who just refer them to the SBST without any intervention. When everything fails, we would refer the learners to the district office who will then send the psychologists to counsel the learners. (CT-A)

The problem is for learners who are depressed or stressed. As teachers we do not know how to deal with them. Sometimes we talk to them, and they get better...sometimes it is like we are making the situation worse. We have a committee called the SBST (School based support team) but again, it is comprised of teachers. Even if as a class teacher you fail to reach the learner and you refer the learner to the committee, they too cannot help much because they also are not trained. We would then refer the learners to the social workers but the social workers do not come every day. And they also get stuck because they cannot provide counselling. All they can do is to intervene at home and maybe try to help the family. For counselling, we need psychologists but we do not have them at our school. So, we refer learners who need counselling to the District based support team (DBST). But the DBST takes years before they can even come at your rescue. (CT-D)

Furthermore, for learners that might be experiencing barriers to learning, then we... individual teachers would try to intervene and when they fail, then we have a

structure called the SBST and we would send these learners to that body and that body will come up with intervention strategies to assist those learners... then we would complete the forms and send the names of those learners to district specialists that will come and assist the schools by assessing these learners and try to intervene and support those learners. The challenge is that the process takes long to come and assist those learners. (P-C)

We try all our best to provide for vulnerable learners by 'adopting' them and supplying for their material needs and by being their confidante and friends when they need support. The problem is referrals when it comes to learners with special education needs, parents refuse to complete the consent forms. They would even tell you that 'Ngwanaka ga a gafe. Ngwanaka a ka se ye ko sekolong sa digafi' (My child is not crazy. My child will not go to a school for crazy children). At the end, they are just pushed from one grade to the next and when it's time to leave to another school, they drop out because they've lost hope for the future... (P-E)

Some schools provide for the spiritual needs of learners and they involve pastors. This is what they said with regard to spiritual support for vulnerable learners:

Pastors do come to school and pray for the learners and read Bibles for them for emotional support. There was this learner who was epileptic and we would ask the pastor to come and pray for the learner and we not sure how the parents take it. However, the parent would be saying that the child has ancestral spirits and when we ask the pastor to pray for the learner, they get offended. So, we get consent from the parents first. (SBST-A)

We actually do not know how to identify learners with spiritual needs. So, when we see a learner who is acting very wildly, very violent like fighting other learners or even sniffing glue, we engage the parents, police and the social workers and we also call the pastor to come and pray for the learner. (DP-E)

While the findings inferred that schools provide for the material needs of vulnerable learners, it seems as if different educators used different approaches in their attempt to help emotionally and psychologically distressed learners. It could be that some educators have some skills while others do not have adequate knowledge to be able to help vulnerable learners. While the DBST has psychologists to deal with emotional/psychological needs of learners and learners with special education needs, it can be assumed that they are not able

to cover all schools at the time of need. The findings revealed that either the district psychologists were few or the demand was too huge for them. It can be presumed from the findings that schools do not have a structured and reliable support system to deal with the emotional/psychological and spiritual needs of learners or learners with special education needs which thus might compromise these learners' progress. The findings also revealed that most parents do not understand the aims and objectives of White Paper 6 of the Department of Education (2001).

4.3.3.3 Sub-theme 3: SBST functionality

It appeared that the SBSTs in most schools were not fully functional. The quotations suggest that due to a lack of knowledge and skills, the SBSTs either just send lists without any intervention to the district office or they falsify information for the sake of submission. In school E, the participants gave conflicting responses on their SBST functionality. This is how the participants responded to the question of SBST functionality:

I think the SBST in our school is 'functional' (giggling) because at least we submit every month to the district office...but the information is 'cooked' just for the sake of submission... we just write false information. You find the intervention strategy being the same for all the let's say 143 learners. It that really possible? But what can we do because we don't know what to do and we are expected to submit. (DP-B)

No. I say no because the subject teacher would intervene and then eh! after the intervention has not yielded any good results, he or she will refer the learner to the SBST and the SBST normally will not do anything for the learner. They will just refer the learner to the DBST without intervening. (P-B)

I don't think our SBST is functional. I see us as lists compilers for the sake of submission. I don't see any impact for when... like the class teacher would identify a learner and refer the learner to the SBST for intervention, the SBST is expected to intervene and assist the learner but even after all that, in most cases the learner comes out the same up until maybe the DBST (District based support team) comes and intervenes. I think it is just a matter of compliance. (DP-C)

Our SBST is trying in terms of material support but they not have the skills to deal with learners with special education needs and learners with emotional stress. So, they only focus on food and clothes. They keep a list of learners who are needy and

they seek assistance from the community and other sponsors. For other learners who need remedial support and psychological support, they just send the lists to the district office and then wait until the district officials come. Sometimes they would just request the social workers and pastors to assist and they also help to a certain level. (CT-B)

School E participants have conflicting views and they responded as follows:

Not at all. Remember the SBST is comprised by teachers and have not been trained to deal with vulnerable learners. Although they have attended a few workshops but the needs of these learners need a specialist to intervene. The function of the SBST is to provide intervention for learners who are academically challenged, who have social needs, who have emotional and psychological challenges. However, the SBST members are not specialists in any of those areas. Although they try but they cannot reach learners who need remedial, they also cannot reach learners with emotional and psychological challenges... I cannot say the SBST is functional because they cannot even perform half of their duties. (CT-E)

Yes. I can say so. It is functional because when it comes to... like I said that we look at the child holistically, when a child has a learning barrier, we make sure that we integrate and network with different stakeholders, the district will be taken on board to take care of the learners... So, another thing that we do as the SBST is that we look at the physical, we look at the emotional whereby we refer them to the social workers, we check if there is abuse and we refer to the SAPS, we have 'adopt a cop' and if it is a social need, the social workers are robed in to support. So, what we do is that we look at the problem and try to check as to which structure can intervene at that time. (SBST-E)

Although it seems as if the SBSTs have attended workshops, the members of the SBSTs do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to be fully functional. The effectiveness of the workshop training seems questionable in terms of duration, knowledge and skills development, as well as empowering the SBST members in performing their roles. The findings showed that most SBSTs were not fully functional and this was supported by the evidence from the document analysis which showed that the SBSTs only focus on the material needs of learners and neglect the emotional needs and learners with special education needs.

The review of the document analysis also inferred that there was no evidence of educator or SBST intervention regarding the emotional and psychological needs of vulnerable learners and learners with special education needs. From the findings it is clear that SBSTs do not have a functional framework or protocol to provide holistic support for learners who are vulnerable. It can also be presumed that there was no proper monitoring of the SBST from the school and the district office as some SBSTs even sent falsified information to the district office. Due to seemingly unsuccessful workshops for SBSTs, it seems as if most SBST members still do not fully understand their role and duties in supporting vulnerable learners and they are turned into ‘conveyer belts’ between the school and the district office.

4.3.4 *Theme 4: Factors influencing the ability of educators to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners*

This theme illustrated the factors that influenced the ability of educators to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners by examining the positive and negative responses of educators towards performing pastoral role, as well as the factors that either enhanced or hindered them from performing that role.

4.3.4.1 *Sub-theme 1: Educators’ positive response to pastoral care role*

The participants in this study believed that a school should be a home for the vulnerable learners where they could feel loved, cared for and supported. The participants also perceived pastoral care as their responsibility and it is presumed that most educators respond positively to providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners because they are motivated intrinsically by the care, passion, and love that they have for these learners.

The participants expressed that the pastoral care role cannot be forced on any person; it depends on a person if they feel the urge to provide care or not. The participants mentioned that while some educators are driven by their religious or cultural background, others have a moral conscience and they support vulnerable learners because they feel it is the right thing to do as they see themselves as parents to the vulnerable learners. The participants also suggested that both internal and external motivation, as well as the desire to impact positively on the learner’s life, encouraged them to support vulnerable learners. The participants highlighted that they felt obligated to help vulnerable learners because they too had experienced such challenges. The participants also believed that caring and supporting vulnerable learners enhances learner discipline and academic performance. Knowledge was also proposed by the participants as one of the factors that influenced educators’ positive

responses to the provision of pastoral care. This is how the participants gave a positive response towards the pastoral care role:

This is their second home and learners spend most of their time here at school. So, we need to act as parents of these learners. So, we need to ensure that we are so friendly and open to these learners such that when they have problems, they will be able to approach and tell us anything about their lives without any fear. They should be able to feel safe because eh! you see, some learners are neglected at their homes and for most of them, we are the only people they can rely on and trust because we show them love and we care. We are their parents. (P-B)

Most of us, we walked the road. We have been vulnerable ourselves but someone helped to get us where we are today. So, we also need to help others. That is how it is supposed to be. It is a chain that all of us must link because if the chain breaks, I don't know. Ubuntu and pastoral care are inborn, they are in your blood. To me I think if you have Ubuntu, you will want to help, yes you will struggle especially if you do not even know what you are doing but you cannot just let things be and say you are a teacher. (CT-D)

Say you manage to identify the problem and you come out victorious in addressing the problem that the learner had and the learners starts to perform better, that on its own would motivate you to do more than you are doing. That is how you get motivated and fulfilled that as a person you have made a difference in a child's life. But the school also motivates educators by giving them awards for going an extra mile in helping the needy learners. (P-C)

You know, others it will be their nature or their background. Others it is from Christian background or the cultural background to say as an African, this kind of saying that you cannot have someone suffering or have someone without food even if you don't know that person but they would want to help them, they would want to support them because what I see is that it is out of people's nature (P-D)

For participant SBST-B, knowledge motivates educators to provide care and support for learners. This is the response that was provided:

The people were not aware of the role of this committee but because of the knowledge they have now acquired, now they became interested and it became

easier for them to practice pastoral care voluntary so... I think that is one of the factors that helped some of the educators to really see that there is something that needs to be done with regard to these kinds of learners. (SBST-B)

The findings suggested that the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) were not mandatory for educators to perform pastoral role; thus, not all educators provide such care. It seemed that the educators perform pastoral care out of free-will and vulnerable learners appear to be at the mercy of such educators because nothing compels them to be caring. The findings suggested that although there might be other factors that influenced the educators' support to vulnerable learners, most educators were mainly driven by the inherent Ubuntu spirit.

Motivation, empathy and self-fulfilment also appeared to be the driving forces for educators to care and support vulnerable learners. These findings align with Nodding's (1984) theory on the ethics of care in that educators show commitment to improving the vulnerable learners' well-being and the motivational shift is on learners rather than on the educators themselves.

The findings also suggested that there was a direct relationship between pastoral support and performance, and also between pastoral support and discipline, in that the learners who are cared for by educators behave better in class and perform well compared to learners who do not receive pastoral care. However, this could be a misconception because not all learners who are vulnerable perform poorly or are ill-disciplined, and again not all learners who are performing poorly or ill-disciplined are vulnerable. The findings also revealed that as educators increase their knowledge about pastoral care, they tend to be more willing and confident to support vulnerable learners. From the quotations, it also appeared that the departmental officials do not acknowledge the role of the educators regarding pastoral care and the demands thereof which then demoralises some of the educators to perform the role.

4.3.4.2 Sub-theme 2: Educators negative response to pastoral care role

The participants proposed that educators lack knowledge and skills on how to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners. The participants suggested that some educators do not want to support vulnerable learners because they believed they were employed as teachers and it was not their duty to provide pastoral care to learners. The participants posited that some educators do not love their job, some are ignorant, others are angry and bitter, and some lack compassion. The participants were also concerned about workload and

overcrowded classes as conditions that limit their ability to provide pastoral care as there is no time allocated in the timetable to do so. The participants also suggested a lack of parental involvement as another deterrent which demotivated them from supporting vulnerable learners because some parents do not show interest in their children's school work. The following were the negative responses of the participants towards vulnerable learners:

But for some it is just the attitude when teachers feel that they are here to teach and to teach only and they have too much work to do with very tight timeframes. They are not social workers, they are not psychologists and they should not be expected to do all those things of caring for those learners. Some would even say that these learners are dirty and they smell urine. They are teachers and these learners have their own parents who should take care of them. The only thing they do is just to complete the support forms, but you can see that they are actually cheating because there is no evidence of support for individual learners and they would write the same comment for all learners. It is not possible that all learners can be supported the same, challenges are different. When you question them, they tell you about overcrowding in classes. It's always excuse after excuse. (P-C)

One is ignorance. Two is to lack passion. Another one is that some of the people are uh! Are not human enough and not because of the situation that he or she finds himself in at work place. Sometimes it is something that is within you... It is something that is deep rooted within you... It is somebody who just accepts things as they are. He or she doesn't want to see himself being a role player or maybe a solution in a certain situation. They sometimes use to say 'there is nothing I can do. I cannot solve the situation that I have found being there some years ago.' Most do provide pastoral care but some teachers choose not to do it and when we engage them, they tell us about the workload. The principal tried to instil that spirit of caring to them but they say they are not social workers. I think it is just a matter of a negative attitude. Some people are just angry and bitter and you would not even know what their problem is. (SBST-B)

I think it is two ways, some teachers feel pressurized by the work and performance and they feel that giving attention to one child takes their time. They say they have classes of more than 65 to 70 learners, so you cannot ignore the whole class for just one learner. In case those learners hurt one another while you are out, you will be held accountable still. We end up neglecting the core business of the school which is to teach but when you fail as a school, no one remembers the burden that

you were carrying during the year. Again, when do you do that pastoral care because you have to be teaching at that time? When submissions are needed, the department officials forget that you also had to do pastoral care for these learners... We don't have remedial classes which means we have to also assist learners who are slow in learning. I believe schools need people who will focus on vulnerable learners while teachers focus on teaching. (DP-A)

I think they do not see it as part of their work as educators and again we do not force them because obviously you cannot force a person to care if they do not want to especially because the policy does not like force it on anyone... The other problem is that this issue of pastoral care was not part of our training when we were trained to be teachers so some teachers feel it is not their duty because still, they do not have the knowledge and skills to do that. Some teachers would even tell you that I am here to teach, I am not a social worker. (SBST-C)

Parental involvement and interference was also raised as a hindrance to educators performing pastoral care and this is what the participants said in that regard:

Some is because... due to this parental involvement, some educators end up throwing in a towel that I have been calling the parents and they do not pitch up. So, why should I bother myself now because I wanted to make them aware of this problem and maybe to talk to each other so that we can discuss how can we help. So, I think that is the main problem. So, they become demotivated. (SBST-D)

Some participants responded that educators also had stress which hinders them from performing pastoral care for vulnerable learners:

It's a pity that some teachers, I believe they joined teaching profession because they could not afford to follow other professions or maybe they did not have any option... All that they are here for is just the money. They yell and the learners, they don't even walk an extra mile to assist the learners even if the learner can cry to them. But I have also realized that most of these teachers have their own stress and they feel that these learners are adding to their stress. I say so because they would just isolate themselves from us... (DP-B)

The findings in this theme suggested that educators do not have knowledge and skills to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners which seemed to affect their confidence in

performing the pastoral care role. It is also presumed that teacher training institutions do not train student-teachers on pastoral care provision. Although the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) instructs educators to perform the pastoral care role, it appeared the Department of Education had not resourced schools or put systems in place to ensure that schools and educators executed pastoral care effectively to enhance the well-being of learners.

The document analysis gave the impression that schools did not have school psychologists and that there was no time allocated for educators to perform pastoral role and their workload was extensive. Over and above the perceived personal stress that educators had, the findings also insinuated that educators also had stress emanating from working conditions and performance pressure. The findings also revealed that most parents do not support their children's education which seemingly demotivated some educators from providing pastoral care. The findings also implied that pastoral care was not infused in the job description of the educators; hence some educators saw it as an extra job that derailed them from doing the job they are appointed for.

4.4. Summary of the chapter

This chapter focused on the research findings based on the question of how primary school educators managed the needs of vulnerable learners. In this chapter, the researcher explored the participants' understanding of Ubuntu and pastoral care, the pastoral care needs of learners and how educators provided for such needs, as well as the factors that affected the provision of pastoral care in schools. Educators in this study highlighted that Ubuntu and pastoral care are intertwined. Although most educators are eager to provide pastoral care, they are not trained to perform the role considering the challenges embedded in their normal core duty of teaching. Overcrowding and high workload were mentioned as some of the factors that negatively affect their pastoral care provision.

The following chapter will discuss the research findings as they compared with the literature review.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research findings and the interpretation thereof. This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the literature on the topic. The researcher also reviews the theory that underpins this study and links it with the research themes. The contribution made from this study in terms of knowledge and practice is also presented.

5.2. Research questions

Main question:

How do primary school educators manage the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?

Sub-questions:

- How do educators understand the concept pastoral care as a value of Ubuntu?
- How do educators identify the needs of vulnerable learners?
- How do educators describe what they do in providing pastoral care?
- What are the factors influencing educators' ability to provide pastoral care?

5.3. Discussion of research findings

5.3.1 Conceptualisation of Ubuntu, pastoral care, and the relationship between the two concepts

This question explored the participants' understanding of pastoral care and Ubuntu and how the two concepts relate. The findings highlighted that Ubuntu is an essential element in schools needed to address the needs of vulnerable learners. This finding is in line with Tutu (2007) who states that the spirit of Ubuntu should always be upheld in schools so as to ensure that all learners, especially vulnerable learners, feel safe, protected and loved.

The study also reported that the need for schools to embrace the spirit of Ubuntu is a result of the high number of vulnerable learners in schools. Earlier studies by Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006), Parag (2009), and Andersen *et al.* (2014) also report that due to the challenging social circumstances that most learners face, the number of vulnerable learners is escalating and there is a gap in caring for their needs. The researcher in this study argues that maybe the number of vulnerable learners has increased in schools because the SASA (1996) dictates that children of school-going age should be in schools. Another reason for schools having high number of vulnerable learners might be that schools are seen as the only place where the children can get free meals and possibly love and support from educators.

The participants in this study suggested that learners' vulnerability emanates from poverty and parental neglect. This finding is consistent with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2009) and Clarke (2008) who report that most vulnerable learners' well-being is threatened by poverty, abandonment or neglect. Vulnerable learners depend on schools, and in particular on educators, to practice Ubuntu and provide them with the love and support that they miss from their homes. This finding supports evidence from studies by Mohlakwana (2013), Diale *et al.* (2014), and Arora *et al.* (2015) who find that most vulnerable learners have physical, psychological and sociological needs that are not met at their homes. The view of the researcher in this study is that most parents and caregivers are not present in the lives of most vulnerable learners; probably because they work far from their homes or they spend a lot of time searching for the means to fend for their families and thus have little time to fulfil the needs of their children. Another reason for unmet vulnerable learners' needs is that some learners stay in child-headed households and other stay with caregivers who do not care about their well-being.

The findings of this study also showed that Ubuntu is a feeling that is inherent in all human beings and is expressed through care and support for the person in need. A similar finding was reported by Tutu (2007) who states that Ubuntu is an inborn feeling that means people have a natural sympathy for others. The participants in this study also indicated that not all educators act on the Ubuntu drive within them, and some do not care about the vulnerable learners and their needs. While the researcher agrees that Ubuntu is inherent in all human beings, she concurs that there are educators who choose not to take action or are unable to help vulnerable learners. Perhaps such educators do not have confidence in themselves or maybe they are overwhelmed by the needs that the vulnerable learners have, or they do not believe in the spirit of Ubuntu in relation to providing pastoral care.

The findings in this study aligned with and are supported by the evidence by Hearn *et al.* (2006), Mohlakwana (2013) and Phuthi (2014) in that pastoral care is understood as an action that is taken by individuals to provide for the needs of other people. In the context of this study, the findings described pastoral care as actions of care and support that were taken by educators to provide for the holistic needs of vulnerable learners while also developing their resistance to cope with future challenges.

MIET (2010), UNICEF (2009) and Ogina (2007) describe schools as Centres of Care and Support where all learners should feel cared for and supported because educators may be the only adults that vulnerable learners depend on for care and support. Consistent with the findings by Best (2007) and Russell (2007), the findings of this study showed that pastoral care has now become an integral part of any educator's duty. The researcher is of the view that due to parental 'absenteeism', most vulnerable learners are not well prepared and empowered to handle their own life challenges and educators are better positioned to close this gap. This implies that teaching and pastoral care have become inseparable because educators are expected to provide pastoral care while teaching. In this study, the researcher incorporated Ubuntu as the driving force behind the provision of pastoral care. It also means that educators need to be versatile enough to be able to apply Ubuntu principles as they perform the roles of teacher and pastoral caregiver at the same time.

In line with the Norms and Standards (2000) and Values in Education (2000) which highlight the need for educators to be in *loco parentis* and provide love and support for all learners, the findings in this study highlighted compassion, sharing, nurturing, parenting and openness as the most prominent principles of pastoral care. The findings of this study expressed that educators should be committed to building a caring relationship with learners and put the needs of the vulnerable learners at the centre of their daily duties. This finding speaks to Nodding's theory of caring (1984) which is about caring relationships. The researcher is of the opinion that this finding aligns with the Children's Act which states that everything pertaining to children should be done in the interests of the children. The researcher also argues that 'parenting' is a virtue that is encapsulated in the duties of educators and the two roles are inseparable. While the researcher acknowledges the need for educators to perform the two roles, this expectation may be detrimental because one role may suffer at the expense of the other.

The researcher argues that different people have different understandings of the relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care. This view is supported by the findings that assumed two perspectives on the relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care. One perception was that

Ubuntu and pastoral care are similar, and the other perception was that while Ubuntu and pastoral care are different concepts, they are interrelated. The former perspective is in line with Owens and Ennis (2012), Naicker (2015), and Nodding's theory of caring (1984) which put care at the heart of both Ubuntu and pastoral care. The researcher reasons that the participants who perceive Ubuntu and pastoral care as similar see care as the defining action that is common in both Ubuntu and pastoral care. Therefore, care is seen as a thread that runs through the two concepts.

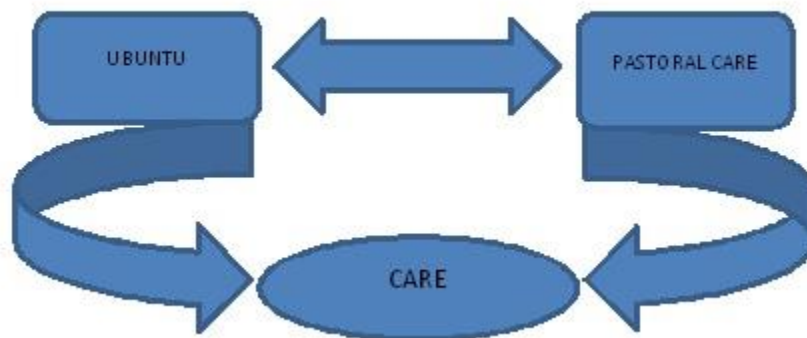


Figure 5-1: Ubuntu and pastoral care as similar concepts

The second perspective suggested that Ubuntu is an inner feeling that drives a person to perform pastoral care. Hence pastoral care is seen as a consequential effect of Ubuntu. Consistent with the literature by Tutu (2007) and Lefa (2015), this finding proposed that Ubuntu is an inherent value and pastoral care was the action that was evident of the existence of Ubuntu, as underpinned by the principles of humanity, support, care and compassion. To the researcher, it appears that the second perspective assumes that because all educators have Ubuntu in them, they will automatically perform pastoral care. This mindset is not correct in that although all educators have Ubuntu, as mentioned by Tutu (2007), some educators might not be motivated or be able to perform pastoral care.

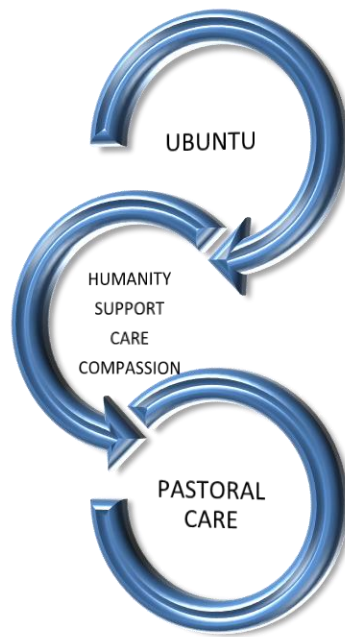


Figure 5-2: Pastoral care as a consequential effect of Ubuntu

5.3.2 Pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners

This theme discusses how educators identify the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners. The theme examined how the participants perceive the needs of vulnerable learners and how they identify vulnerable learners in terms of physical appearance, academic performance, and learner behaviour.

It is widely recognised that the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners are both physical and non-physical, tangible and intangible. In line with the findings by Skinner *et al.* (2006), Murphy (2011), and McKinley *et al.* (2009), the findings in this study showed that most vulnerable learners' needs are material/physical, emotional/psychological, spiritual and special education needs. Most of the vulnerable learners' homes were dysfunctional and most of these learners were neglected and abused physically, emotionally and financially, and they did not receive adequate care and love from their parents or caregivers (Molefe, 2007; Hlalele, 2012). This study affirms the literature from previous studies that most vulnerable learners stay in informal settlements which seem to be impoverished with high rates of unemployment. The needs of vulnerable children identified include emotional, spiritual and academic; and the most prominent needs were food and clothing.

The researcher in this study is of the view that due to the poor psycho-social circumstances in the vulnerable learners' homes, most parents and caregivers are overwhelmed by the situation and maybe focus on how to provide for the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter only, neglecting the intangible emotional and psychosocial needs of their children. In line with the findings by Mwoma and Pillay (2015), the findings in this study suggested that the psycho-social factors could either undermine or enhance the individual's self-esteem and motivation. The view of the researcher in this study is that the gap created by not meeting the basic needs of vulnerable learners may have an influence on their behaviour, self-esteem, and motivation to reach the self-actualisation level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs and self-worth. This could be because these learners might feel inferior, helpless and hopeless about their present and future lives.

This study also reported that some learners stay in child-headed households and those children seem to struggle to fend and care for each other. It also appeared from this study that some of the vulnerable learners' caregivers receive child support grants on their behalf but use them for their own benefit while vulnerable learners' needs are neglected. These findings support Ogina (2007) and Skinner *et al.* (2006) who find that in an attempt to eradicate poverty, the South African government issues child support grants for children who are vulnerable. However, the participants in this study stated that some parents and caregivers misuse the child support grant at the expense of the vulnerable children. The researcher argues that the child support grant may be misused because there might be no other income in the household which leaves parents and caregivers with no option but to use the grant to satisfy other personal needs. It is also possible that there is a lack of accountability measures from the Department of Social Welfare to ensure that the funds are spent as intended.

Research by Phuthi (2014), Mohlakwana (2013), and Mwoma and Pillay (2015) allude to the fact that most educators identify vulnerable learners based on their physical appearance, academic performance, and behaviour (discipline or emotional). The findings affirmed the literature by Molefe (2007), Beyers and Hay (2011), and Ntaote (2011) who report that most of the vulnerable learners perform poorly and are disruptive at school and so most educators classify learners who are not well dressed, learners who do not perform well, and learners who are either withdrawn or disruptive, as vulnerable learners. The participants in this study also identified improper and/or dirty school uniforms, poor performance, and 'unusual' conduct as signs of vulnerability. It could be that due to their adverse situation, most vulnerable learners cannot concentrate in class, they regularly absent themselves from school, and they steal from other learners so that they can obtain food.

However, Ogina (2007) attests that the perception that all vulnerable learners are destitute, withdrawn, perform poorly, or are ill-disciplined is not correct. The view of the researcher in this study is that there might be other learners who are not vulnerable but still present themselves in that manner. There might also be temporary factors that affect learners causing them to misbehave at school despite that fact that they are not vulnerable learners.

Furthermore, the researcher's opinion is that most educators fail to understand the psychological distress that vulnerable learners experience and how it affects their lives; hence they perceive them as 'attention-seekers'. In other studies, Molefe (2007) and Diale *et al.* (2014) also find that most educators struggle to identify learners with emotional, psychological, and special educational needs. This literature is supported by the findings in this study which revealed that the emotional, psychological, and special educational needs of vulnerable learners were often neglected because most educators did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to identify such needs. The researcher is of the opinion that educators do not have the skills to identify the non-physical needs of vulnerable learners because they have not been trained to do so.

5.3.3 Educators' provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners

This theme investigated how educators provide for the needs of vulnerable learners with attention to their responsibility, the support provided within the school and by external structures, as well as the functionality of the School Based Support Teams.

In line with the theory of Right Action by Metz (2011), the researcher is of the opinion that most educators acknowledge pastoral care as reflected in the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) as their duty. De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek (2007), Drewery (2007), and Mohammed *et al.* (2014) also report that educators are in *loco parentis* and they assume the role of parents when learners are at school. This role sets the grounds of providing pastoral care. This study investigated the educators' provision of pastoral care at four levels; namely, the class teacher, the SBST coordinator, the deputy principals, and the principals, and the findings from all participants substantiated what has been reported by other researchers. All participants had a similar perception of Ubuntu and pastoral care practices in their schools.

The findings in this study signified that class teachers play a critical role in filling the gap of 'absent' parents. Such findings were also reported by Molefe (2007) and Phuthi (2014) who affirm that most vulnerable learners look up to their class teachers as their parents. The findings of the current study showed that as the educators provide for the needs of

vulnerable learners, some educators even 'adopted' them and encouraged business sectors and communities to provide food and clothes for the children. This finding aligns with the Hindu Vedic statement by Warrier (1953), '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', which means 'The world is my family.' The researcher agrees with this Vedic statement in that 'it takes a village to raise a child' and the entire school community, including external support structures, and all must join hands to ensure the well-being of every learner. The findings also revealed that due to the love and care that are integral to Ubuntu, such class teachers went all out to establish a good relationship with the vulnerable learners which promoted open communication and trust so that they could help vulnerable learners. This finding is consistent with the findings by Loots and Mnguni (2007) and Hlalele (2012) who find that educators who are friendlier to learners become more approachable and it also becomes easier for these educators to identify 'unusual' conduct which might be signs of vulnerability in the learners.

The Bildung theory by Humboldt (1793) and Nodding's (1984) theory on the ethics of care also concur in terms of the importance of interpersonal relationships in providing care, and these authors further mention that interconnectedness between the learners and educators enhances the values of trust and openness and learners feel that their experiences are acknowledged. Perhaps the vulnerable learners look up to the class teachers as their parents because they are not well cared for or loved in their homes and maybe the class teachers have demonstrated a caring relationship with them. Another possibility is that for learners who stay in child-headed households, there is no one to provide parental care and love for them and class teachers, as people who spend most of the time with them, are the only adults who show interest in their well-being.

This study also supports evidence from studies by De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek (2007), Phuthi (2014), and Calvert (2009) in that most educators provide for the material needs of vulnerable learners and they ignore, or are unable to provide for, their emotional/psychological and special educational needs. The researcher contends that most educators only focus on the material needs of vulnerable learners which are straight forward and easier to fulfil compared with emotional and psycho-social needs. In line with Calvert (2009), the findings also highlighted that most educators, including SBST and SMT members, lack knowledge and skills to deal with the non-physical needs of vulnerable learners because they had not been trained to provide counselling for learners in distress and remedial education for special educational needs. When faced with such learners, the findings support the evidence by Ogina (2007) that different educators employ different

approaches in their attempts to help emotionally and psychologically distressed learners, as well as learners with special educational needs.

In this study, some educators tried to provide counselling to learners while others just referred the learners to the SBSTs without any form of intervention. The researcher contends that the different approaches used by educators might cause tension between the staff members where some would feel that other educators just do not care and the 'burden' is left with them to deal with. Again, educators might feel demotivated because the SBST and SMT members seem not to be able to provide them with advice and support on issues relating to pastoral care. For more serious non-physical needs, or when the educators' intervention fails, the findings in this study confirmed the literature by Oleke *et al.* (2007) that due to a lack of skill, most schools rely on external structures such as 'sister' government departments, community structures, and the DBST for assistance. However, the external support was found not to be prompt and reliable. Maybe the support is not reliable because these external structures have many schools to service or they do not have enough skilled human resources to deal with the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners.

Although the findings, as supported by Diale *et al.* (2014) and Masango (2013), showed that SBST members had attended workshops, the SBSTs did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to be fully functional. It could be that the workshops were not effective because the duration was short to cover the entire scope or the content was not comprehensive to empower the attendees to deal with the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners in totality. Another possibility is that educators who attended the workshops did not have the passion and interest of providing pastoral care. The findings revealed that educators who were passionate and took an interest in the well-being of vulnerable learners performed pastoral care better than educators that lacked such interest. This finding was similar to the finding by Rulwa-Mnatwana, (2014), Stofile (2008) and Raymond (2012) who report that most educators learn to provide pastoral care on their own and they became better with experience.

Consistent to the findings by Parag (2009), the findings of this study showed that the general management of pastoral care in schools was not properly conducted and there was overlap of roles between the principal, the deputy principal, the SBST coordinator, and the class teacher. This could lead to role duplication, role conflict, or even role neglect. Such a situation, as revealed in this study, was possibly due to the lack of school policies and directives with regard to the implementation of pastoral care. To the researcher, this finding implied that roles are not clarified in terms of proper reporting, referral, and accountability at

the school level. The researcher also puts forward that another possible reason for educators not providing pastoral care as intended in the Norms and Standards (2000) might be because there is also no proper monitoring and support from the district office and schools are not held accountable for their actions or lack thereof. Perhaps the district officials also do not know how to support schools to provide pastoral care.

5.3.4 *Factors that influence the educators' ability to provide pastoral care*

This question examined both the positive and negative factors that influenced the educators' willingness and ability to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

While some educators do their best to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners, some do not even make an attempt to assist. The findings of this study identified that most educators who provided pastoral care were driven by the inherent Ubuntu and they performed these duties out of love, empathy, self-fulfilment, motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) and experience. This finding concurs with Ogina (2007) who also reports similar findings. Some educators are motivated by their culture, background, and religious beliefs to provide pastoral care. The researcher argues that most educators do not provide pastoral care in compliance with the legislation as stated in the Norms and Standards (2000); rather they perform pastoral care out of their own free will and possibly from believing in the Ubuntu spirit.

As educators perform pastoral care to vulnerable learners, they too become fulfilled as they see these learners succeeding in life. This view is in line with Bildung theory (Wilhelm von Humboldt, 1793) and Interdependence theory by Kelley and Thibaut (1978) which speak about mutual dependence. In this case both the educators and the vulnerable children obtain different types of fulfilment as a result of providing pastoral care. Mbiti's (1970) study states that educators need learners just as learners need educators; 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am'. Consistent with the research by Rulwa-Mnatwana (2014), the findings of this study reported that knowledge is another factor that enhanced the ability of educators to perform pastoral care. As they gain knowledge and experience on how to handle pastoral care matters, educators tended to be more keen and confident to support the vulnerable learners.

The reason why some educators do not provide pastoral care could be that they are overwhelmed by the high number of learners seeking pastoral care alongside teaching which is their 'core duty'. This finding is also reported by Andersen *et al.* (2014) and Smit and Fritz

(2008) who suggest that the multifaceted and complex range of socio-economic factors that warrant pastoral care, as well as the escalating number of needy learners, hinder educators from performing the proper pastoral care role which might render them feeling incompetent and demoralised. The researcher argues that the pastoral care role in its current form might create a 'lose-lose' situation because educators leave the majority of learners in class on their own while dealing with one learner who needs specialised pastoral care.

Another finding in this study resonated well with the reports by Raymond (2012), Parag (2009) and Rulwa-Mnatwana (2014) that over and above the educators' personal stress, most educators also had stress emanating from performance pressure and unrealistic working conditions such as workload and overcrowded classes. Ayers (2006) suggests that educators with reduced class sizes perform the pastoral care role better than those in overcrowded classes, which shows the effects of class size on performance. The researcher in this study asserts that the introduction of the seven roles of an educator, in particular the pastoral role, did not take into consideration the work of the educators and how the pastoral care role affected their functionality as teachers. From the findings of this study, it seemed as if pastoral care was not being accommodated in the school timetables and the educators' workload had not been revised in spite of the expectation to perform pastoral care.

This might imply that the education department does not acknowledge, or is not aware of, the strain on educators that goes with pastoral care provision, or the departmental officials do not take this role seriously. Moreover, the findings showed that while other schools have school based psychologists, these researched schools did not have such support. There was also no tangible reward for educators who performed the pastoral care role besides their teaching responsibilities, and this could have discouraged the educators from going the extra mile. This argument moves away from the principles of Ubuntu which is grounded on good will and does not demand compensation for reaching out to help others.

The findings also revealed that schools were not well equipped or resourced to deal with pastoral care. Studies by Rulwa-Mnatwana (2014), Stofile (2008), and Stofile *et al.* (2013) suggest that the Department of Education wrongfully assumes that the establishment of a policy automatically implies that the policy will be effectively implemented. These studies further report that the success of any policy rests on the capacity to implement it. Ogina (2007) also states that educating a child is a shared responsibility between the educator and the child's parent(s)/caregiver(s). The findings in this study supported the literature by Ogina (2007) whereby most educators are demotivated due to the perceived lack of parental

support. It could be that parents/caregivers do not understand their role or maybe they do not have time and/or interest to support their children's' education.

The researcher is of the opinion that the apparent expectation for educators to provide for both the pedagogic and non-pedagogical needs of vulnerable learners may result in negative consequences such as frustration, fatigue, and emotional burnout. Maybe the question that still needs to be asked is, is it practically possible for educators to take care of the pedagogical and non-pedagogical needs of learners, and if yes, how should they balance the two roles of teaching and providing pastoral care? Should educators just focus on teaching the learners and let other people worry about the rest?

5.4. Contribution of the study

This study contributes to an understanding of how primary school educators provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners. Schools are regarded as Centres of Care and Support where the principles of Ubuntu and pastoral care are upheld. This implies that schools should support the Ubuntu and pastoral care principles of care, love, compassion, and support for all learners. The researcher acknowledges that schools are second homes to learners; however, educators are not multi-skilled to perform their 'core duty' of teaching and provide pastoral care at the same time.

This expectation is problematic in that it might result in a 'lose-lose' situation wherein teaching and learning are compromised and vulnerable learners' needs are still not fully addressed considering that educators are not competent to handle the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners. Educators have been trained to teach and they do not have the expertise to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners. The alternative solution to this challenge is for educators to refer vulnerable learners to the SBSTs while they focus on teaching. However, the findings of this study revealed that the SBST did not have the necessary expertise to address the holistic needs of vulnerable learners. This is a policy implementation gap and oversight that is currently not being addressed by the Department of Education.

It also seemed that the educators' perception of vulnerability was only confined to physical needs and learners with special educational needs and the emotional and psycho-social needs were not considered. Educators are more able to identify physical needs because these needs are visible and easier to fulfil, but the emotional and psycho-social needs are 'hidden' and not easy to detect unless they are reported and so they remain unfulfilled. This

statement follows from the finding that educators do not know how to identify and provide for learners with emotional and psycho-social needs. The reality is that there are some learners who do not lack physical resources but are emotionally and psychologically vulnerable. Due to the limited perception of vulnerability, the needs of such learners may not be fulfilled.

The findings also pointed out that the SBSTs have sought help from the SMT but they could not get proper guidance and support. Maybe the SMTs did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide support on pastoral care needs, hence they relegated the whole responsibility to the SBSTs. When cases of emotional and psycho-social vulnerability are raised and referred to the SBSTs, the findings showed that the SBSTs act as 'conveyer belts' and they passed the lists to the DBST without first intervening to help those vulnerable learners.

The DBST was also found lacking in that they took much time before they intervened on referred cases. This could be because they lack manpower, do not consider the urgency of supporting the learners, or lack motivation. The other possible reason could be that no one holds the DBST accountable for their intervention in supporting vulnerable learners at schools. The possible solution to this challenge is for educators to be trained on pastoral care so that they can deal with minor cases while the educators serving in the SBST and SMTs receive advanced training so that they can provide intense support to vulnerable learners in the absence of the DBST. Furthermore, the workload for educators serving the SBST needs to be reduced to afford them time to deal with cases that are referred to them during teaching time. This will allow other educators time to focus on teaching while vulnerable learners are also being taken care of.

Educators are expected to teach learners and simultaneously take care of vulnerable learners' needs. This poses a problem in that educators will be forced to leave a full class in order to attend to one learner who has pastoral care needs. Thus, educators are in a dilemma due to conflicting roles of teaching and caring for vulnerable learners at the expense of neglecting the teaching and learning needs of non-vulnerable learners. Should learners who are left unsupervised become injured in the absence of the educator, the educator will be held accountable for the incident. At the same time, educators have an allocated work load to cover during a particular school period. The educator's focus on providing pastoral care in the absence of substitutes or other support teaching staff may put the educator at risk of not being able to cover the set learning objectives. Having to attend to a learner in need during teaching time will ultimately mean the educators will fall behind and

this is regarded as non-compliance with the Annual Teaching Plan and educators might be taken to task for non-compliance.

It seems the Department of Education did not consider the feasibility and practicability of the educators' pastoral care role when the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) were developed. The workload, work conditions, and skills of the educators were not taken into consideration which leaves the educators in a tight spot of having to choose between teaching and the pastoral care role. The solution to this challenge could be substitute teachers who will tend the class while the educators are providing pastoral care support. The Department of Education could also benchmark with other schools and allocate school-based psychologists or guidance and counselling educators either per school or per small cluster of schools and vulnerable learners could be referred to them without any interruption to teaching and learning.

Ubuntu is perceived as the force that drives educators to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners. Educators who provide pastoral care do so due to self-motivation, compassion, love, and humanity. These educators seem to be motivated by their background, beliefs, culture, and experience, and not for policy compliance. The findings from this study suggested that schools can heighten pastoral care provision to vulnerable learners by creating an environment that promotes the spirit of Ubuntu where the entire school community, including parents and learners, could be encouraged to respect and enhance the Ubuntu values of tolerance, love, care, and compassion for one another. This could be done through adopting a school vision and mission statement that highlights Ubuntu values and ensuring that the entire school community respects those values. By so doing, more educators would provide pastoral care freely without being coerced to do so by policy.

The researcher posits that most vulnerable learners are neglected and their parents and caregivers do not care much about their progress in life. Some parents work far from home and others only come home during weekends or holidays, which also leaves most learners vulnerable. For most parents, it seems there is an imbalance between providing for their children's holistic needs and their economic needs. Contrary to the traditional African principles of Ubuntu, there seems to be a shift in parental responsibility where most parents are driven by economic values rather than the intangible values such as care and love. Perhaps most parents prioritise economic values over non-economic values because of their lifestyle demands. This behaviour leaves the educators with no choice but to try to close the gap that the parents have created in the lives of the vulnerable learners.

The findings in this study suggested that there is no proper management of Ubuntu and pastoral care practices in schools. Although it appeared that schools work with external structures to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners, the support was not comprehensive, coherent, or structured. It also seemed as if the support provided was reactive rather than pro-active. This reactive haphazard kind of support could lead to duplication or conflict of roles between the structures. The other possibility is that such responsive support structures could focus on the same needs and neglect other needs that vulnerable learners have, as is so in this study where the physical needs were supported while the emotional and psycho-social needs were neglected. Proactive pastoral care support should have defined structures and well-defined roles. Such an approach should be rooted in the school culture that is grounded in Ubuntu principles – i.e. caring for others.

Apart from the above discussion, this study also provides a pastoral care model to streamline the support while ensuring that the holistic needs of learners are addressed in ways that speak to the core principles of Ubuntu.

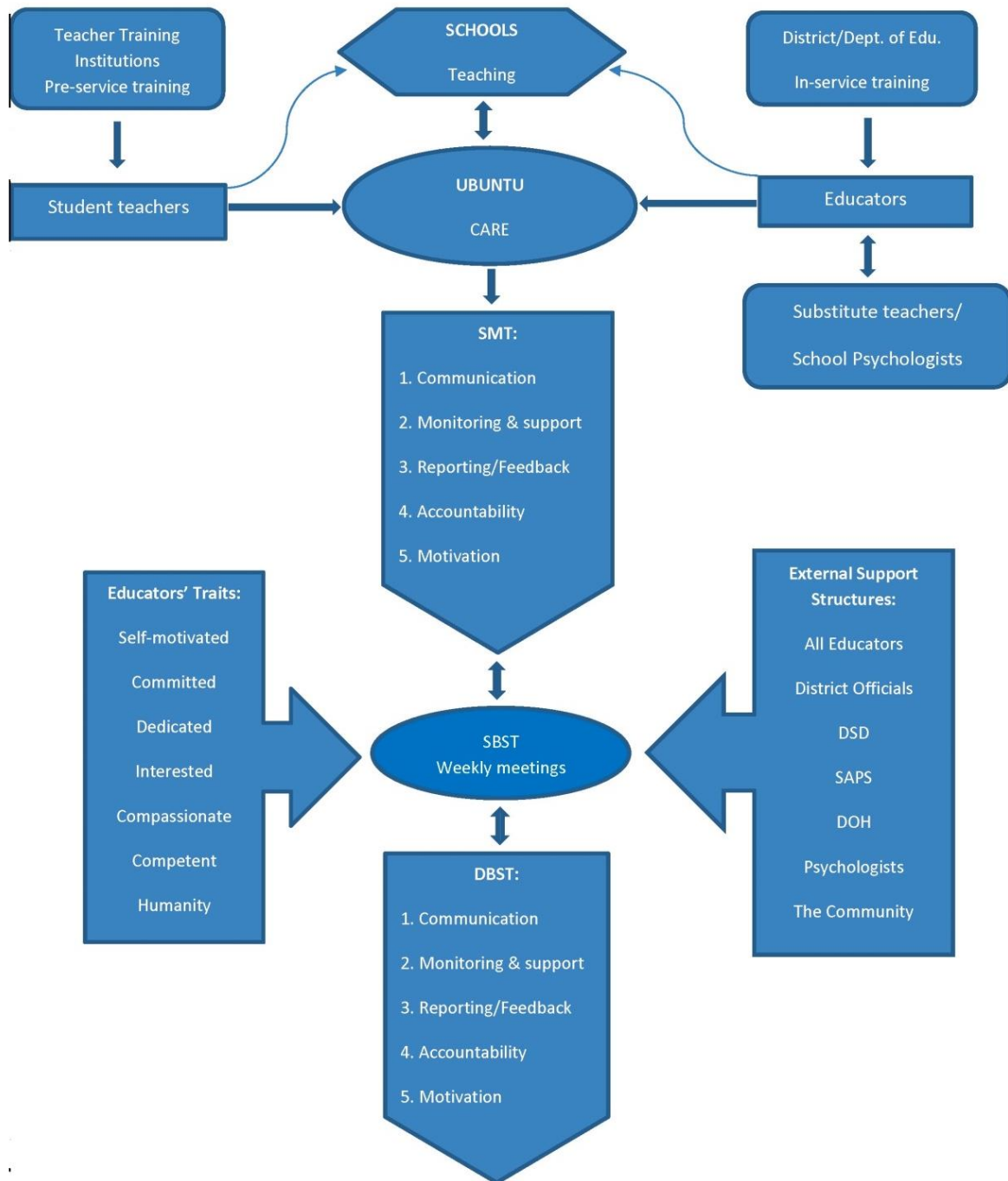


Figure 5-3: Proposed pastoral care model

The diagram above illustrates an approach to effective pastoral care provisioning in schools. This model suggests that educators and student teachers should be trained on pastoral care, founded on the principles of Ubuntu, in order to empower them to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners. As educators perform their roles of teaching and pastoral care, there should be substitute educators who continue with teaching while the educators are attending to vulnerable learners' needs.

Similarly, the Department of Education should appoint school psychologists to address the vulnerable learners' needs so that educators can continue to teach without any disruption. The SMT should provide guidance in terms of pastoral care operations in the school. The SMT should select committed and caring educators who enjoy working with vulnerable learners to serve on the SBST. There should be structured planned meetings between the external supporters, the DBST, and the SBST under the leadership of the SMT. The SMT should also provide motivation, monitoring, and support to the SBST and all other educators as they perform the pastoral care role and transgressors should be held accountable.

5.5. Summary of the chapter

This chapter discussed the research findings in relation to the literature review and the theories that underpin the study. The researcher highlighted new insight that most educators do not perform pastoral care role as a matter of policy compliance, rather they are driven by Ubuntu to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners. This study also presented a pastoral care model which includes proactive planning and strategies.

The following chapter presents the summary of the research finding, draws the conclusions of the study and makes recommendations.

CHAPTER 6. SUMMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher focused on the research findings and how they related to the literature review. Each finding was linked to the research question and the literature on the said finding was reviewed. This chapter presents a reflection of the research journey and a summary of the research findings. The limitations and the delimitations of the study are also discussed. Thereafter, the researcher draws conclusions and posits recommendations based on the research findings.

This study aimed at gathering information about the educators' practices in managing the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners. The rationale of this study proved to be relevant and most participants could relate to it because they deal with vulnerable learners on a daily basis. Although the questions and time for the interviews were approved prior to the study, a pilot study assisted the researcher to better plan time for interviews and how to ask prompting question that provided relevant data. A sample of purposively selected educators were interviewed. Although the researcher in this study made appointments with the participants, some were not available at the set times which led to re-scheduling of appointments. During interviews, the participants were relaxed and were free to share their experiences. Some participants became emotional during the interviews and the researcher in this study had to stop the interview for some time so that the participants can calm themselves. This affected the timing but learning from the pilot study, the researcher was aware of such possibilities and had budgeted extra time per participant. Document analysis was very helpful as it clarified and corroborated what was said during the interviews. Gaps from interviews were also filled by data from document analysis.

The choice of the researcher to use a qualitative approach enabled the participants to share their views, feelings and experiences on the topic thereby providing rich-information data. Some participants were so passionate with the topic and responded to questions that were still to follow which could have affected data analysis. These participants were not stopped but while transcribing the tape-recorded data, the researcher was able to place the responses according to different questions. Ubuntu as a theoretical framework proved to be relevant because it aligned with the main finding of the study that most educators are driven by Ubuntu to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners.

6.2. Summary of the research findings

This section highlights the findings and the answers to each of the research questions based on the responses of the participants. This includes the understanding of how the participants perceived the concepts of Ubuntu and pastoral care, the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners, and how educators provided for those needs as well as enhancers and hindrances to educators' pastoral care provisioning.

6.2.1 *Conceptualisation of Ubuntu, pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts*

This section addresses the finding of the study in relation to the question that looked into the understanding of the participants of the concepts Ubuntu and pastoral care and how the two concepts relate in a school environment. The participants in this study perceived Ubuntu and pastoral care as interrelated. The educators who took part in this study understood Ubuntu as a feeling that a person has inherently and it manifests through pastoral care. The participants understood that as educators perform the role of pastoral care to meet the needs of vulnerable learners, it is Ubuntu in action.

The key principles of Ubuntu and pastoral care, as highlighted in the findings, are humanity, care, support, and compassion and these principles need to be demonstrated in all schools. The educators in this study highlighted Ubuntu and pastoral care as crucial fundamentals in the school because most vulnerable learners' needs are not met at their homes and thus schools remain their only hope to address their needs holistically. The participants understood schools as Centres of Care and Support where Ubuntu and pastoral care are upheld and all learners feel safe, loved, cared for, and supported.

With the high number of vulnerable learners in schools, the participants in this study believed that teaching should incorporate counselling.

6.2.2 *The pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners*

The finding in this section discusses the question that explored the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners from the educators' perspective and how the educators identified such needs. The participants classified the needs of vulnerable learners as physical and the non-physical needs. To them, the physical needs are mainly food and clothing, and non-physical needs include emotional, psychological, spiritual, and special educational needs.

Central to vulnerable learners' needs is a lack of care. The findings revealed that there is a parental gap in the lives of many of the vulnerable learners and most of them were deprived of their fundamental rights of care, protection, love, and support as indicated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Apparently, some parents and caregivers claimed ignorance of the needs of vulnerable learners and some did not seem to care about their lives and futures, which gives the impression that these learners are neglected and not cared for. The findings showed that vulnerable learners were mainly identified based on physical appearance, academic performance, and conduct. This way of vulnerable learners' identification appears to be 'obvious' and easy to see. On the other hand, the findings revealed that most educators are not competent enough to identify and address the non-physical needs of these learners unless these learners disclose their situation and challenges to them voluntarily.

6.2.3 *The pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners*

This section addresses the findings relating to the question that dealt with the provision of pastoral care in schools by examining the responsibilities of the class teachers, SBST coordinators, deputy principals, and principals. The question further aimed to explore how schools support vulnerable learners as well as the functionality of the SBSTs. In their endeavour to provide pastoral care, most educators worked jointly with external structures to provide for the vulnerable learners' material needs and neglected the emotional/psychological and special educational needs. Most educators, SBSTs, and SMTs did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with the non-physical needs of vulnerable learners because they had not been trained on holistic pastoral care provisioning. As the need arises, some educators tried to provide emotional and special education needs support, while others just referred them to the SBSTs.

Furthermore, educators at different levels did not understand their roles, which then lead to conflicting roles. The findings showed that pastoral care support in most schools is not structured and uniform. While the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) prescribe the performance of the pastoral care role by educators, it seems the policy has disregarded the critical specifics to ensuring proper implementation of the policy, such as who should do what, how and when. The policy also falls short of outlining the resources and skills that are needed to ensure the effective implementation of the pastoral care role.

Due to a lack of knowledge and skills, most schools depend on other departments, such as the Department of Social Development for social issues and child support grants, the SAPS

for cases of physical abuse and drugs, and the Department of Health for medical issues. The findings revealed that although social workers try to provide counselling for learners who are emotionally distressed, like the educators, they also had limitations because they are not trained counsellors. As a result, the social workers also struggled in supporting emotionally distressed learners. The only support structure with counselling expertise is the DBST. However, the findings attested that the DBST takes a long time before they can attend to referred cases and they do not promptly honour the schools' invitation for them to intervene. This reluctance by the DBST to intervene compromises vulnerable learners' turn-around time for support and some learners are left despondent.

6.2.4 *Educators' provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners*

The findings in this section discuss the question that highlighted the enhancers and hindrances to the educators' provision of pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The factors that the participants identified as enhancers to pastoral care included motivation, empathy, self-fulfilment and knowledge, but the main driver was specified as Ubuntu. Educators who took part in the study stated that they provided pastoral care out of free will rather than compliance with policy.

For educators who did not provide pastoral care, the identified hindrances were the overwhelming need for pastoral care, working conditions, workload, and overcrowding. Although some educators wanted to assist vulnerable learners, the participants mentioned that they did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners. The participants in this study also indicated that they were demotivated to provide pastoral support because they did not get adequate guidance and support from the SBSTs and SMTs. The findings also indicated that most parents/caregivers did not seem to play their part in supporting the education of their children.

Educators also felt that pastoral care derails their normal teaching because it often has to be done at the same time as class teaching.

Schools could employ substitute educators to tend classes while educators are helping vulnerable learners, or the Department can appoint school psychologists to relieve educators of the pastoral care function. Another hindrance is personal and work/performance stress because it seemed the departmental officials did not acknowledge the effort and time that goes with pastoral care provision. As a result, pastoral care is sometimes perceived as a

burden for which they are not rewarded for through lesser workload or higher scores during the IQMS processes.

Ubuntu and pastoral values need to be embraced in schools where principles of care, love, compassion and support are promoted. The researcher suggests that the educators' perception of pastoral care is not holistic and the psycho-social needs are often not considered. The researcher is of the view that educators neglect the emotional and psycho-social needs because they are 'hidden' and without expertise, it is difficult to identify them. Instead of addressing the emotional and psycho-social needs, the SBSTs act as 'conveyer belts' and they pass over the lists to the DBST without intervention.

The DBST was also found to be taking a long time to address referred cases of a psycho-social nature, probably because they possibly lack manpower or motivation. A possible solution could be that the SBST members should be well trained to alleviate the influx of cases that are referred to the DBST. The other solution could be that the workload of the SBST members should be reduced to give them time to handle the pastoral care issues that are referred to them. The expectation for educators to perform the two roles of teaching and providing pastoral care renders the policy unrealistic and superficial because educators cannot perform both roles at the same time. The workload, work conditions, and skills of the educators were not well considered which then leaves the educators in a tight spot of having to choose between teaching and the pastoral care roles. The possible solution to this challenge is for educators to refer vulnerable learners to well-trained SBSTs or to the appointed school psychologist while they focus on teaching. Another option could be the appointment of substitute educators who will tend classes when other educators are supporting vulnerable learners.

The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) specify the educators' pastoral care role but it does not clarify the roles of different educators and the reporting lines. The policy seems not to be mandatory and officials appear not to enforce compliance; which leaves room for the educator to decide whether to perform the role or not, depending on their own idea of Ubuntu. Most educators do not provide pastoral care for policy compliance; rather they are driven by Ubuntu-based principles of self-motivation, compassion, love and humanity to support vulnerable learners. These educators act in *loco parentis*, probably because most vulnerable learners are neglected by their own parents. Parents could be neglecting their children because they are influenced by their life style and their desire for economic stability in that they end up creating an imbalance between providing for their children's holistic needs and the economic needs.

Contrary to Ubuntu principles, there seems to be a shift in parental responsibility where most parents are driven by the economic values, rather than the intangible values such as care and love. External structures are invited by schools to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners but the support is not comprehensive, coherent, or structured. It also seems as if the support provided is reactive rather than pro-active. Perhaps the support is not structured because the policy does not provide clear guidelines on the holistic pastoral care support and schools fail to give direction to streamline the support. This haphazard kind of support could lead to duplication or conflict of roles between the structures.

The other possibility is that support structures could focus on the same need and neglect other needs that vulnerable learners have, as is so in this study where the physical needs were supported while the emotional and psycho-social needs were neglected. The support could also be directed by the expertise and limitations of the support structures. This study provides a pastoral care model to streamline and regulate the support while ensuring that the holistic needs of learners are addressed.

6.3. Limitations of the study

Like any other research, there are inherent limitations that affect the quality of the findings of the study. One of the discernible limitations of this study was the research site, which was confined to schools in the Soshanguve township area, in the Tshwane North district office of the Gauteng province. The choice of this sample was informed by the topic which directed the researcher to explore pastoral provisioning in schools of similar contexts and the learners who experience similar challenges. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be relevant to other schools and areas and cannot be generalised. In order to cover a broader spectrum and ensure generalisability of findings, a researcher could select a sample across all schools, not just township schools.

The study only focused on the educators and the views of the learners were not explored as guided by the topic under study. This limited the claim of representativeness because the learners' views and experiences could have shed more light on the impact of the pastoral care support provided by educators and it could also have enhanced the quality of the findings. However, the document analysis provided a picture of the support that educators provide to vulnerable learners and if there was any notable progress after the educators' intervention. This limitation could be avoided in future by broadening the research topic to also include learners.

Observation as a data collection method could have enhanced the reliability of the data because people are then observed in action. However, the researcher could not use this method because the Department of Education only approved the research to be conducted after school so as to avoid disruption of teaching and learning. To heighten data credibility, the researcher corroborated data from interviews with document analysis. This limitation can be avoided if a researcher could state what will be observed and what means the researcher would take not to disrupt the smooth running of the school.

6.4. Delimitation of the study

Considering the time frames and the scope of the research, the researcher only sampled educators who were directly involved with providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners. However, targeting only the educators who deal with vulnerable learners in the study gave skewed results as other educators' opinions and experiences were left out. Other educators' views could have provided deeper insight on the topic and also affirmed the findings.

The literature on policy development and learners' experiences of pastoral care support was not reviewed because this research study was only interested on the practices and experiences of educators as they perform the pastoral care role in schools.

Instead of a quantitative approach, this study adopted a qualitative approach which enabled the researcher to elicit rich descriptive data which allowed the participants to share their emotions and feelings. Rather than other data collection instruments such as questionnaires, the interview as an instrument to collect data also enabled the participants to freely express their experiences and practices and this was corroborated with a document analysis. There could be other contextual factors which influenced educators' responses or lack of responses to the topic under study which were not explored in this study.

6.5. Suggestions for future research

This study suggests that schools need a comprehensive, coherent, and structured approach which ropes in expertise from educators, district officials, sister government departments, and community structures in providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Due to the pervasive need for pastoral care in schools for vulnerable learners, it appears that the education system needs educators who are multi-skilled to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners without compromising their 'core duty' of teaching. The pastoral care role seems to have implications for the educators' workload and working conditions. However, it

is not clear how educators can balance the two roles considering the demands needed for each role.

Future research could also focus on the role of the SBSTs on issues of non-physical needs. Research could also investigate how educators and student teachers can be trained to perform pastoral care effectively. The findings showed that most SBSTs mainly focus on material support and neglect emotional/psychological and special educational needs. The reason noted for this in this research is that most educators, including the SBSTs, are not well trained to deal with the non-physical needs of vulnerable learners.

Future research could also explore the role of the school management teams (SMTs) on the provisioning of pastoral care for vulnerable learners. The findings in this study revealed that the SMTs are not well trained to provide the necessary guidance and support on issues relating to pastoral care. This study did not research the views of learners on pastoral care provision in schools. Future research could investigate the experiences and views of learners and the impact of pastoral care in their lives.

6.6. Conclusion

There are two groups of educators when it comes to providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners. There are educators who provide pastoral care and those who do not. The findings revealed that the educators who provide pastoral care do it because they are driven by Ubuntu and not for policy compliance. They are mostly self-motivated and they rely on self-gained knowledge and skills to perform the role of pastoral care.

Educators who do not perform the pastoral care role feel that it is over-burdening and time-consuming; moreover, they do not have the knowledge and skills to perform this role. These educators raised issues of overcrowding and workload as some of the factors that hinder them from supporting vulnerable learners. They complained that the departmental officials put pressure on them to produce good results in spite of the time and work that they put in to support vulnerable learners.

It seems as if departmental officials do not acknowledge the enormous problems that educators are faced with when they have to teach and provide pastoral care at the same time. Furthermore, when educators ask for support, the SMT does not seem to know how to support them, and district officials do not respond promptly to requests for intervention which then leaves the schools in the lurch. The participants stated that the Department of

Education fell short in providing the necessary directive and resources when pastoral care was introduced. While the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) prescribe performance of the pastoral care role by educators, it seems the policy disregards the critical specifics to ensure implementation of the policy; such as who should do what, how and when. The policy also falls short in outlining the resources and skills that are needed to ensure the effective implementation of the pastoral care role. The solution to this challenge is for the Department of Education to provide schools with the necessary resources and skilled human resources to implement the policy.

6.7. Recommendations

- The researcher in this study proposes a multi-layered training approach. Teacher-training institutions should provide pre-service training for student educators on how to provide pastoral care to learners at school. The Department of Education, through the District Office, should provide in-service training for all educators on holistic pastoral care to fulfil the learners' needs. The SMTs' and SBSTs' training should be more advanced to enable them to deal with more serious cases and also provide guidance and support to other educators to be able to care for the vulnerable learners. All training, pre-service and in-service, should be geared towards ensuring that schools are empowered to identify vulnerable learners and provide pastoral care for them. The SMT should also develop a pastoral care policy to direct the operations of pastoral care provisioning.
- The principal should ensure that there is open and continuous communication between the SMT and the SBST regarding the support and care for vulnerable learners. The SMT should put in place systems for monitoring and support as well as two-way reporting and feedback. All educators should comply with the legislation regarding pastoral care, and the SMT should hold them accountable to perform as expected. At the same time, schools should continuously motivate the entire school community, including learners and parents, to uphold the spirit of Ubuntu where love, care, and support are always promoted.
- The SMT under the leadership of the principal should establish SBSTs composed of educators who are self-motivated, compassionate, committed, dedicated, and who have an interest in pastoral care. SBST members should be trained on SBST, including pastoral care provision instead of willy-nilly rotating SBST members annually. Schools should ensure that there are new members joining the SBST so that they can learn as others leave. Schools should invite outside experts to form part of the SBST.

- The SMT should ensure that there are weekly meetings held with external support structures, including the DBST, and meetings should be structured with a deliberate agenda to deal with vulnerable learners and their challenges. Meetings should be planned, and all stakeholders should have a schedule which they commit to. While there is a SBST coordinator, the chairperson of the SBST meetings should be the principal or deputy principal.
- The DBST should also provide monitoring and support while ensuring that there are open communication lines between the district office and the schools on issues affecting vulnerable learners. The DBST should also provide guidance and workshops; not just on completion of forms, but on the holistic approach to dealing with vulnerable learners. Reporting and feed-back between the schools and the district office should always be maintained. Schools which do not comply with the legislation on pastoral care should be held accountable by the district office.
- The Department of Education should revise the workload of educators serving in the SBST with the aim of reducing it while working on the introduction of school-based or cluster psychologists or guidance and counselling educators in all schools whose main focus will be to address the needs of the vulnerable learners.
- The Department of Education should revise the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) and provide clear guidelines on the application of the educators' pastoral care role as stated in the policy. The Department of Education should also provide schools with the necessary resources and skilled human resources to holistically provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Permission and Consent Letters



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

Ethics Committee

11 April 2018

Ms Mathapelo Sekhu

Dear Ms Sekhu

REFERENCE: EM 18/02/03

We received proof that you have met the conditions outlined. Your application is thus **approved**, and you may start with your fieldwork. The decision covers the entire research process, until completion of the study report, and not only the days that data will be collected. The approval is valid for two years for a Masters and three for Doctorate.

The approval by the Ethics Committee is subject to the following conditions being met:

1. The research will be conducted as stipulated on the application form submitted to the Ethics Committee with the supporting documents.
2. Proof of how you adhered to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) policy for research must be submitted where relevant.
3. In the event that the research protocol changed for whatever reason the Ethics Committee must be notified thereof by submitting an amendment to the application (Section E), together with all the supporting documentation that will be used for data collection namely; questionnaires, interview schedules and observation schedules, for further approval before data can be collected. Non-compliance implies that the Committee's approval is null and void. The changes may include the following but are not limited to:
 - Change of investigator,
 - Research methods any other aspect therefore and,
 - Participants.

The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education does not accept any liability for research misconduct, of whatsoever nature, committed by the researcher(s) in the implementation of the approved protocol.

Upon completion of your research you will need to submit the following documentations to the Ethics Committee for your

Clearance Certificate:

- Integrated Declaration Form (Form D08),
- Initial Ethics Approval letter and,
- Approval of Title.

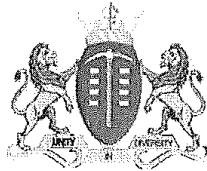
Please quote the reference number **EM 18/02/03** in any communication with the Ethics Committee.

Best wishes

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn
Chair: Ethics Committee
Faculty of Education

Room 3-3, Level 3, Building 10
University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20
Hatfield 0028, South Africa
Tel +27 (0)12 420 1234
Fax +27 (0)12 420 5656
Email marisa.jeask@up.ac.za
www.up.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Ifofapha la Yitho



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2


GDE AMENDED RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	03 May 2018
Validity of Research Approval:	05 February 2018 – 28 September 2018 2018/43
Name of Researcher:	Sekhu M.S.
Address of Researcher:	329 Phase 2 Lebanon Mabopane 0190
Telephone Number:	072 300 7288
Email address:	sugars.sekhu@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools
Type of qualification	PhD
Number and type of schools:	Five Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane North

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

 04/05/2018

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488


Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Ms Faith Tshabalala
CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 04/05/2018

Making education a societal priority

2

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

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Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za



Faculty of Education

Tshwane North District Office (TN) Permission Request

Tshwane North District Office
Gauteng Department of Education
WONDERBOOM JUNCTION

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I hereby wish to request permission to conduct a research at five primary schools in Tshwane North District Office, Gauteng province. I am currently a PhD student at the University of Pretoria and my supervisor is Dr. Teresa Ogina. The title to my research is: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools**. The research aims to explore the experiences and practices of educators on how they provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners under the auspices of Ubuntu.

Vulnerable learners in this context, refers to learners who may be emotionally distressed due to their family situations and lack of socio-economic support. Some research both locally and internationally has been done on this topic but this research hopes to explore educator pastoral

care role from Ubuntu perspective. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study may contribute towards closing a gap in literature and possibly develop an Ubuntu-based model on the provision of pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

Data collection will be through individual interviews on this topic. I hereby also request to use the school boardroom/HoD's office or principal's office to conduct the interview. The interview will be conducted after school so as not to interfere with school activities or teaching time and will not take longer than 60 minutes. The interview will be audio taped after obtaining consent from the participants and transcribed for analysis. I will also request your permission to analyse the documents that educators use to capture all activities pertaining to management of vulnerable learners' needs. The educators' participation is totally voluntary and they will not be harmed or put at risk for participating or refusing to participate. Only those who have consented will be interviewed and they may withdraw at any stage of the process should they wish to.

The interview transcripts and field notes from data analysis will only be accessed by myself and my supervisor and will be regarded as confidential and anonymous. The educators' identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know their identity as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. Schools will not be identified either. The information obtained will only be used for academic purposes in the form of a Doctoral thesis or presentations at conferences and seminars.

Collected data will be kept in my possession. Another set of data will be kept by my supervisor who will lock up the data for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the University's Education, Management and Policy Department according to the policy requirements. **All data collected with public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use.**

For any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below or via Email.

Name of student: Mathapelo Sugar Sekhu

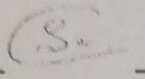
Name of Supervisor: Dr. Teresa Ogina

Contact student: 072 300 7288

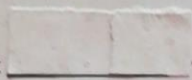
Contact supervisor: 072 128 9958

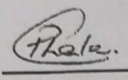
E-mail of student: sugars.sekhu@gmail.com

Email of supervisor: taogina@up.ac.za

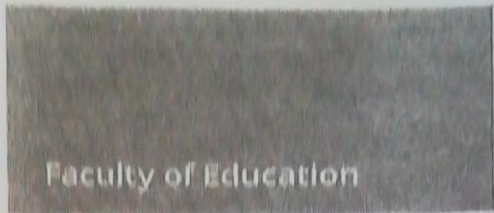
Signature of student: 

Permission granted / not granted (delete what is not applicable) by:

Name of TN official: 

Signature: 

Date: 16.05.2018



Permission Letter from SGB

I, _____ (your name), am the

Chairperson (your position in the SGB) hereby permit / do not permit

(*delete what is not applicable*) the researcher to conduct the research project titled: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools** in the school. I also permit / do not permit (*delete what is not applicable*) that the school premises be used for the interview and permit / do not permit (*delete what is not applicable*) that the school documents pertaining to management of vulnerable learners be copied and analysed for this research. I understand the purpose of this research and the intentions thereto. I also understand that the interview will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. I understand that the interview will be audio taped.

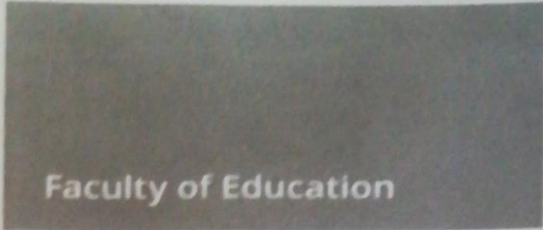
I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research - the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent* - the research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation* - the respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g. the respondents will not be panalised or victimized in any way.

- *Privacy - confidentiality and anonymity* of respondents and the school should be protected at all times.
- *Trust* - respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: Phiri

Date: 21.05.2018.



Principal Consent form

I, _____ (your name), ~~agree~~ / ~~do not agree~~ (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools**. I understand the purpose of this research and the intentions thereto. I also understand that I will be interviewed on this topic for approximately 45 minutes at a venue and time that will suit me but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. I understand that the interview will be audio taped. I also understand that my documents and records pertaining to how I manage vulnerable learners and their needs as well as how I support the SBST will be copied and analysed by the researcher.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research - the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent* - the research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation* - the respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g. the respondents will not be panalised or victimized in any way.
- *Privacy - confidentiality and anonymity* of respondents and the school should be protected at all times.
- *Trust* - respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____

Date: 22 May 2018



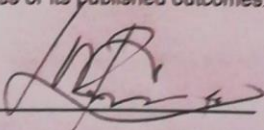
Faculty of Education

SBST coordinator Consent form

I, _____ (your name), ~~do not agree~~ agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools**. I understand the purpose of this research and the intentions thereto. I also understand that I will be interviewed on this topic for approximately 45 minutes at a venue and time that will suit me but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. I understand that the interview will be audio taped. I also understand that my documents and records pertaining to how I manage vulnerable learners and their needs as well as how I support the class educator and HoD on referred cases will be copied and analysed by the researcher.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research - the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent* - the research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation* - the respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g. the respondents will not be panalised or victimized in any way.
- *Privacy - confidentiality and anonymity* of respondents and the school should be protected at all times.
- *Trust* - respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: 

Date: 22.05.2018



Faculty of Education

SMT member Consent form

I, _____ (your name), agree / ~~do not agree~~ (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools**. I understand the purpose of this research and the intentions thereto. I also understand that I will be interviewed on this topic for approximately 45 minutes at a venue and time that will suit me but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. I understand that the interview will be audio taped. I also understand that my documents and records pertaining to how I manage vulnerable learners and their needs as well as my support for the class educator on referred cases will be copied and analyzed by the researcher.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation in research* - the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent* - the research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation* - the respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g. the respondents will not be panelized or victimized in any way.
- *Privacy - confidentiality and anonymity* of respondents and the school should be protected at all times.
- *Trust* - respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

22/05/2018



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

Educator Consent form

I, _____ (your name), ~~agree / do not agree~~ (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: **Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools**. I understand the purpose of this research and the intentions thereto. I also understand that I will be interviewed on this topic for approximately 60 minutes at a venue and time that will suit me but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. I understand that the interview will be audio taped. I also understand that my documents and records pertaining to how I manage vulnerable learners and their needs will be copied and analyzed by the researcher.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research - the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent* - the research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation* - the respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g. the respondents will not be panelized or victimized in any way.
- *Privacy - confidentiality and anonymity* of respondents and the school should be protected at all times.
- *Trust* - respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

22/05/18

Annexure B: Interview Schedules

Educator Interview Protocol

Title: Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools.

Time of interview: _____

Duration: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Pseudonym: _____

Position: _____

Male / Female: _____

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
1.	What is the educator's understanding of the concept of pastoral care in relation to Ubuntu?	What is your understanding of the concept of pastoral care?	
2.		What is your understanding of Ubuntu as a moral value?	What is your understanding of Ubuntu?
3.		What is your understanding of the concept of pastoral care in relation to Ubuntu?	
4.		What is your perception of the educators' pastoral care role?	Seven roles of an educator of which one of them is pastoral care. What do you make of the expectation from the Norms and Standards?
5.	What are the	From your own	

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
	pastoral care needs of learners?	experience, what are the pastoral care needs of learners?	
6.	How do educators describe their responsibility of pastoral care?	How would you describe your responsibility as a class teacher in performing the pastoral care role?	
7.	Why are educators responding to their role of providing pastoral care the way they do?	What makes educators respond positively/negatively to providing pastoral care to learners?	What do you think makes educators respond positively to providing pastoral care to learners? What do you think makes educators respond negatively to providing pastoral care to learners?
8.	What factors enhance the educators' ability to provide pastoral care?	In your own opinion, what factors enhance the educators' ability to provide pastoral care?	
9.	What factors limit the ability of educators to provide pastoral care?	In your own opinion, what factors limit the ability of educators to provide pastoral care?	
10.		How do you identify vulnerable learners in your class?	
11.		What kind of support do you give to vulnerable learners?	
12.		In your view, how functional is the SBST in providing support for vulnerable learners?	
13.		What programmes are there in your school to support vulnerable learners?	
14.		In your view, how does the entire	In your view, what does your school do

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
		school work together to support vulnerable learners?	to uphold pastoral care?
15.		In your view, how does the entire school work together to uphold the value of Ubuntu?	In your view, what does your school do to uphold Ubuntu?

SBST coordinator Interview Protocol

Title: Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools.

Time of interview: _____

Duration: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Pseudonym: _____

Position: _____

Male / Female: _____

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
1.	What is the educator's understanding of the concept of pastoral care in relation to Ubuntu?	What is your understanding of the concept of pastoral care?	
2.		What is your understanding of Ubuntu as a moral value?	What is your understanding of Ubuntu?

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
3.		What is your understanding of the concept of pastoral care in relation to Ubuntu?	
4.		What is your perception of the educators' pastoral care role?	Seven roles of an educator of which one of them is pastoral care. What do you make of the expectation from the Norms and Standards?
5.	What are the pastoral care needs of learners?	From your own experience, what are the pastoral care needs of learners?	
6.	How do educators describe their responsibility of pastoral care?	How would you describe your responsibility as the SBST coordinator in performing the pastoral care role?	
7.	Why are educators responding to their role of providing pastoral care the way they do?	What makes educators respond positively/negatively to providing pastoral care to learners?	What do you think makes educators respond positively to providing pastoral care to learners? What do you think makes educators respond negatively to providing pastoral care to learners?
8.	What factors enhance the educators' ability to provide pastoral care?	In your own opinion, what factors enhance the educators' ability to provide pastoral care?	
9.	What factors limit the ability of educators to provide pastoral care?	In your own opinion, what factors limit the ability of educators to provide pastoral care?	
10.		How do you identify vulnerable learners in the school?	
11.		What kind of support do you give to vulnerable learners?	

No.	Research Question	Interview Question	Modified Questions
12.		In your view, how functional is your SBST in providing support for vulnerable learners?	
13.		What programmes are there in your school to support vulnerable learners?	
14.		In your view, how does the entire school work together to support vulnerable learners?	In your view, what does your school do to uphold pastoral care?
15.		In your view, how does the entire school work together to uphold the value of Ubuntu?	In your view, what does your school do to uphold Ubuntu?

Annexure C: Sample of interview transcript

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: DP - A

Gender: Female

Position: Deputy Principal

School's Pseudonym: School A

Date: 12 June 2018

Time of interview: 15:00

Duration: 63 min 15 sec

Place: School A

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: You welcome.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: I still agree.

Interviewer: Thank you. I hope you still remember that my study has to do with Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners with focus on how schools cater for vulnerable learners and their needs.

Interviewee: I do.

Interviewer: Thank you. The first question states, what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Ubuntu to me is showing kindness to the person that you are with or you encounter, not just to your family but to everyone. I think Ubuntu is about kindness...showing kindness. In a school situation, we work with children from different backgrounds and as a teacher you need to show them that you care and love them. Even when you are in class, you need to ask how they are and how they

slept and what they ate. The learners get very excited to share with you and immediately you can pick on those who are quiet. During break you can call them and ask them about what they ate or how they slept and they will open up with you because they can see that you care about their well-being.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you understand by pastoral care?

Interviewee: Pastoral care... Let me say I can meet you and then I see from you that which needs my kindness. So, in pastoral care I should just end at the meeting point, I also need to follow up and check where you stay, how you stay and with whom do you stay. That for me is pastoral care. It is about knowing and caring about the person in totality and how they live.

Interviewer: What do you mean when you say one needs to know the other person in totality?

Interviewee: For example, here at school, we expect learners but there is also a child within this learner. So as an educator you need to dig deeper and try to know this learner in totality. In totality means you care for the learner in terms of school work, home situation and well-being. As an educator, you need to have interest in the learner such that you also want to know his home background like who he stays with, if the learner has parents, where does the learner stay and even ask the learner what he ate last night.

Interviewer: Alright. What is the relationship if any between Ubuntu and pastoral care?

Interviewee: Ubuntu for me is a vehicle that will lead you to pastoral care. Ubuntu will lead you towards taking care of someone pastorally. So, it means one needs to have Ubuntu so that they can give pastoral care. I don't think one can give pastoral care to anyone if they do not have Ubuntu. If you have Ubuntu, you can see when there is someone who needs your support and when you provide that support you are doing pastoral care.

Interviewer: How do you identify the pastoral needs of vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Mostly, it is through their behaviour. You will always notice them each time you are in class. They are disruptive and unsettled. They even take other learners' pens, they move around in the classroom, they cause noise in the classroom. And they like going out. Each time the teacher comes in, the child requests to go out. Another thing is that they also like to bully other learners. Another way of identifying them is through their appearance. You find that their trousers do not have zips. Their shoes are dirty, even themselves are dirty and you can see that they did not bath and no one took notice that the learner has not bathed or the clothes are dirty and when you ask the child where is your mother when you left for school, the child will tell you that the mother was sleeping. Sometimes even when it is cold, they come to school without anything warm. They normally come late to school and they don't even have pens and they leave the books at home, they do not

do the homework and no one even cares to check their books and even ask what they did at school. But those learners always make sure that they come to school because of the food that they get from school. Even when there is no scholar transport maybe due to strikes, they come on foot because they need the food because they do not get food at home and no one takes care of them at home. So, you will then ask yourself what is wrong with this child and it is then that you will find out that the child has social problems. Some learners might look well cared for at home, clean and well fed but they are always reserved and they do not want to associate with other learners. Those mostly are emotionally unstable and you can see them crying very often. The other learner will even call them 'cry-babies'. When you intervene when they cry, you won't get anything from them. Mostly because we as teachers we also do not know which questions to ask and the learners do not readily give you the information. Again, their parents when called to the school, most want to look 'good' and they not want to disclose their challenges at home. It is only when the social workers get involved that the truth about the situations at home will come out. Some you find that for example, the parents are always fighting or they live only with the mother and the children miss their father and the mother does not want them to visit their father.

Interviewer: How do you support learners with behavioural problems?

Interviewee: Sometimes, like in my class, I have learners who are very much naughty but they are academically clever. They disrupt the class and they disturb other learners in class. So, we will then refer them to the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) so that the SBST can help in trying to find out what is the problem with these learners and also intervene in terms of maybe by involving the psychologists so that they can advise us on how to deal with them. The challenge is that even if you refer them to the SBST, the SBST does not know how to handle such cases because they are not psychologists and they too cannot detect what should be done with these learners. So, the only way is to refer them to the DBST (District based support team, hereto DBST) who unfortunately, will also take a very long time before coming to the school because they say they do not have enough manpower to cover all the schools. Although they try to conduct workshops, the workshops are not helpful because it is just a 2 hours thing and you cannot use one method to deal with all situations because they differ and learners differ too. Some of these learners perform well but they waste your time when you try to keep order in class. These learners are attention seekers and sometimes you find out that these learners are used to getting everything they want from home and no one says no to them. Immediately you start to command order, they get annoyed. Another thing that we have realized is that most of them get hyper-active after break because of the sweets they eat during break. We tried talking to the vendors and parents but still the problem is not stopping. Some parents think that they need to show their love to their children by giving them sweets and chocolates.

Interviewer: How do you support learners who are emotionally unstable?

Interviewee: As teachers, it is difficult for us to get to the root of the problem because these learners are reserved and shy and their parents won't tell you're their story. Immediately you suspect something like withdrawal and the learner always crying,

we refer the learners to the SBST which will then refer them to the DBST and the psychologists will come. Sometimes we just refer them to the social workers although they too are not psychologists but they assist to a certain level. Other schools in the city have full-time psychologists who can immediately attend to learners who are emotionally distressed. Ya neh!

Interviewer: How do city schools manage to have psychologists on site?

Interviewee: Such schools have money and they hire the psychologists to be based at the schools. With us, the situation is different... with parents that cannot buy basic things like food and clothes for their children, where then can we get money to hire psychologists. We rely on psychologists from the district who have to serve all schools in the district and I don't know how many learners... Just imagine! Hence you find that you can refer a grade 3 learner to them but the learner would even finish grade 7 without getting help. When you ask the district will tell you they have a long list. What more can you do?

Interviewer: It is a serious problem indeed. What is your take on vulnerability and discipline?

Interviewee: I think there are learners who would be ill-disciplined but not be vulnerable. Those are the ones I say are attention seekers or whom we call 'mamma's baby' (mother's baby). But the majority of learners who misbehave are the ones who are vulnerable. For instance, we have this learner in our school whose parents are deceased. I would say this learner rotates from one relative to the next in terms of staying. One moment she stays with this relative, the next time you ask she is with another relative and so on. Even now, we tried to contact the adult that we engage with about the child but we cannot find any, everyone is shifting the blame. This child is performing very poorly in class and at the same time, she is very naughty. As you try to teach, she does not concentrate. She will be bullying others, taking their pens and even food during break. It's a daily thing. We tried talking to her but she does not stop. You would even think that she is not mentally well because as you talk to her, she continues to fiddle with other learners and she would even laugh at you. So, we have involved the social workers so that they can assist us in tracing the adult in this learner's life. Another case is of a learner whose parents are using drugs and they are injecting themselves with drugs. Whenever there is no money for drugs, the parents would fight to an extent that the children would even run away from home. These learners witness such things happening at home and when they come to school, they bully other learners because of anger and frustration that they have. They come to school hungry and when they see anyone with food in their bags, they steal it. It's so pathetic and if you don't take time to engage with them, you would not understand why they behave that way. Such learners need our love and support because they do not get that from their homes and the only way to correct the situation at home is to involve the social workers and the police. The police would come after a day or two but the social workers take time and meanwhile, the learner is living in that situation. We become their parents when they are at school. When you listen to these learners' stories, sometimes you would even go to the staff room and cry. You would wish you had the ability to take all of them to your home to stay with you.

Interviewer: What is the relationship if any, between vulnerability and performance?

Interviewee: Vulnerable learners have serious academic problems. Their concentration span is very low. I have a learner in my class who is taking care of her siblings. The parents just left them. This learner is forever upset minded. When you call and talk to her, she will tell you that she is worried about her siblings because she does not know what they are going to eat after school, and at night. Her performance is very poor and no one in the family wants to assist the child. We engaged the relatives to take them but they refused. They say they check on them regularly but cannot take them to their houses because their homes are very small and they have their children also. The situation is wide-spread where again you will find the learner sleeping in class and when you engage him, he told me that the parents were fighting and he could not sleep. There is also this learner who reported to the principal that she cannot study at home nor do homework because she does all the chores at home, she cooks, she fetches water and wood, she washes clothes for the whole family and such. This learner failed dismally and the parents do not even want to come when we call them. We have asked the social workers to intervene and we are still waiting for them to come. Unfortunately, in most cases, vulnerability and performance go hand in hand. These children are like doomed forever. It's very saddening.

Interviewer: I believe you are aware of the seven roles of an educator in the Norms and Standards for Educators. One of the roles is pastoral role. What do you make of this expectation that educators should perform that role?

Interviewee: If I can identify a learner is need maybe school shoes or uniform and when I engage with him or her I find out that at home maybe there is no one working, or the parents cannot supply or whatever the story might be, from my side I am able to buy or bring clothes from my home and give to that child, even food. But fortunately, there is food provided at the school but if it can come to a point that I have to share my lunchbox with the learner I would do so. Sometimes when we hear that the child is hospitalized, I will be the first to go visit the child in hospital. There was a case in my class and the learner was just staying with her mother and the mother passed on. The norm is that when we hear of a death case at any of our children's home, we would go, pray with them and give them condolences. But this time the situation was different. When we arrived, we only found the mother from next door and she told us that she has never seen any relatives visiting this home ever. She has contacted them and they all say they will come on Friday because they are working. She did not know where to start for the funeral arrangements. When I looked at my learner, she had tears in her eyes and I told myself I have to do something. As a school we donated and bought all the food for the funeral, fortunately the mother had a funeral cover and the coffin and such were covered. I was going to that house daily after school and sometimes left around 10 at night. On Friday I even slept over and together with the other teacher, we cooked and prepared everything for the day of the funeral. Now the case is referred to the social workers and they were able to find the father of these children who has now come to stay with them and they are also getting child grant. So as an educator I need to step in and help the child with whatever need he or she has. I feel it is my responsibility to perform that role because while learners are at school, they are all my children and I

cannot eat while my children are not eating... eh! or I cannot sleep well knowing that there is a learner who is not having warm clothes to wear when it is cold. I have to do something... Sometimes learners come without having taken a bath from home and you smell urine from them. As a mother, you will organize a bath and clean clothes for that learner. In lower grades, some would even mess themselves in class and other learners might laugh at that child. We try to teach them not to laugh at each other and again you will organize that the learner bath and get the learner clean clothes and then report to the parents at home. This is so serious that we even had to buy a bath specifically for bathing learners and we collect lost clothes and after we have tried to locate the owners and no one claims them, we keep such clothes to help learners that might have a problem while in school. Again, there is this learner in our school who is epileptic... the teacher is really having it tough because the learner sometimes collapses 3 or 4 times in a day and the teacher has to assist. Even the learners have adapted to the situation, they already know the signs and they even know what to do when the learner collapses. The teacher then has to leave everything that she is doing to attend to that learner. This not only affects the learner, the teacher and all other learners get affected including the older brother in another class. We have reported the case to the district office but up until now, nothing is happening. It is really frustrating. Another thing is that it is also a problem when as a teacher you have to leave 61 learners unattended and you have to take care of this one learner. And while you do that, your work lacks behind and then you also have the syllabus to complete, I think that is why some teachers would just send the learner out to the office. It's just a serious problem. You have to multitask... give the other learners work to do and pray that they do not fight and injure one another in your absence while you are attending to this other learner. In ex-model C schools, they have people who would come and do that job while you continue to teach. But for us in township schools, pastoral care is core to every teacher's work.

Interviewer: You said most of the teachers assist vulnerable learners. What according to you prompts them to assist the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I believe there are people who have committed themselves to helping the nation. To them teaching is not just academic, it is about helping these vulnerable learners to become somebody in their lives. Such teachers just help voluntarily and they won't even complain. It is just the love they have for these children...

Interviewer: Again, you said some educators would just send learners out to the office instead of helping them. What do you think makes them do that instead of helping the learner?

Interviewee: I think it is two ways, some teachers feel pressurized by the work and performance and they feel that giving attention to one child takes their time. But I think mainly it is the attitude. Some teachers just feel that it is not their job to bath these learners or even give them attention even when they can see that the learners are in need. Though I believe that all people have Ubuntu in them, you will ask yourself questions sometimes. Some teachers just don't care. They will even tell you that they are trained to teach and nothing more than that...

Interviewer: Alright. What programmes do you have in the school to assist the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We have a programme we call 'Bana-Pele programme'. The programme focuses at giving learners uniforms. We would identify the needy learners and give them the list for donations. We also have an NGO, individuals and even former students who also donate uniform for the learners. We also have the Department of Social Welfare and they are also helping with uniform and emotional problems to a certain level because they too, like us teachers do not quite know how to deal with emotional challenges. The SAPS also assists with behavioural problems. We have pastors who would also help spiritually and for counselling. We also have the NGO called the 'Bophelong Drop-in Centre' and they are stationed here at the school. They assist with supervision of learners in the morning and during breaks. They also assist when there is a learner that has to be taken to the clinic and the learner can walk, so they would stay there with the learner until the parent comes. Whenever there is a learner with emotional challenges, we also refer the learner to them although they are not trained counsellors, they are able to calm the learner until the counsellors come. We also have 'Sizakala Wellness counsellors' who will be starting in the next term to provide counselling for vulnerable learners who are emotionally disturbed.

Interviewer: Ok. Would you say your SBST is functional?

Interviewee: Not really. I think our SBST is not functional because all that they do is to refer the referred learners to the DBST and the social workers... and that on its own is not an effective measure because social workers themselves are not psychologists and the DBST has many schools to service and they will come after a very long time. The SBST itself does not have the capacity to deal with issues relating to behaviour and emotional challenges. Furthermore, when we have to intervene academically for learners who are struggling academically, again as teachers we are not trained to do remedial and the SBST also does not have proper skills to do that. So, we claim we are intervening but honestly, we don't know what we are doing. I do not want to sound like I am complaining but again, ex-model C schools have remedial classes with trained remedial teachers and whenever a learner is struggling academically, the teachers would refer the learner to them and they know exactly how to intervene and help the child. We are trying but I don't see the system of the referring learners to the SBST helping that much.

Interviewer: This marks the end of the interview. Do you have questions or comments for me?

Interviewee: I wish someone can do something about the functionality of the SBST so that vulnerable learners can be assisted. Otherwise it was a very good interview. I enjoyed it.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. Keep well.

Interviewee: You too.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: DP - B

Gender: Female

Position: Deputy Principal

School's Pseudonym: School B

Date: 13 June 2018

Time of interview: 15:00

Duration: 63 min 15 sec

Place: School B

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: You are welcome madam.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Thank you. I hope you still remember that my study has to do with Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners with focus on how schools cater for vulnerable learners and their needs.

Interviewee: I remember.

Interviewer: Thank you. The first question states, what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Ubuntu is about helping one another. It is about caring and nurturing everyone that you see with love, respect of whoever the person is. Not looking down on others but helping every person without looking at their background... even if the person is poor or needy or is crying. It is about assisting that person who needs assistance.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you understand by pastoral care?

Interviewee: Pastoral care to me means nurturing, loving and caring for others. I also think it is about giving support socially and emotionally to the learner and supporting them in the school, the community and not forgetting the teachers in the school. Pastoral care can also involve social workers, pastors, parents, community and even the health service depending on the need of that person.

Interviewer: Alright. What is the relationship if any between Ubuntu and pastoral care?

Interviewee: I think Ubuntu is a once off feeling and it stays in you, you resemble that when you see a person. Pastoral care is an ongoing support that follows the feeling of Ubuntu. With pastoral care, you need to give support on the person always and you have to get an output of what you want to achieve. For example, if a child was suffering from a social background behaviour, you then engage the social workers and you monitor and you always keep the report of what is happening. Ubuntu on the other hand is when you show that care on that person that you get in contact with at that time. It is like greeting people, like when a person is always sleeping then you need to care enough to ask that person, what is wrong, how can I help? Ubuntu is a once off thing to all people even the ones you can never meet ever again and pastoral care is a continuous thing.

Interviewer: What needs do vulnerable learners have?

Interviewee: The needs are very broad. I can say some learners need are for clothes and food, some could be facing problems at home where the parents are always fighting and they are neglected and they don't get the love that they need from their parents. Some learners are abused physically and they are even beaten and some it is emotionally where parents would just insult them or say very offensive things to them. There was a learner in my class who came to me and told me that she wants to kill herself because her mother does not love her. Her mother once told her that she wishes she could have aborted her when she was still in her stomach. She calls her useless and she blames her for her boyfriend who left her. The learner told me that she was sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend and it was done since she was young. At some point she felt she cannot take it anymore and she told her mother. The mother told her she should sleep with her boyfriend because this man is the one who is buying food for them in the house because her husband left her. The mother would even force her to sleep with the boyfriend while she holds her. We referred the matter to the social workers and the police and the mother and the boyfriend are now in jail and the child is now in the custody of the grandmother.

Interviewer: What social needs do vulnerable learners have?

Interviewee: Ok. Sometimes when you interview the learner you find that the learner has problems from home. Some learners are staying with the grandmother. For example, we have learners at school that is staying with the grandmother who cannot walk. So, we once visited that family. Fortunately, we got the uncle's number and we asked why the learners do not have food or money or shoes and the uncle told us that there is someone in Mpumalanga who is taking their money and then we

advised the uncle to go to the social workers. So, after engaging with the social workers, they said they will be going to court to fight for that money because the learners are getting something like R2500 and someone in Mpumalanga is taking that money. And now the learners got their money and they seem to be happy because they saw us coming to their family and also because now they have food and clothes. The uncle is the one providing for the learners because he now gets that money.

Interviewer: How then do you support the vulnerable learners' social needs?

Interviewee: So as a school, we identify the learners who are needy and we give them food and we keep record as to which learner received what. We also refer them to the social workers to get grants and also if there are other family issues such as abuse or neglect from home.

Interviewer: How do you identify learners with emotional needs?

Interviewee: Mostly, those learners are very reserved or they bully other learners or they cry easily either when you ask them why they are quiet or do not want to play with other learners. Such learners are full of anger and they slap other learners. These learners are so angry to an extent that sometimes they retaliate when you try to reprimand them. I remember a case of a grade R learner who always held a pen like he is holding a knife ready to stab someone. The teacher tried to teach him how to hold the pen but he refused to change. One day this learner was pushing other learners at the assembly and when the principal tried to reprimand him, he said to the principal 'I will kill you with a knife'. So we didn't leave it like that and when we called the parent, the mother came and she told us the child learnt it from the father. Each time when he is angry and fights me in the house, he threatens that he will kill me with a knife in the presence of the children. So as an educator when we identify ill-behaviour, we call and interview the child and then call the parent. It is then that you will get a true picture from home and the parents will confirm that. Sometimes you can hear stories from the learners when they play a game called 'Maskitla'. While they play that game, they would dramatise and tell others about their home life and each learner would tell what is happening in their lives. Some would just make up stories but while you listen carefully, some are in fact telling a true story of what is happening in their homes. And you can see, as the learner is talking, you can see from his body language when he starts to mumble and get irritable as he is conveying the story. Then as a teacher you can call the learner aside and dig deep.

Interviewer: How then do you support the vulnerable learners' emotional needs?

Interviewee: Once we realize that a learner has emotional needs, I believe the most important support that one can give is to listen. As a teacher, you need to be a shoulder to cry on and the learners should know that there is someone at the school whom I can go to and that person will give me time and I can talk to that person. Sometimes people do not want much but just to pour out and they get relieved emotionally. Emotions can sometimes be positive or negative and you still need to listen and if it is good stuff, you rejoice with them. To help learners with emotional

needs is a serious problem because for one, we are not trained and two, even though we are called for workshops, it is never enough because the situations are not the same. We are somehow disadvantaged in township schools because we do not have the same resources as other schools whereby there are psychologists who are based at the school and they also have assistant teachers who will also help when you experience challenges with some learners. As a result, teaching is not compromised because then you can refer the learners to them while you continue to teach. In our case, the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) members are also teachers and they have to leave their work to attend to cases. Again, when the SBST refers learners to the DBST (District based support team, hereto DBST) after they failed to help the learner, the DBST takes time because they are few and they have to service learners in the whole district. Sometimes you will feel that life is unfair.

Interviewer: What is the relationship if any, between vulnerability and discipline?

Interviewee: Most of learners who are vulnerable, like those with dirty or torn clothes or the learners who are coming from broken families, are very naughty. We've got a child who is staying with the grandmother from the father's side, the mother is staying somewhere else. The child sometimes to school with shoes not of the same colour, he is always out of the class, even the trouser does not have a zip and he beats other learners and now he has resorted to smoking glue. We have called the police on several occasions and when we engage the mother because when he was still in grade 3, he was identified for placement in a special school but the mother refused to sign the SNA (Support needs assessment, hereto SNA) form for consent. So last time when the mother came and we engaged her about her children, she said, 'I wish they can die, I don't want these children. I wish them to die, I don't want them anymore because if I say this, the grandmother says something else'. And the very problem comes from the father because when he comes, he just throws money to these children and gives them a lot of money and he goes. So, they buy anything with it, even liquor and glue. This child even beats other children when they are playing outside, he takes their money as well. We called the police and we also involved the community because sometimes they go out of the school yard without being noticed. Even when the gates are locked, you will never know how they sneak out. One time the principal was following them on the road, they had stolen the vendors' food and they were sitting under the tree during school hours and eating that food.

Interviewer: How does the SNA form work?

Interviewee: Before we complete the observation form, the teacher has to write all the behaviour that the child displays. Thereafter, the teacher completes the SNA1 form looking at the problems that the child encounters. Then there are activities that the learner has to engage in in the form of intervention. If it curriculum challenges, then the learner will be given extra work to do which will then be submitted by the class or subject teacher to the SBST together with the SNA1 form. Then the SBST will conduct some intervention with the learner and if all fails, then the learner will be referred to the DBST for further intervention.

Interviewer: Is the SBST only focusing on academic challenges?

Interviewee: The SBST focuses on both academic and social challenges. The form provides that the teacher will indicate academic challenges and behavioural challenges or any other challenges that the learner encounters.

Interviewer: What is the relationship if any, between vulnerability and performance?

Interviewee: Yes, there is. Most vulnerable learners perform poorly and they are the ones who are causing chaos in class... not to say I am labelling them but most of them are very problematic. They fight other learners and they are always rowdy in class. Some of them would even tear other learners' books and steal their pens. You have to have patience to deal with them... only if you understand their situations at home, you will also understand why they behave that way. From my 23 years of experience as a teacher, I have come to realize that these learners do not do this to spite you or other learners. They just are in need of love and attention because they can't find it at home. So, when they behave that way, I give them extra work to do and sometimes I task them to write the learners who are making noise. They love to be recognized and they will act like they are the favourites of the teacher. Meanwhile, they get orderly because they cannot write their names in the list. But again, we refer them to the social workers for further assistance because some might need intervention even at home because at home they witness fights and abuse from their parents. The social workers do home visits and they do a lot to help their situations at home.

Interviewer: Now, you will recall that as educators, one of your roles in the seven roles of an educator is to provide pastoral care. What is your make of this expectation?

Interviewee: I have always been amazed how most teachers perform that role of pastoral role. Why I say that is because most of the teachers become parents without anyone asking them. And you find that a learner is drawn to some other teacher depending on how the learner feels around that teacher. We become parents automatically because learners will just come to you even if you do not invite them. A learner would pass one teacher and go to the next one and you can see the face lightening up when that teacher appears. I believe it goes with the job of being a teacher. You teach the learners and you also become their parent. Some educators have gone to an extent of 'adopting' learners and they would pay for their trips, they would buy them school uniform, home clothes or nice things even cakes on their birthdays. They even take them to their homes on weekends and their parents understand that and mainly it will be learners who are neglected from their homes. Pastoral role to an educator is inherent... Most of the educators do an awesome work and they don't expect to be rewarded for that. This goes beyond clothes and food, the teachers also provide love and care to these learners. We try to make the school to be a home to these learners. As the teacher appears, the learner would run to him or her and hug him or her and also after school, the learner will remain with that teacher in the class, talking and sharing with that teacher. So even some of the challenges that the learners have, you will get them through these teachers because

the learners can open up when they are with them because they feel that attachment with them. I don't see myself as just a teacher, I am also their mother.

Interviewer: You said earlier that most of the educators perform pastoral role. What do you think makes them to perform that role for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I believe it is the person within the person. What I mean by that is that the conscience in you will tell you that you need to help. These teachers take the phrase *loco parentis* very seriously and they see themselves as parents to these learners. They see these children as their and as a parent you cannot ignore the child who needs your help and act like you did not see it... but again it is surprising that some teachers would just close their eyes to a needy learner...

Interviewer: Why would other educators choose to ignore the challenges of these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: It's a pity that some teachers, I believe joined teaching profession because they could not afford to follow other professions or maybe they did not have an option. And you can see them from far because they care less about the learners that they teach. All that they are here for is just the money. They yell and the learners, they don't even walk an extra mile to assist the learners even if the learner can cry to them. But I have also realized that most of these teachers have their own stress and they feel that these learners are adding to their stress. I say so because they would just isolate themselves from us... you know there are teachers when you find them eating, you can just put your finger in their food and taste it but these ones, you will never even try it. They are not just cold to the learners, they are cold to all of us even their colleagues.

Interviewer: Now, what programmes do you have in the school to assist the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We have compiled a list of needy learners and the list is readily available for when anyone can call to ask for names of learners so that they can provide for them. The SAPS and social services would provide them with uniform. The programme from social services runs for 3 years and they provide new uniform to the identified learners for 3 years in succession. But they do allow us to add whenever we see a need from the unidentified learners. Community people also give donations in the form of food parcels. We also have an NGO called 'Adolie' who also assist with uniform and food parcels. Pastors would also come and preach to the learners and also give them moral support. We also have a group called 'Umoja' and SAPS and they help with awareness on drug abuse and the dangers of using drugs. We do not have a programme for those interventions. We are unable to plan for them because our time is very tight and we mainly focus on teaching and again they cannot give us their plan in advance, they just come. We also have another NGO which would send students for Life Skills and during that period, they would get into the classes and give learners moral support and counselling. From ABSA, they sent a student who was teaching learners on behaviour. But as I say, we just squeeze them in whenever they come, there is no structured programme for that. It is just hit

and run just to calm the child in times of need, you listen to the child, you hug the child, you cry with the child but we do not have a proper programme because we do not have the expertise. But I have to be honest, as a school we are not doing much for vulnerable learners because as teachers we are not trained and although we refer the learners to the social workers, they too are not counsellors but they try their best to assist. The only help in terms of counselling will be the psychologists from the district office but they do not come as speedily as we would like them to.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you think your SBST is functional?

Interviewee: I think the SBST in our school is functional because at least we submit every month to the district office. We are expected to submit the names of vulnerable learners and our intervention but I can forthrightly say that...I am sorry to say it but the information is 'cooked' just for the sake of submission... we just write false information. You find the intervention strategy being the same for all the let's say 143 learners. Is that really possible? But what can we do because we don't know what to do and we are expected to submit. We once had psychologists and social workers assigned to schools and that used to work for the vulnerable learners and the functionality of the schools because the teachers would just focus on teaching and refer vulnerable learners to that support team of social workers and psychologists...but the programme was stopped and I still don't know why it was stopped. Ex-model C schools have monies to hire the social workers and psychologists for their schools but we can't. They also have remedial classes with professional remedial teachers who are well qualified and competent. There are also I think 4 schools that I know of in the whole district, excluding ex-model C schools, which they call 'Full-service schools' and although they do not have social workers and psychologists, they at least have remedial classes and remedial teachers. The situation is very complex because even if we try to help these learners after school, most of them come with buses from scholar transport and the buses leave immediately after school. We tried to talk to the owners of the buses to at least give us 30 minutes for intervention but when you call the learners for extra support, they cannot concentrate because they don't understand why they have to be in class while other learners are playing outside. I think remedial was going to work better when it is done during lessons while all learners are in class so that these learners do not feel discriminated or labelled or punished. Our learners are disadvantaged so we just do whatever we can to help these needy learners. What we can do effectively is providing food and clothes but beyond that, we just hug and listen and maybe say a word or two to comfort them...

Interviewer: We have now come to the end of the interview. Do you have any questions?

Interviewee: I don't have questions. I have enjoyed the interview.

Interviewer: Ok. Thank you for the information. Keep well.

Interviewee: Thanks.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: SBST - B

Gender: Female

Position: SBST Coordinator

School's Pseudonym: School B

Date: 08 June 2018

Time of interview: 14:30

Duration: 76 min 08 sec

Place: School B

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Morning mam...Thank you for coming.

Interviewee: Morning... It's a pleasure.

Interviewer: Do you still consent that I interview you?

Interviewee: Yes madam. I have no problem with that.

Interviewer: So now, what is your understanding of the concept of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: I think Ubuntu uh! Is to have humanity, to be human enough to a certain situation that might arise from another person and then helping that person to get out of that situation...it is a free will. I think Ubuntu is also about kindness, someone has to be kind enough to put himself or herself into someone else's shoes and also respecting the other person as a human being...empathy. The overall one is love. You know love, they say love conquers everything. If you have love in you, it will make you to perceive things in a human way. And also let me not leave out justice.

Interviewer: Can you please explain what justice means to you?

Interviewee: Ya. I think eh! If you really want justice in someone's life, I think it'll make you to practice Ubuntu. Ok. You see if I talk about justice, justice will move you to take some steps to see people living a better life. To practice Ubuntu doesn't mean you have to offer material things. Ubuntu can also make you to look into some of the things into detail.

You will ask questions... why this family isn't receiving grant. If you have the powers and the knowledge, you can follow up such things and even help some of the learners. You can help the families through the learners to acquire some of the things that will maybe make their lives better.

Interviewer: Can you give me examples of justice in your view?

Interviewer: You see, when you want justice, you will want to see all people succeeding in their lives. For example, if your neighbour is hungry, you get concerned and you share with them what you have and also help them so that they can get the grants to maintain themselves in future. Whatever knowledge you might have to better other people's lives, you make sure that you inform them so that they can live better. I know we cannot all be equally blessed but I believe people are blessed so that they can bless others, it can be through knowledge, advice, or just helping through donations and such. That for me is justice.

Interviewer: What is your understanding of the concept pastoral care?

Interviewee: Ehh! According to me, Uhm! Pastoral care, Uhm! It is something that has to do with taking care, taking care of learners... I'll refer to learners because I'm dealing with learners. That is taking care of learners in totality so. Uhm! Whereby you will be adhering to their needs. And then when I refer to their needs, I'll be referring to Uhm! also in totality. The social needs, eh! academic needs... that is everything, everything that has to do with the total support to the learner so that the learner will be able to function well, especially in the eh! The teaching and learning situation...

Interviewer: From what we have discussed thus far, how then do you link pastoral care with Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Pastoral care and Ubuntu... Mmm! I mean if uh! You are looking at the life of a learner in totality, the well-being, referring to the social, religious part... Let me just say the child's life in totality, uh! It will make you to practice the Ubuntu principle. As I mentioned that Ubuntu is to give freely and when you give freely and you take care of someone, physical needs, social needs... That is the pastoral part of it and in a way, you will be practicing Ubuntu because no one has forced you to doing that. It is passion from you. It is what you are, yes! Because you don't have to say I want to take care of someone, I want to do this and this but whereas it is something that maybe you are doing for... or maybe you are expecting a reward in return. So, it is not an obligation. That is why I am saying it is a passion. It is something that comes from you.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you find that there are many learners who are struggling due to their socio-economic challenges?

Interviewee: A lot. Especially in this area, I'm referring to Soshanguve township. There are a lot of learners who are experiencing a lot of challenges. Eh! Maybe if you can allow me to give eh! To give some of the examples.

There are learners, for an example, eh eh eh! Who are coming from the families whereby both parents are not working... Eh! In fact, They are struggling with everything, academically, socially... when coming to school matters, some of them, they don't have proper uniform. During winter season, you find that some of the learners don't have warm clothes, some of them... they could hardly wear proper trousers, shirts. Some of them they do not have the buttons, the trousers, some of them they do not have the zips you know... And you find that the learner cannot learn in a normal way while they are undergoing some of the situation. And there are some of the learners who are coming from the child-headed families whereby only learners are, are on their own. They don't have parents and when you check, their parents are no more taking care of them, their parents are no more staying together anyway, their parents are divorced, there is no one who is responsible of taking care of the children. they are left alone in the family or their houses. Some of the learners, ah! They are staying with the uncles, their aunts, I mean the extended family members of which they are not giving you know, uh! In fact, it's like they are not dedicated to their well-being. And there are some of the learners who are coming from dysfunctional families, very dysfunctional families. There is a parent, I mean there is both parents but it's like, some of the learners will come very early in the morning and say mam, I did not eat yester night and then when you try to find out, they say the parents were just there, they were arguing, they were fighting... Some of the learners, they come from the houses that they have been turned into shebeens... You know what, so I really don't know how to have this proper term of how to describe these kind of learners...

Interviewer: Ya... It's huge neh!

Interviewee: Yes. Some of them they are cramped into a small house whereby they are all sleeping in the same house where there is no proper furniture or something like a bed, not enough blankets... There are lots of challenges, lots of challenges...

Interviewer: The situation seems to be bigger than it meets the eye neh!

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: How do you become aware of the learners' challenges?

Interviewee: Eh! Some learners would just tell you, that is, if they find you welcoming to them. Some you would see from their appearance, coming to school dirty, dirty clothes, no jersey even when it is cold, torn clothes and so on. Eh! We usually identify vulnerable learners in various ways and in many ways. The first one, as an educator you need to know your learners, isn't it? Then the first one will be through observation as a class teacher and you can see that this learner is behaving in a different way. Maybe the learner is so reserved and maybe you can also see that physically that there is something wrong. It might be from the way that he or she is conducting him or herself among other learners... Some would always cry of stomach cramps and when you interview them you find out that they since ate the previous day at school. Sleeping in class is another way of identifying these learners. When you interview them, they will tell you that they did not sleep, maybe the

parents were fighting the whole night or maybe their home is turned into a shebeen and they could not sleep because of the noise. Some are very disruptive and they bully other learners, stealing their belongings... food and pens and such.

Interviewer: Alright. Thank you. Now, you will recall that as educators, one of your roles in the seven roles of an educator is to provide pastoral care. What is your make of this expectation?

Interviewee: To me the expectation is right because one of the obligations or the responsibilities of an educator... as an educator you are going to be everything to a learner. We don't have health professionals on site; we don't have police on site; even though they are part of our...

Let me say, they are the external structures or partners, but if a learner is not feeling well, I am not going to say, without even trying to help or find out what is happening, maybe a learner has hurt him or herself during lunch or during Life Orientation period or during physical education period... So, you cannot say, I am not trained to be a health professional... Pastorally, you are going to attend to that particular learner. We receive problems from the learners, some of the learners will approach you and try to get help from you, we are also attending to such kind of things. So, all the problems coming from the learners, we are attending to them. So according to me, that expectation is reasonable because I cannot teach a learner or I cannot just ignore a learner being aware of certain challenges that he or she is going through. So, I think it is part and parcel of our responsibilities. I also think that one cannot separate himself or herself as an educator from caring for learners? In other words, we are caring about our kids... we are caring about their well-being. Whatever is challenging them, we are attending to those challenges.

Interviewer: From your own experience, what are the pastoral care needs of vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Uh! There are a lot of things... eh! There are, let me say eh! One of the needs of the learners that I have realized while I'm the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) coordinator is that our learners lack discipline. That one I will say it. I don't know. If they lack discipline, what is it that they really need but they lack discipline. They lack morals. This is something that we are really experiencing in this school or in this community. Lack of discipline, lack of morals. And another thing is this poor parental involvement whereby most of the time when we call parents regarding whatever issue we are having with the learners, they will only send the siblings. It is very rare to see the real biological parent of the learner. And there is the poor, which I think is related to this because when it comes to parents' meetings and evenings when we need to address some of the parents regarding their children, they don't pitch up. In a class of 53 learners and where I'll be expecting at least 40, then every time we will only have 10 parents. And like with the issue of academic performance when we invite parents in order to discuss the poor performance and in order to engage parents or to make them aware of the problems emanating from the learner or maybe to come and explain about this intervention processes and the likes, you will end up issuing letters inviting parents but they don't come. And it really affects us as a school because with the learners who really need to be referred,

those who are experiencing barriers to learning, they will end up stuck here with us and each and every time, they will be highlighted from the district level. Each and every schedule, they are there. They fall under learners at risk. There is nothing we can do because parents don't want to come and give us the consent so that the learners can be taken to the DBST and referral to special schools. And I really don't know, but even though I put them as challenges but somewhere somehow, I think they will also indicate a need. Even though I'm putting them in another way round but there is a need of parental involvement because it doesn't... we don't have to take it at face value because it makes the whole school to get stuck. You will keep on supporting the learner, supporting the learner but the parent won't come. And there is this misconception that they don't want the learner to be sent to the special schools.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you think is the reason for parents not to come when called to discuss their children's education?

Interviewee: I think one of the reasons is the misconception that if a learner has been referred or has been placed in a special school, it means he or she is mentally challenged. You see?

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: So, some they will even mention this in Sesotho saying: 'Ngwanaka ga a gafe. Ngwanaka a ka se ye ko sekolong sa digafi' (My child is not crazy. My child will not go to a school for crazy people).

It's so painful to see those particular learners growing and growing and becoming over aged at primary level.

Interviewer: So as a school, what is it that you are doing to get rid of this misconception?

Interviewee: Ok. Uh! I think we have agreed that during whatever parental involvement such as parents' evening, one-on-one parents meeting, evening in our parents' invitations, there is a slot of SBST where we encourage parents to work together with the school with regard to the school health programmes because we are the ones who are issuing the consent form for school health programmes. Again, we also inform them about the processes of referring a learner who is experiencing a problem. So, each and every parental involvement, we do have a slot of trying to talk to parents. And since we have resorted to that kind of a strategy, it became better. It is better now because this thing has been preached to them time and again. To some of them, this cloud that was hanging is gradually removed.

Interviewer: Alright. I want to take you back a bit. You talked about learner discipline. What do learners do to show ill-discipline in the school?

Interviewee: That is very serious in our schools. Learners coming from dysfunctional families lack discipline bully other learners. They use vulgar language even in front of the teachers. They steal from other learners and some dodge classes and go and hide behind the toilets. We have seen other learners even sniffing glue.

Interviewer: Do you as the SBST coordinator and your team try to dig deeper to find out why these learners are behaving this way?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you please share with me what you do.

Interviewee: Most of the learners, you know, are coming from child-headed families, no one is taking care of their academic needs. Some of the learners are orphans, they need attention even though in the wrong way. Some of the learners, their parents don't even care. Parents are there but they don't care about their school matters. And some of the learners they would even mention that even if you call him or you call her, she won't come. This is what we have discovered and one other thing is the mob-psychology amongst themselves. So, some of the challenges, we really have a challenge in dealing with them because if a learner is disrespectful and you tried to call the parent and you tried to invite that parent by means of letter, by means of sending another learner, by means of calling, and they not pitching up... So, what will you do?

Interviewer: Can you please explain your understanding of mob-psychology.

Interviewee: Mob-psychology is when people influence each other to behave in a certain way, especially in a bad way. In our community, the parents do not come when we call them to the school because they say we are the educators and we are paid to take care of their children at school. They even complain when you give learners homework because they say we don't want to do our job and we want them to do the job of teaching the learners for us. When you ask a learner why he or she did not do the homework, the learner will tell you that my mother refused for me to do the homework. She said school work is done at school and at home, I should do the house chores. And they will even say, go tell your teacher I said so...

Interviewer: There's a lot on your plate neh!

Interviewee: It is a lot. And some of them is because yes, they are really experiencing some challenges whereby some of the challenges as a school, we have some limits because if the learner this week, the learner is eh! eh! The learner is staying with one parent and another week, she's going to another parent... and those two parents are in loggerheads...When he/she is on that other side, they are saying this and that about the other one...

Interviewer: So how do you support learners whose parents are separated?

Interviewee: It becomes something that is very difficult to resolve, it is beyond us as educators. So, let me say that most the learners are coming from really dysfunctional families and their parents are young. So, most of them are staying in small houses, RDP houses where there is no privacy... so our learners are really exposed to things they should not be exposed to and some of these things they come with them here in the school.

Interviewer: Do learner tell you or do they act out what they've been exposed to?

Interviewee: Let me say we are coming from the same section whereby your mother and my father are in love, and one learner will just say something to the other learner that 'papa ka o jola le mama hao...' (My father is having an affair with your mother) and they will start fighting. They say it in a ridicule way whereby the other learner will just fee, you know, to fight the other. Some of the learners would even share with others what their parents eh! ...do at night. Even worse, some mothers change boyfriends and learners are expected to call each one papa (daddy).

Interviewer: Ok. How would you describe your responsibility as an SBST coordinator in performing pastoral care role?

Interviewee: I think my responsibility is to make sure that educators eh! ... are responsible enough in their duties regarding taking care of learners. I mean when I'm talking about SBST duties I'm referring to taking care of the challenges that surround a learner. So as educators, we need to execute our duties uh! I mean, maybe I can say in a proper way whereby we need to be aware of all the issues that surround the learner... the total life of the learner. We need to make sure that we play our role. By that I mean, you will be aware of everything that is happening in a child's life... you will aware of everything that challenges a learner, everything that will become a barrier to a learner. Again, you will be able to know all the strategies or to employ all the strategies in order to get rid of all challenges that make the learner not to learn in a normal way.

Interviewer: Ok. What is it that makes educators to respond positively to providing pastoral care to vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Ok. I think as I said, to be human enough is something that will lead one to feel for other people, not to have this ignorant uh! element whereby you will just say I'm gonna ignore this because my child is well taken care of. I mean humanity is a driving force for one to practice Ubuntu, to have passion.

Interviewer: Ok. For those who respond negatively, what makes them do so?

Interviewee: One is ignorance. Two is to lack passion. Another one is that some of the people are uh! Are not human enough and not because of the situation that he or she finds himself in at work place. Sometimes it is something that is within you, you find that people complain about you because you are not human enough. It is something that is deep rooted within you. Religiously I can say it is somebody who really doesn't care about the Bible principles. It is somebody who just accepts things

as they are. He or she doesn't want to see himself being a role player or maybe a medicine in a certain situation. They sometimes use to say 'there is nothing I can do. I cannot solve the situation that I have found being there some years ago.' Some they would even say, 'I'm here for teaching. I'm not a doctor, I'm not a social worker'. Some cannot even identify learners experiencing challenges in their classes.

Interviewer: What according to you makes educators to be ignorant when it comes to providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I think educators just choose to be ignorant because they tell themselves that they have come just to teach and nothing more, they just do not care about the well-being of the learners. They ignore the state of the learner in class. Even when a learner is crying, instead of asking the learner what's wrong, they would just chase the learner out and continue to teach. They would say I am a teacher, not a doctor or a social worker...

Interviewer: What according to you makes educators not to have passion when it comes to providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I believe teaching is a calling and by that, I mean it is not about the money, it is about wanting to see these children succeeding in life and that fulfils you as a called teacher. However, some joined teaching because they could not find another job elsewhere. They actually do not like teaching and do not like other people's children. To them it is about the money and nothing about the child and his or her future.

Interviewer: What do you think is the reason why some educators cannot identify vulnerable learners in their classes?

Interviewee: It is because of lack of interest in other people's lives. Like I said, they do not have passion, they just don't care about the child. All they come to school for is to collect the cheque.

Interviewer: Now for those educators who do provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners, what factors enhance their ability to provide such care?

Interviewee: Mm! Some of the factors might be... it is that some of the educators are part of the SBST committee and obviously they become involved. Some of the people were not aware of the roles and responsibilities of being an SBST member. But now, being part of this whereby you are involved in the problem solving and decision making and try to eh! to solve some of the issues. I think that is one of the factors that helped some of the educators to really see that there is something that needs to be done with regard to these kind of learners. Why I'm saying this is because some of the educators even volunteered to be part even though it is spread to other educators. They volunteered to offer help, to offer assistance whereby they use to buy clothes, torn shoes they replace them, some of them are paying for their trips. I think to be part and also to be well knowledgeable because uh! The people were not aware of the role of this committee but because of the knowledge they have

now acquired, now they became interested and it became easier for them to practice pastoral care voluntary so.

Interviewer: On the other side of the coin, what factors limit the educators' ability to provide pastoral care to vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: You know, let me not talk about the financial issues because volunteering to help is in different ways, it doesn't specifically refer to financial contribution. If somebody is really prepared to help, it can be through anything. I think one of the things that can limit them might be lack of interest and to be stingy and some is because due to this parental involvement, some educators end up throwing in a towel that I have been calling the parents and they do not pitch up. So why should I bother myself now because I wanted to make them aware of this problem and maybe to talk to each other so that we can discuss how can we help. So, I think that is the main problem. So, they become demotivated.

Interviewer: So as a school, how do you identify vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Eh! We usually identify vulnerable learners in various ways and in many ways. The first one, as an educator you need to know your learners, isn't it? Then the first one will be through observation as a class teacher and you can see that this learner is behaving in a different way. Maybe the learner is so reserved and maybe you can also see that physically that there is something wrong. It might be from the way that he or she is conducting him or herself among other learners. Besides when the school needs a form... there is a form which the school needs whereby we need to provide the learner's profile such as orphans and vulnerable learners. So, we become aware in different ways, even if you were unable to observe him or her but the forms, I don't know whether they are from the district office or one of the NGOs, each and every year, they come and collect such lists.

Interviewer: So, when they come and collect, they get the information from the school after you have identified them?

Interviewee: Yes!

Interviewer: So, it means you should be able to identify them as a school.

Interviewee: We should be able to identify them. We even get information from them when we ask them, who are orphans? Who are coming from child-headed families? And they will indicate. But before maybe before we can compile that list, some of them especially those who have been here from lower grades, we know them. So sometimes we don't have to ask because we know them since we have taught them in lower grades unless the new ones but as a class teacher also we try to maintain or to build teacher-learner relationship whereby you know your learners. In my class I know the learners who are struggling. And we buy clothes for them and even you know, we even pay for these parents to come over when we invite them to the school because some will say, mam I got your message but I'm unable to come over there because I don't have money. So, we will just say, get some money from your

neighbours and I'll pay it back. There are a lot of challenges. So, if you don't have that passion, that love you know... you won't make it.

Interviewer: You spoke earlier on about some educators being stingy but what about emotional support?

Interviewee: Ya! That is why I was saying to offer help, it is not tailored that it should be in the form of money because also whatever information, advice, support that will be given to that particular needy learner will suffice. So not all of the educators but even those who are not doing that or maybe those who are not fond of doing that, they are trying because the majority are offering that support.

Interviewer: In your view, how functional is your SBST?

Interviewee: Not optimally. We try to do our best but we get stuck because we don't know how to help. If you talk about remedial, we don't have expertise; if you talk about identifying and addressing emotional needs, we don't have expertise; if you talk about counselling, we don't have expertise... At the end, we are only limited to providing for the learners' physical needs because in that area, at least we have the Nutrition programme and donations for clothes.

Interviewer: Alright. Does the entire school work together to support the learners?

Interviewee: Most do but some teachers choose not to do it and when we engage them, they tell us about the workload. The principal tried to instil that spirit of caring to them but they say they are not social workers. I think it is just a matter of a negative attitude. Even when a person is free and you ask them to help a needy learner, they still refuse. Some people are just angry and bitter and you would not even know what their problem is. Some of them are bitter about promotions. I know of 2 teachers who were voluntarily helping the learners but they have stopped. When we asked them, they said it does not help because there is no reward for that. They said they applied for promotional posts in the school but they were not appointed and unfortunately, they also influence other teachers. It is just that 2 but others although they drag their feet, but they do help when requested.

Interviewer: The SNA forms are the ones you use for referrals?

Interviewee: Yes. They are used for referrals and for learners who need the district team intervention. But whoever doesn't need to be referred, we put them in the individual support file.

Interviewer: Lastly, what do you do as a school with regard to Ubuntu?

Interviewee: We put learners first. Academic, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of learners are our priority. I believe we exist because of these learners and we need to take care of them with anything that they need. In our community, we have realized as a school that these learners look up to us for stability and sense in their

lives because from home, they have many challenges of neglect and abuse. Even when you call a parent to discuss about the child, most do not even come, they don't care. One parent said, 'if you want to fail him, let him fail'. So, we try to help the learners and also try to help their families because we believe that parents who display a don't care attitude also have problems of their own, hence we involve the social workers for house visits.

Interviewer: Ok. Now we are done with the interview. So, I want to hear from you if there is anything that you want to ask or comment on.

Interviewee: Yhoo! As of now, I have no question. You've drained me... You've taken all the knowledge and you have sucked all the knowledge that I had. I think all the questions were all relevant. I hope whatever you hoped to get, you got it.

Interviewer: You have been very helpful. Thank you very much!

Interviewee: Thank you too.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: CT - C

Gender: Female

Position: Class teacher

School's Pseudonym: School C

Date: 20 June 2018

Time of interview: 15:00

Duration: 48 min 8 sec

Place: School C

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: You are welcome madam.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: Yes, madam I do.

Interviewer: Thank you. I hope you still remember that my study has to do with Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners with focus on how schools cater for vulnerable learners and their needs.

Interviewee: I remember.

Interviewer: Thank you. The first question states, what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Ubuntu... helping hand... accepting others the way they are and acknowledge where they need help and give out help where you can.

Interviewer: Ok. What is your understanding of pastoral care?

Interviewee: Pastoral care is the way you take care of someone. As a teacher, you meet different types of learners, from different types of home, from different backgrounds. Some are from eh! very poor families, some just moderate and some from well-to-do families. All these learners need our care. Most of them they come to school without eating anything. In this winter season, some will come to school wearing short sleeve shirts without any jerseys on. At school we have lost-and-found jerseys and all other clothes that were lost by some children. So, we collect them and first ask from learners who have lost something. After some time and when no one comes to claim the clothes, I wash them and distribute them to those learners who are in need. Also, they come to school being hungry. As I also work in the Health committee in the school, I am the Health coordinator in the school, the teachers will bring those learners to me in the morning. Learners will be complaining about headache, cramps in the stomach and so on. I know the symptoms already. So, I will ask them what they ate before coming to school in the morning and they will say nothing. What did you eat last night at home? Mam, I last ate here at school during break. So, you see that these children are surviving through the Feeding scheme here at the school so as educators we must take care of them and we must know them individually as they are. Some of them get injured at school, some come to school sick, parents just push them to come to school even when they are sick. It is our responsibility to take care of them, we cannot just say, your parents pushed you to come to school, go back home. So, we look at the condition of the child and we take the child to the clinic so that the child can get help. Yesterday one child fell during break, I think that child broke the arm so I asked one teacher to take the child to the clinic and they referred the child to the hospital. So that is what to me defines pastoral care... taking care of one another.

Interviewer: Why do you think parents would just push learners to school even when they are sick?

Interviewee: Many times, parents just push the learners to school so that they can keep them away from them. During the school holidays, they would even say, ha ke tsebe dikolo di bulwa neng e tle le boele dikolong. Le a re tena mo hae (I wonder

when the schools will be opening, you bothering us when you are home). When learners are at school, to them it is some kind of a relief because when they are home, they regard them as nuisance. Again, they push them to school because sometimes there is no food at home and they do not know what to give them. So, they know that at school, they will have a meal from the Nutrition programme.

Interviewer: You spoke about learners who come to school hungry and without proper clothes? Are those the only needs that vulnerable learners have?

Interviewee: Most learners in our school come from informal settlements and the parents are still young. Most of the parents are not employed and most stay alone in the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses. Unfortunately, the single mothers do not have any source of income and they rely on boyfriends to support them financially. New men come in and out almost every day. Again, there is no privacy because the houses are very small with only 1 bedroom. The learner will be exposed to adults doing things that the child should not see. Sometimes they even observe their mothers being abused and beaten by these boyfriends and it affects them emotionally and psychologically. So, they come to school with that lot of burden and sometimes when you interview them, they tell you they feel like they can die because nobody cares about them, they have given up in life. I observed one learner in my class and she was continuously crying. She tried to hide it from me but I could see her. When I engaged her, she told me that her mother was raped the previous night by some man who claimed that he has been giving them money and now her mother wants to dump her. She had to run to the neighbour's house for safety. When the neighbours try to intervene by calling the police, the mother refused because she is afraid that the man will hunt her and kill her when he gets out of jail. I tried to calm her down and then called the social workers to come and assist. They have been to the house twice already but they could not tell us the whole story because they say it is confidential. The child has since been moved from her mom's place and is now staying with her grandmother. So, it is not just poverty that these learners face, it is also emotional distress.

Interviewer: How then do you identify learners who are emotionally abused?

Interviewee: Ai! It is tough to tell. We also don't know exactly but most of the time we see the behaviour of the learners. Some learners become bullies because they have a lot of anger from home. They fight other learners and when you ask them why they do that, they will tell you a lot of stories... one learner told me that his father told her that, you need to be a man and a man is a hunter. As a man, you fight for what you want until you get it. So, when the learner is at school, he does the same thing. He takes other learners belongings and he fights them if they refuse to give him.

Some learners who are emotionally abused become very quiet and reserved. You can only notice that if you know your learners. If you don't know them, it becomes a problem to see that they have a problem. Sometimes we see it from the essays that they write. I once asked my learners to write an essay on their family. I told them to first draw a picture of the family members and write about what they do as a family. You can see from the pictures how the learners view their family. Some learners would draw herself and the mother holding hands and the father on the side. And if

you know how to analyse the drawings, you can also see from the colours that they choose. Again, you will be shocked from the stories that they write in the essay. Mostly they will write about the fights and abuse at home. It is only a few who will write about the nice things that they do as a family. So, when I have time, I engage them on the drawings and the stories, then they open up and tell me how they live at home.

Interviewer: So what kind of support do you give to learners who are emotionally abused?

Interviewee: As a class teacher, I will first try to talk to my learner. We encourage them to talk to us because we teach them that we are their parents and they can trust us. Some of the children will tell you their situations and we try to comfort and support them but in most cases, we refer them to the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) who will then refer them to the social workers because like us, they also do not know how to deal with emotional problems that learners have. The social workers will intervene on social issues like going to their homes and talking to their parents but then they cannot assist the learners with emotional problems. So, we refer them to the DBST (District based support team, hereto DBST) who will then send psychologists to come and talk to the learners.

Interviewer: What is the relationship if any between vulnerability and discipline?

Interviewee: Most of the learners who are vulnerable have discipline issues. For one, most of them come late to school and when they have to write, they do not have pens or they forgot the book at home. It is always a problem. So, they end up stealing other learners' pens. One learner even stole another learner's book and wrote in it. This other learner reported to me that her book has been stolen but we could not trace it. It was only when I was marking that I found her book but the hand writing inside was not the same as hers. The name outside was hers. When I questioned this boy who gave me the book, he confessed that he stole it and tore off the pages from inside the book but forgot to change the name outside. Again, these learners like to fight other learners and after interviewing them, you realize that it is the behaviour that they have learnt from home. One boy told me that they are 8 at home and the mother can only afford to buy half a loaf of bread every day. So, they have to fight for the bread every day otherwise they cannot eat. I referred the boy to the Nutrition programme and we identified all learners who do not have food to eat at home and we give them left-overs every day.

Interviewer: What programmes do you have in your school to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We do not have set programmes except the Nutrition programme where we give learners food for free. We also have links with Mercedes Benz and they have assisted us with a vegetable garden. So, we give our learners vegetables and we even give them to take home when there is plenty. We also have donations from individuals, community or NGOs who donate uniform for the vulnerable learners. I would also say the SBST but the SBST is not functional because the teachers in the

SBST also have limitations when it comes to some of their duties. They have not been trained to assist learners with learning challenges, they have not been trained to assist learners who have emotional challenges. Such challenges need specialists, professionals who have been trained thoroughly. So, the SBST specializes with submissions because as schools, we have to submit names monthly to the district office. I believe it is unreasonable for the department to expect teachers to do all that when they have not been trained.

Interviewer: What do you see as your responsibility with regard to providing pastoral care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: There is a policy in the department that is called SIAS (Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support) strategy. I believe that is what I am expected to do as a class teacher. I should be able to screen and identify the vulnerable learners, refer them for assessment and support where necessary. But because the support team from the district office takes long to come, we try to support them ourselves at the school and also involve social workers and sometimes pastors. My responsibility in pastoral care is to make sure that the learners can learn in an environment that is conducive for learning and with the minds that are free to learn without any problems hanging on their shoulders.

Interviewer: What is your make of the expectation in the Norms and Standards for Educators that speaks about educators having to perform a pastoral role?

Interviewee: That expectation is on point. As I say, learners have to be free in their minds to learn and it is the duty of the teacher to make sure that such happens. As a teacher, you need to try to address all the problems that the learner has so that the learner can perform well in school. When a learner has stomach cramps because he is hungry, as a mother, you organize something for the learner to eat. I think all of us as teacher, we are parents to these learners and we need to act like it. We cannot ignore the problems that these learners have and just teach. Most of the teachers do a lot to help these learners to an extent that they buy them school clothes or pay for their school trips just to make them happy. When the learners seem troubled, some just come to us and share their challenges with us. Even if we cannot help much, just hugging and telling them it shall be well, it helps a bit then you involve the social workers. For most of us, these learners see us as their parents.

Interviewer: Why do you say most not all of the educators help the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I am saying most because there are those teachers who just do not care about these learners. The learners even know them and when they have problems, they will pick only those teachers who show them that they care and that they love them. Some teachers do not want to be involved in the lives of these learners at all. The only thing that they do is to teach them but I believe they teach them because they have no other choice. I believe if it was up to them, they would not be teaching those learners. I believe all people have Ubuntu but for those teachers, you would ask yourself questions. But if you look closely, you will also see

that these teachers also have their own problems and unfortunately, they do not have a skill to put their problems aside and assist other people. For some of them, they just have a bad attitude. They claim they have not been trained to support vulnerable learners. Who has? But if you love the children you will try and if you fail, you would have tried and you can also seek help from other people for that child.

Interviewer: What do you think limits those educators not to help the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: It is their own issues, their own problems because some of them have stress of their own. Some do not understand what loco parentis means. They think theirs is just to teach or at least that it is what they tell themselves. The principal tries to encourage us to assist these learners but they will tell you that their duty is to teach and they have a lot of work. Even if you ask a teacher who is free at that time to take a learner to a clinic, they will tell you that they are busy with school work. I think it is bad attitude that some people have. They will say the principal should take the learners to the clinic or call those learners' parents.

Interviewer: What makes other educators to provide care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I can answer that in one word...love. It is not about being trained or not, it is not about being paid or not, but it is because we love them we see them as human beings and if you can help, why not help one day you will need help too, it might not be money but you might be stranded and you will need help from someone else. I for one believe that matsoho a hlatswana (one hand washes the other). You might be old one day and needy and the only person next to you might be that learner whom you ignored when you were a teacher...

Interviewer: What do you think enhances those educators to help the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Still it is love. Although the principal would give us certificates and award us for going an extra mile, I think the main reason is love because some do good things and they don't even want recognition. They will ask you why do you need to reward a mother for taking care of her children. It is her duty. That is how much they love these children. One teacher in our school does not have her own children and she has even adopted 2 children in the school. She provides everything for them and their parents even know her because she even takes these learners to her home for weekends and also visits them at their homes. Love is the thing that makes the teachers to help.

Interviewer: This is the end of the interview. Do you have any questions or comments for me?

Interviewee: No. I have enjoyed the interview and all the best in your studies.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for availing yourself. Keep well.

Interviewee: My pleasure.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: P - C

Gender: Male

Position: Principal

School's Pseudonym: School C

Date: 24 May 2018

Time of interview: 15:05

Duration: 63 min 15 sec

Place: School C

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning sir. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: Welcome madam.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: Yes, I consent.

Interviewer: Thank you. I hope you still remember that my study has to do with Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners with focus on how schools cater for vulnerable learners and their needs.

Interviewee: I still remember.

Interviewer: Thank you. The first question states, what is your understanding of pastoral care?

Interviewee: I think is the support that you would give to people who are in need of it. And eh! it can be the support that you give to people who lost their loved ones, children who have experienced divorce in their homes, people who are affected by illnesses, more especially the incurable disease. It can also be the support that you give more especially to the poor. From the education context, it will be the support that you give to the learners. You know, we have many children from different backgrounds and they are in need of support and maybe under pastoral care such learners will be our focus so that we give them the support that they need.

Interviewer: Ok. You spoke about learners needing support. So what kind of support are you referring to?

Interviewee: The kind of support that I'm talking about... let me give you a few examples. We have learners that are staying in child-headed homes and as a school we would call them and have discussions with them to find out how they go about their situations so that we can give them support. Say maybe they need food, we are organize food for them. We also organize them school clothes in order to put them on the same level as other learners in the school. It could be that we have a school trip then we would request the educators to pay for them, buy lunch boxes for them and at the same time those learners would feel that they have a sense of belonging. We also buy them clothes because when we have civvies day here at school and we have seen that most learners do not like these days because they always put on same clothes. So, then we talk to educators, actually it is an arrangement that we have agreed upon together as a staff that we adopt these learners. When we adopt them we basically take care of their needs and they are also able to discuss their challenges with us.

Interviewer: Ok. You have explained how you provide for material needs but you also spoke about learners who have experienced loss, learners in child-headed homes and also those who have experienced divorce in their homes. So how do you provide for such learners?

Interviewee: Besides the material things, as a school we have people who have adopted our school, the sponsors. I have engaged them to say we have learners who have barriers and they have come up with a programme that will help these learners with educational barriers. They are going to provide tutors for the learners who will remain with these learners in the afternoons and help them in Mathematics and English.

Interviewer: Ok. What does your school do for learners who are in need of emotional support?

Interviewee: The minute we become aware of such learners, those who are registering in our school for the first time, we engage them and listen to their stories. But because we are not professionals in that regard, so we have links with our nearby clinic and we invite the nurses and we also arrange the psychologists so that they talk to these learners and provide counselling for them on how they can cope with their challenges of maybe losing parents. It's not only those who have lost parents, there are those who have both parents but when you check you find that the background is not good and learners do not receive the necessary support. So, we also arrange counselling for such learners. Actually, we also have the contacts of the social workers, we have the contacts of the psychologists and the contacts of the nurses. When we refer cases to nurses and nurses are unable to provide the support, they would escalate the cases to the psychologists who will then come to the school to see these learners. We will then provide them with an office and they will sit down with these children. And they will engage with these learners regarding the challenges that they experience.

Interviewer: Ok. Before you refer these learners to the social workers and psychologists, how do you identify these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: It is easy for us to identify the learners with material needs because what we do is that by the beginning of every year, we distribute the forms to all learners in which they should indicate the personal information of the learner, of the parents. Then from those forms we are able to see that these learners do not have parents. So, we would call those children and interview them about their lives. The minute we establish that these children do not have parents, we then make follow up with them in terms of where they live, who is taking care of them, who is looking after them and then after we have gathered that information we then eh!... we have a committee called the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) within the school and we pass the information to them and they will observe such children. The SBST will then intervene by seeking clothes or food for them and escalate to social workers and psychologists if learners need emotional support.

Interviewer: Ok. You said you issue out forms to new learners in the beginning of the year. Is that the only way you identify them?

Interviewee: Ok. Throughout the year... you know this is something that I always remind the educators that you should have ownership of your class and you should know your learners and the minute you suspect that this child might be having challenges, you bring that child to me or the SBST and we will interview the child and the minute we realize that this child is going through some challenges or his background is not good, we will intervene and provide up to the level that we can and then maybe then the situation is beyond our expertise, it is then that we will invite experts in the form of social workers and psychologists.

Interviewer: So, how would educators see that the learner has emotional need?

Interviewee: Eh! Most of the time... I think it becomes easier for the teacher to notice that. What I'm saying is that you know if the child is not well looked after, the teacher can see from how the learner is in terms of torn clothes, damaged shoes or not having proper uniform and also what they use to carry their books with...such children will normally use plastics to carry their books. And you know such children will not even have socks and they are also not bathed accordingly. And once we realize that we have such a child, we will then try to dig deeper...dig deeper will mean that we even have to call the parents and get those parents to school. But then most of the time it is difficult to get those parents to school because they would say that they do not have money to catch a bus or taxi to school. Then eh! we would talk to the bus drivers... we have the scholar transport here at the school. We would talk to the drivers to say just for that day only they should come with that parent in the bus because we have called the parent to discuss this and that with them and when those parents come here, we would talk to them. Actually, let me say 99,99% of the parents would give us the permission to say that 'please look after my child, we are from this background and it is difficult for us' and the reasons that they would give most of time would like 'we are many at home and no one is working. So, it is difficult for us to buy this child uniform and it is difficult for us to give him food and so if the school has something to provide, that will be appreciated'.

Interviewee: Ok. If you have a learner whose appearance looks well and this learner might be having emotional challenges, how would identify that?

Interviewer: Ya. We do have such learners that you know would convince that they are from good background but only to find that when this learner is associating with other learners in class, that child will be reported most of the time that he or she is bully or he does not want to associate with other children... this child would most of the time be by himself or herself. The minute we realize that we try to talk to these children but most of the time such children do not feel free to can disclose to us or share with us what they are going through. Now because our lack of expertise, we cannot penetrate these learners and in such instances, is then that we will involve social workers... involve the psychologists so that they can use their expertise to dig deeper and get information from these learners.

Interviewer: Alright. Now what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: I would say Ubuntu has to do with sharing...sharing what you have with people that do not have that which you have. It could be that you have something, then you share with those people, it could be clothes, it could be food, it could be other needs such as eh! for example, a parent living with 8 children and then such children do not have benefits or luxuries that are being enjoyed by other children that they are associating with. You find that most of the time, most parents who have stable background take their children to places of interest especially over the weekend or so, so when you come across children then you realise that they do not experience that in their lives, you can say like on this day I will give some money that you can go out with other children or so. And you can...my focus is on the learners within the school and you realize that these children would eat whatever that is provided by the school in the nutrition programme during lunch time and after that we have other children then going to buy sweets and other staff and then now by providing a cent for those other children who do not have. So, in my explanation of Ubuntu and sharing, maybe I would also couple it with caring. Caring for me would be availing yourself, listening to what these children are saying about their lives, take that seriously and where possible, help. And where you cannot help, try to get help for them from other people.

Interviewer: So, in trying to show that you care for those learners, how would you help as a school?

Interviewee: How we help, we provide what they need. Examples would be food, clothes, entertaining them, paying for trips, buying them lunch during the trips and getting them help from experts that is not within my reach. Example would be on issues such as emotional support from social workers and psychologists. Furthermore, for learners that might be experiencing barriers to learning, then we... individual teachers would try to intervene and when they fail, then we have a structure called the SBST and we would send these learners to that body and that body will come up with intervention strategies to assist those learners. And somewhere somehow, we are able to assist those learners and where we feel we have done all we could and still we did not succeed, then we would complete the forms and send the names of those learners to district specialists that will come and

assist the schools by assessing these learners and try to intervene and support those learners. The challenge is that the process takes long to come and assist those learners and would be like you refer a child this year and the child is still in grade 4 and the child would get to grade 7 or even beyond before the child can be placed to another school where he or she would be able to learn at the pace that he or she needs to.

Interviewee: So, do you only refer learners with learning barriers to the district office?

Interviewer: Ya. To the district we refer learners with educational barriers. So, in our school we have this NGO and requested them to assist because the process from the district takes forever. They will be helping with learners who are bullies within the school and learners with educational barriers. The thing is that most of these vulnerable learners release their frustration through bullying others and being ill-disciplined. So, they promised that they will send their specialists to us to come and assist those learners. It is not like we undermining our district but we also thought that we can escalate these challenges to other outside structures considering that the district does not have enough manpower to intervene when they are needed. Our aim is to help these children in the challenges that they face on a daily basis. So as a school we try to provide for their material needs and for emotional needs, we involve the social workers. The SBST deals with educational issues and they refer the learners to the DBST where they cannot help.

Interviewer: What programmes do you have to support these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: The first one would be 'adopt-a-child' which we encourage all teachers to do. We also have these people in our community who will also assist these learners with food and clothes. For example, one community member bought 100 pairs of school shoes for these vulnerable learners and the other this is that we also have people who use our school facilities. So, we approached them and they also buy complete school uniform for learners that we would identify on quarterly basis. And then eh! the other thing is that we also approached one staff union and we said we have a challenge as a school regarding vulnerable learners and they also provide 250 pairs of school shoes for those learners annually. We also have a programme that is run by Mercedes Benz and we told them that we have learners who would have lunch here at school and the next meal will be again here at the school the next day. So, they have planted a vegetable garden for them so that these learners can have nutritional meal during break. They also provide seedlings throughout the year and they come and make sure that the garden stays fertile at all times. We have also identified vulnerable learners that are given vegetables after school to eat at home. They are supporting these learners with school shoes and bags to carry their books. The other thing is that every year, towards the end of the year we would invite grade 7 learners' parents and even those parents whose learners will not be coming back to the school the following year, then we request them to donate uniform to us. Then the following year when we do our survey we would identify learners and give them that donated uniform. We also have these learners who would lose their uniform and after trying to find the learner who lost their uniform and no one comes forward, then we give that uniform to these vulnerable learners.

Interviewer: What is your understanding of the relationship between pastoral care and Ubuntu?

Interviewee: I think they relate in the sense that they all focus on vulnerable people and in the school, it will be vulnerable learners. They speak about support, care, encourage the society to share what they have to share with those vulnerable learners. In a way I would say they both seek to provide care for vulnerable learners in the school.

Interviewee: Ok. I believe you are aware that the National Norms and Standards for Educators speaks about the 7 roles of an educator of which one of them is pastoral role, so what is your make of this expectation?

Interviewer: I think it is something that needs to be condoned within the school. I'm saying that because once these learners enter the school yard, they become our children and then it becomes our responsibility to take care of them and that means that we need to provide for all that they need from us...in a holistic way. And as a school that is what we are doing because we act in loco parentis. And 80% of our teachers have adopted those children. I believe we are parents and we need to plant something good in these learners in the form of teaching them and obviously when you find that you don't achieve in teaching them, you need to check what could be the reasons behind that and most of the time you find that...for example, you find that here are these learners and every time they get into class even if it still early in the morning, they sleep. And once you try to find out why they behave that way, you find out that they did not have a meal last night, they did not have a meal in the morning and parents were fighting at home and such kind of things, so as a school we try to make the situation different for these children from how things are at home. In that way we also encourage them to come to school because they know that when they come to school they are going to get that love and support that we do not get at home. So as educators we are parents and this is what I always tell my staff members to say that we are parents to these learners and we need to love them. I also tell them that in case your child is not attending school here, wherever your child is, you expect those educators there to love and treat your child as their own. And I think most of the teachers are adhering to that. I'm saying that because we have these little children in grades 1 and 2 and who would sometimes mess themselves and I taught my educators that we are not going to send those children home like that. We then arrange that they be cleaned up and we give them the clothes that we forever keep in the school for such instances thereafter we will call the parents and tell them what happened.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you find that there is a relationship between vulnerability of learners and their performance in class?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: How so?

Interviewee: If the child's home situation is not that good, it has shown that it also affects their studies and performance in class. In a sense that say that this child is from a family that is always fighting at all times, the minute this child enters the classroom, instead of focusing on his studies, the child would think about the situation at home or the child will just sleep in class because he did not get a relaxed sleep at home because he was scared. Sometimes the situation is that children when they brag about the exciting things that happened during the weekend then this child who is from this not so good background would feel sad and inferior and then become withdrawn and then that will have an impact on his performance in class.

Interviewer: You spoke proudly about the programmes that you do as a school and the educators that are helping the vulnerable learners. What do you think makes these educators positive in assisting these learners?

Interviewee: I think eh! when as a teacher you are doing your all to teach the learners and you find that you cannot reach them, it frustrates you as well so you dig deeper to find out what could be the cause. Say you manage to identify the problem and you come out victorious in addressing the problem that the learner had and the learners starts to perform better, that on its own would motivate you to do more than you are doing. That is how you get motivated that as a person you have made a difference in a child's life.

Interviewer: You continuously said 80% or most of your educators are providing care for these vulnerable learners. Why not 100%? Why are other educators not providing that care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Yes, we are still not at 100% and we have those people who are negative. I think it starts with the person's attitude but what I have realized is that they do not stay negative. I think they change their attitude because of the praises that we always give to those who are going an extra mile. One other thing is that it is not only these learners who have challenges, as teachers we also have our baggage. What I've seen is that most of the ones that are negative are the ones that have their own personal challenges and so they rather nurse their own problems instead of assisting someone else. Once I invite them and we engaged about their personal situations and I try to help as much as I can, I've realized that they start to open up and become positive. For example, I have this teacher whom I knew to be forever happy and this educator had adopted some children in the school but since this year I've seen that this educator has stopped caring for these children then later I spoke to her about the change and that educator opened up about the situation at home. Just by talking to that educator, I have seen that this educator has changed and she is starting to open up even to the learners. So, I think most of the educators become negative because they too have personal problems and are vulnerable themselves. But for some it is just the attitude when teachers feel that they are here to teach and to teach only and they have too much work to do. They are not social workers, they are not psychologists and they should not be expected to do all those things of caring for those learners.

Interviewer: What is it that enhances the educators' ability to provide pastoral care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Ya. It is not easy to make educators to see that which you see. So as a principal you need to think of means or strategies that will make your educators enjoy helping these learners. So, what I do is that during our staff meetings for any reason, I talk about them in front of others and thank them for what they are doing. I always have cards ready and I would present those educators with a 'thank you' card. In a way I'm encouraging them to continue while at the same time I'm encouraging others to follow. I don't just end there, I also talk about those educators in our parents' meetings and the parents really appreciate that. Again, at the end of the year when we issue out achievers' awards, I would also present certificates to them in a way of thanking them. I think that motivation is helping a lot because I have seen is that some educators would even want me to see what they are doing so that they can also be openly appreciated. I even said to them that all teachers who have been helping the vulnerable learners will appear in our school diary and I've noted that everyone wants to appear there.

Interviewer: So, you also spoke about the SBST. Would you say your SBST is functional?

Interviewee: To be honest with you, it is not functional. What I did now was that I even changed the coordinator with the hope that the new one will do things differently. So, the whole thing is on test now to see if this one will be able to perform or not. The problem is that the educators...although they have been workshopped, they have not been fully trained in the functions of the SBST and how to fully provide for vulnerable learners that are referred to them. Mind you, when individual teachers fail, they expect the SBST to come to their rescue and close the gap soon because the district process takes forever.

Interviewer: What records do you keep within the school when you support these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We have names of all the learners we have identified and when the NGOs come and donate anything, we take pictures for our school record which we also use in our school profile. We also have the referral form for when we refer the learners to the district office, we also keep records of outsiders' visits and interventions. I can avail all those documents for you if you need them.

Interviewer: Thanks. Would you say you work together as a school to care for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Not all. I still have to get the few educators that are not showing that support to join in so that we can all work together as a team.

Interviewer: What do you think makes the other educators not want to show support for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I have realized that the new teachers are the ones who do not show that support. I interviewed them once and they told me that they are still learning the ropes and they feel overwhelmed by the work that they have to do in teaching. But I would say, they will join with time because we have allocated them mentors to guide them in their work.

Interviewer: What do you think makes other educators to show support for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: I think most teachers are supportive because they love these children. Even though I also motivate them but I think the main drive is their love for the children.

Interviewer: Ok. Would you say you work together as a school to uphold Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Again, it is not all but we have things that we pride ourselves with in upholding Ubuntu as a school. Although we still have some who are lacking behind but we are doing very well on behalf of the school. I believe we can still do more considering that almost 70% of our learners are faced with those challenging situations daily.

Interviewer: What do you think you still need to do more to uphold Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Eh! I think we teach our learners morals and discipline and also to expand our support to the community by helping vulnerable learners. In doing so, I believe these learners can turn the situation in the community around for the better. I believe there is always room for improvement, especially in making the lives of these learners better even at home.

Interviewer: Ok. We have come to the end of the interview. Any questions for me or comments?

Interviewee: No questions. I just hope that all that I have shared with you will help you in your studies.

Interviewer: Thank you.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: CT - D

Gender: Female

Position: Class teacher

School's Pseudonym: School D

Date: 21 June 2018

Time of interview: 15:00

Duration: 49 min 34 sec

Place: School D

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: Ok.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: I still consent.

Interviewer: Thank you. I hope you still remember that my study has to do with Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners with focus on how schools cater for vulnerable learners and their needs.

Interviewee: Ya. I remember.

Interviewer: Thank you. The first question states, what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Ubuntu for me is about caring... not being selfish...eh! putting other people first... also thinking about how other people feel whether they are in need of something or they have challenges. Then you put yourself in their shoes and you think of what it is that you can do to accommodate them or to assist them... having empathy towards other people.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you understand by pastoral care?

Interviewee: Pastoral care to me is about helping. In our school, most of our learners come from poor families and they rely on the food that is provided at the school. But some get shy to eat because other learners laugh at them and call them names, so sometimes I taste the food so that I can encourage the learners to eat without fear. We also reprimand those who laugh at those learners and we teach them to tolerate one another irrespective of their home background.

Like these children come to school and they need someone to listen to them so as teachers we must give them a chance to talk and we need to listen to them. Maybe we can help them. Some children come from home stressed and depressed and sometimes as teachers, we just push them. So, if the teachers push them, where will they get help?

Interviewer: What is the relationship between Ubuntu and pastoral care?

Interviewee: To me they are the same except that you can have Ubuntu in you but you need to take action to take care of someone and that is pastoral care. Ubuntu should push you to act. You cannot just say I care but close the door in the face of someone who needs care... you need to take steps to help that person and that is pastoral care.

Interviewer: How do you identify learners who are stressed and depressed?

Interviewee: Most of these learners would isolate themselves... they cannot concentrate in class and some take out their stress on other learners and they beat them or they bully them, taking their belongings, pulling and pushing them. And when you intervene as a teacher, some will just burst into tears and some will even run away. I had a learner in class and he used to misbehave in class. Each learner will come to you telling you that this boy has pinched me, this boy has pushed me, this boy has taken my pen and so on... Normally I would just say to the boy, stop what you are doing or give back the pen... But one day I got so tired of his behaviour and I took him to my office. When I asked him why he is always disturbing in the class, he stormed out and ran. I tried to call him but he continued to run and he was crying so loud. The principal came out and I explained all that has happened. Fortunately, the boy could not go out of the school because the gates were locked. We looked for him and after a while, we found him hiding behind the toilets. The principal called him to his office. He resisted but ultimately, he came. When we asked him why he ran out, he refused to talk. So, we involved the social workers. After the social workers' intervention, they reported that this learner is physically abused at home. His father and mother beat him and that is why he is also fighting other learners. The social workers took over the case and they visited the boy's home and they are providing support even as we speak. Some learners do not want to write when you ask them to. They are just rebellious and when the social workers intervene, a lot becomes revealed like the child is rebelling because he is... he has anger that comes from home. Maybe the parents are fighting or the father has

abandoned him. So, most of the time, we see learners who are stressed from the way they behave.

Interviewer: How do you help vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: It depends on what the need is. Some learners come to school hungry and as a school we have a programme from the Department of Education called the Nutrition programme. Learners are given food in the morning and during break. In the afternoon, we identify the needy learners and we sometimes give them the left-overs. We also have teachers who have 'adopted' some of the learners and they buy them school uniform and they bring them clothes from their homes. The Department of Social Development also assists with school uniform and we also get donations from the community and some NGOs to donate school shoes for these learners. The problem is for learners who are depressed or stressed. As teachers we do not know how to deal with them. Sometimes we talk to them, and they get better...sometimes it is like we are making the situation worse. Remember, we are not trained to handle that need of the learners. We have a committee called the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) but again, it is comprised of teachers. Even if as a class teacher you fail to reach the learner and you refer the learner to the committee, they too cannot help much because they also are not trained. We would then refer the learners to the social workers but the social workers do not come every day. And they also get stuck because they cannot provide counselling. All they can do is to intervene at home and maybe try to help the family. For counselling, we need psychologists but we do not have them at our school. So, we refer learners who need counselling to the DBST (District based support team, hereto DBST). But the DBST takes years before they can even come at your rescue. You would think that I am exaggerating but I am not. We had a learner who had lost both her parents in an accident and the learner could not function at all. She stays with the grandmother and the grandmother only depends on social grant for living. The learner would always cry in class... she did not want to write. She did not want to eat... we referred her to the DBST but they only came after 3 years. Seeing that the learner cannot cope, I took the learner to my own psychologists and I paid for 2 sessions on my own. Thereafter the psychologists said she will continue seeing her and I should not pay, she did it for free. It has been 4 years now but this learner is still attending sessions. Her problem was very serious.

Interviewer: What is the relationship, if any between vulnerability and discipline?

Interviewee: The relationship is there. Like I told you about that boy who always disturbed in class, that boy was vulnerable from home and he behaved badly in class. We have seen that behaviour in many of them, not just that boy. Most of the time the learners who bully other learners, come from homes where you find that the father is abusing the mother and the children. One learner even told us that he is only happy when he is at school because at home, the father is always abusing them physically and he fears for their lives. So, we refer these learners to the social workers and they visit the homes to provide support.

Interviewer: What is the relationship, if any between vulnerability and performance?

Interviewee: You know, when you know vulnerable learners, you will understand the situations that these learners are facing every day of their lives. How can you concentrate in class when you are hungry? How can you concentrate in class when you are cold? How can you concentrate in class when you not having proper uniform of your trouser does not have a zip or your shoes are torn and you feel inferior? How can you concentrate in class when you are worried what is going to happen to you and your mother when you get home and the father starts abusing you again? How can you concentrate in class when you left your mother bed-ridden and you are not sure if she will still be alive when you get home? There is no way that these learners can perform well. We try to support them even with extra classes but still, most of them come with school buses and they have to leave at a certain time. Most of the learners who perform poorly in school are vulnerable. It is a very serious situation that these learner face. It's really sad...

Interviewer: How would you describe your responsibility in performing pastoral role for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: My role as a class teacher is to love these learners, all of them. I need to care for them to an extent that when they are hungry or sick, I sometimes leave the class and get them food or help. I am able to see when my learners are not well and as a mother, I have to act. I would call the learner aside and talk to that learner and I have managed to build that relationship with them so that they can talk to me about anything that is bothering them. I would try to assist as much as I can and if I fail to assist them, I refer them to the SBST for intervention.

Interviewer: From the Norms and Standards for Educators, educators are expected to perform pastoral role. What is your make of this expectation?

Interviewee: For most of these vulnerable learners, teachers are the only people they look up to for support. You find that the parents don't care, the parents do not support them, the parents are not around... there may be reasons why parents do not support the learners but at least the learners are sure that teachers are always there at school. I believe when you call yourself a teacher, it goes without say that you also need to be a parent to these learners. That is what loco parentis means. We are the parents to these learners in the absence of the biological parents. In my experience as a teacher, I've learnt that we are the parents even in the presence of their biological parents. We close the gap on neglect, the gap where there is no care, the gap where there is no support. It is unfortunate that not all teachers see it that way though.

Interviewer: Why do you say not all teachers see pastoral role that way?

Interviewee: The thing is, some teachers take pains to go out of their way to help learners who are needy even if it means staying after school to give an ear to these learners or sacrificing to buy them new clothes or cakes on their birthday, other it is a total No No! They just do the bare minimum. Teach, mark, get their salary and then off they go...They do not even mind teaching even when they see that are a learner is in distress like if a learner is not feeling well. All they do is just send the learner to

the principal. They won't even care to take the learner to the clinic, they will tell you it is not their duty and the principal should see to finish. If you ask them to help a learner, they will tell you that they have a lot of work to do and they are not trained to provide assistance beyond teaching. I mean all of us are not trained to provide that support but because we love these children, we try all that we can to ensure that the school is a safe environment for the learners in terms of feeling at home and being provided with love and care. I believe those are teachers who joined teaching maybe because they did not have any other way... they don't belong to teaching fraternity. You can only go all the way to help these learners if you joined teaching because you love it and not because you just wanted a salary. How do you work with children but you don't love them? It beats me!

Interviewer: What do you think limits them to assist the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: People can be selfish you know! Some people are self-centered and it pains me to see a person behaving that way as if he or she has never or will never need other people's help. In life you need other people, you cannot make it on your own. But for some people, they will even make statements that these children as filthy and smelly... they say their parents are useless and worse they even tell it to the children themselves. Just imagine! The learners know which teacher to go to and who not to go to because they know how each one of us will react.

Interviewer: What makes other teachers to go all the way to help the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Most of us, we walked the road. We have been vulnerable ourselves but someone helped to get us where we are today. That is how it is supposed to be. It is a chain that all of us must link because if the chain breaks, I don't know. Ubuntu and pastoral care are inborn, they are in your blood. To me I think if you have Ubuntu, you will want to help, yes you will struggle especially if you do not even know what you are doing but you cannot just let things be and say you are a teacher. What if it was your child and maybe your child cannot talk to you, obviously you will expect a teacher, a parent at school to give an ear and maybe you can help the child together. I know that we are not trained to provide that kind of support but we do that all because we see ourselves in these little ones and we love them irrespective of their social background.

Interviewer: What programmes do you have in the school to take care of vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We have the Nutrition programme from our department of education, we have the school uniform programme from the Social Development and we also have social workers visiting to provide support where need be. A formal structure in the school for taking care of vulnerable learners is the SBST but I cannot say confidently that the committee is functional because mostly we concentrate on submissions. Even the teachers in the committee are not so competent to deal with vulnerable learners or to even advise other teachers what to do to help these learners. I can safely say that the only thing I know we do well is giving these learners food and

clothes. The rest such as remedial and emotional support, we don't know how to do anything in that regard. We just try all that we can to calm the situation at the time, sometimes we succeed but most of the time we don't. Then we refer the learners to the DBST but please let's not talk about the DBST, it is almost useless. You can refer a child who is now in grade 3 and the learner would even get to grade 7 or even leave the school without any intervention from the DBST. If you try to follow up, they tell you they have a long list. We no longer bother to even follow up. It's just submission after submission but no help is coming forth.

Interviewer: Ok. We have now come to the end of the interview. Any questions or comments for me?

Interviewee: I know you cannot do anything but I wish someone can try to help us help these learners. Maybe we can have psychologists assigned to schools like city schools have or what I do not even know. I know the government will tell you about money problems but you can ask yourself, what do we want to use the money for if it is not for these learners who in future will be our presidents and leaders? If we do not take care of them, what kind of a nation will we be?

Interviewer: I hope so too. Thank you very much. Keep well.

Interviewee: You too.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: SBST - D

Gender: Female

Position: SBST Coordinator

School's Pseudonym: School D

Date: 04 June 2018

Time of interview: 14:30

Duration: 51 min 02 sec

Place: School D

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: Ok.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: I do consent.

Interviewer: Thank you. Just to remind you, my study has to do with how schools practice Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

Interviewee: I remember, thank you.

Interviewer: Ok thanks. Now, what is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Ubuntu is the way we people look out to taking care for each other. We look at someone's needs, it is about helping each other.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you understand by pastoral care?

Interviewee: Generally, pastoral care is very broad. It is when we as the school we take care of others. Like we as educators we help pastorally where for example, we have got accidents here that are happening during school hours, after school hours, in the middle of the day, somebody will just intervene where there is a problem. It is about taking care of one another, not only in the school but also in the community because there are people, there are parents in the community who need help and most of the time they do not know because of lack of knowledge. So, we take their contacts from the learners and we contact those people and give them advices and directions in terms of what to do if they've got problems. Sometimes some are in need and they don't know where to go, they've got problems and they don't know where to go. Some of them they don't have money for transport when they need to go seek help and we as educators we do help them.

Interviewer: So, what is the relationship, if there is any, between Ubuntu and pastoral care?

Interviewee: The relationship is there although there are some differences somewhere because Ubuntu is broad but pastoral is direct. As a people we need to have Ubuntu for everyone and we practice pastoral care to the people around us. Pastoral care in the school will be about helping the school community, the learners, their parents and the colleagues but Ubuntu is practiced everywhere, at school, at work, at home and everywhere. So, we are all encouraged to have the spirit of Ubuntu within us and help all people who are in need.

Interviewer: What have you identified as the needs of vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Eh! We've got learners in need here at school. Every class has got learners who have needs. The needs of the learners would be these basic needs which are the need for food, protection, security, education. So, some of the learners come to school and you find that they have nothing at all...no parents, no food, no people to care and protect them at home. So here at school we identify them and then... you can see physically that the learner is neglected from the way they appear sometimes not having bathed, no proper uniform or even with torn clothes. Sometimes we also identify them from the way they are behaving and you can tell that there is no discipline at home or there is no one to teach them the difference between right and wrong. All that then tells us as teachers that we need to intervene. So, when we intervene we would call the learner and interview the learner, that is when now we find out that there is a problem at home, that is when now we find out that there is a need for the learner to be helped here at school in terms of uniform, in terms of food and that is why we have this nutrition programme in schools. This was done after identifying that there are so many children who cannot perform well because they are coming to school with hungry stomachs.

Interviewer: Ok. Besides the material needs, are there any other needs that you have identified from vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Ya. Sometimes you find that the learner always sleeps in the class and as a teacher you can detect that the learner must be having problems. So, then the teacher will intervene and do what we call the individual support. We will then call for the parent to come and that is when we will find out that there is no parent at home and maybe the learner stays with relatives and the learner is made to work the whole afternoon and evening and the learner does not sleep on time or maybe social problems at home. Sometimes the learner cannot sleep well because the parents are there but they are always fighting and shouting in front of the children. So, then the learner is always tired and he sleeps immediately he sits in class or is always withdrawn. Sometimes you find that there is no food at home and the learner comes with a hungry stomach so the learner cannot concentrate in class and that is when now, the learner will always sleep in the class. Sometimes you find that the learner is sick but because he needs food from school, he still comes to school. Some of the learners take pills before they come to school and the pills then make them to sleep in class. We also had a case of a learner who was always sleeping in class and when we intervened we found that their house is a tavern and they sell liquor till late. There would be people in and out of the house every day, with loud music and sometimes the parents even send the child to sell liquor. How do we know? We will know after intervening and then calling the learner who will then tell us or even call the parents when we identify the problem. It is then that we will be informed that don't be surprised when you see the child sleeping all the time, it is because the learner's problem is this and that. Then that is when now we will have the information and we will support the learner.

Interviewer: Ok. You spoke about a learner who might not have parents. How then do you support such a learner?

Interviewee: Ya. If a learner does not have parents, we will then talk to the person who is staying with the learner and the information that we get from that person will determine the kind of help we should give. For example, if they don't know how to get grant, we will refer them to the social workers because we as the school, we don't go to that extent. We have a protocol that we are using to say it is school, then invite the parent, then we inform the district and then the social workers. So, we would go with the social workers to their families and maybe offer them uniform or food parcels, depending on what they need. So, the orphans in the school will be prioritized for the nutrition and uniform programmes so that whenever there are left-overs, we will give to them because at home there is no one who can provide for them or we are not sure if the guardian is feeding the learner properly because some guardians take the child grant and use it for their own benefit and neglect the child.

Interviewer: So what other programmes besides nutrition and uniform are also there in the school to support these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We work together with the Health department and we keep a list of learners in the school so that when the health people come we can readily give them the names of the learners. So, when they come, they help the learners on issues of health and the parents as well in terms of how to take care of their children for example when they see something disturbing about the child then the parents should take the child to the clinic. They also come to the school for vaccination and deworming of children because they cannot be sure that the parents will take the children to the clinics. On other social problems, we invite the social workers. The social workers help by advising the parents in terms of how to get child grant and what to do in terms of abuse and other social issues although again some parents, even biological parents take the money and do hairstyles and do not take care of the children. They also engage learners on issues of bullying, drug abuse and to report cases of molestation. They even visit the children's homes of children where there is abuse and families where there are orphans. They would also involve the police if the situation needs that kind of intervention.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you think there is a relationship between vulnerability and discipline?

Interviewee: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: How so?

Interviewee: Ya! If the child is vulnerable, there is where we have problems of discipline because these children use force to get that which they don't have or need. Also, they emulate what is happening in their families. Most children who are bullying others have seen their parents fighting at home. Sometimes the father would demand money from the mother and take it by force and learners learn that and then practice it at school to say if you want something and they don't give it to you, you should just take it by force. We've got many cases like that in the school. When identifying these learners who are misbehaving, most of them when we are intervening, we find that most of the problems are from home and when you call the

parent, the parent will tell you that I also don't know what to do with this learner because that is what his father also does in front of him... the father will beat me and even take my money forcefully while he is watching. Sometimes, this child will even do the same to me and I no longer know what to do. If the learner is doing those things to the parent, what more about the other learners? The learner will not even respect the teachers in school. In fact, the learner is doing that calling, needs attention to say I've got a problem at home but after identification we can see that there is a problem.

Interviewer: You spoke about performance earlier on. What is the link if any between vulnerability and performance?

Interviewee: Learners who are vulnerable are pressurized by their peers to have this and that. That is when now the learner does not perform well because instead of concentrating in class, they feel left out as they hear other learners boasting about what their parents have done for them like the parent has given the other child money for lunch or the other learner saying we were at this restaurant on Saturday or my mother bought me this and that... another thing is that the learner cannot concentrate in class when he is hungry or even thinking about the next meal or feeling sick. Sometimes the learner thinks about what is happening at home like if the parents are fighting or the parent is sick at home. Sometimes even when you ask a question in class, you find that the learner is not listening and when you ask him why he was not listening, he starts crying. If you dig deep, the learner will tell you about what is disturbing him from home. So, such learners do not perform well as compared to other learners.

Interviewer: I believe you are aware of the Norms and Standards for Educators that outlines the roles of an educator. One of the roles is the pastoral role. What do you think of that expectation?

Interviewee: I believe as educators we should play the pastoral role because we are looking after the learners and I cannot just ignore the learner who is in need. For example, if the child is injured and we call the parent and the parent does not have money to come or to take the child to the clinic, I have to give money to that parent for the sake of the child. As educators we have to work 24 hours and the teacher leads by example. I need to teach everywhere because even if there is someone outside who needs help, I need to help so that my learners can also learn from me. That is Ubuntu.

Interviewer: Do you work together as a school to provide for these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Yes, because we are guided by the policy and there is no way that another teacher will not do it. Even here at the school, we have a committee that is called 'Pastoral care' and it is informing us what we should do in terms of pastoral care. But even if it is not about the policy, we do it in line with Ubuntu. I cannot just pass any person who needs help because we are a people.

Interviewer: Do you work together as a school to uphold Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Yes. We teach learners that we need to take care of each other. For example, this month we are focusing on it and every day at the assembly we talk about it. We have divided the year into months and then we choose the value for the month. So, this month we are taking about it.

Interviewer: Now as the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST) coordinator, what do you regard as your responsibility?

Interviewee: As the coordinator, my responsibility is to oversee in the school that has to do with taking care of learners. We ensure that the learners are helped, learners are supported and make sure that even when learners are fighting, there should be somebody who is intervening. Academically, every term after seeing the performance, as educators we need to make sure that all the protocols are followed, the procedures are followed so that at the end we support the learners that are at risk of failing at the end of the year. I also make sure that the other stakeholders are involved to support the learners. I need to make sure that we continuously talk about the support for learners in our meetings. And in terms of the submissions to the district, I need to make sure that we do things in time so that we can meet the submission deadline. So, I oversee that the SBST is functional.

Interviewer: You spoke about the protocol. Can you please outline what you mean by the protocol?

Interviewee: Ok. In the SBST we've got the protocol. So, from the classroom, we have many learners and some we don't even know because they might be new in our school or new with another teacher. So as the educator, the first thing is to identify learners who are at risk of failing at the end of the year, and then the educator will complete SNA (Support needs assessment) form and refer the learner to the SBST. So, the SBST will then make sure that the learner is supported before they can refer the learner to the DBST (District based support team, hereto DBST). From the DBST they will send people to come and assess the learners. So that is the protocol that we are talking about so that if there is a serious problem, then the learner will be placed in a special school. But there is no way that the district will place a learner in a special school without the school following the protocol as I have mentioned. We keep records every term after identification of learners so that the next term we know who should we support and on what and the list is also submitted to the district. We update the list every term because you might find that the one learner was at risk in this term and after the support, the learner changes and we now have a new learner. That is why we do it every term. We also keep the screening forms and the SNA forms and we identify the learner and then also write the problems that you have identified from each learner because you cannot just support the learner if you don't know the problem of the learner. We also submit copies to the district when we submit the retention schedules at the end of each term.

Interviewer: Alright. Is the SBST only working with learners with learning barriers?

Interviewee: No. The SBST also works with learners with behavioural problems, the other thing is the learners who are orphans and also the needy learners even if they are not orphans.

Interviewer: Now we are done with the interview. Any question or comment from yourself?

Interviewee: We have a problem with the DBST because as a school we would follow the whole procedure and submit to the district and the team takes very long before they come for assessment. So, you find that the you identified the learner in grade 3 and the learner remains in the school up until the learner reaches grade 7 and the parent will also be asking questions to say why has my child not been taken to a special school. The process takes forever and the learners are disadvantaged. They won't even give you updates and when we ask, they tell us that the list is very long and the special schools can only take a limited number of learners per year. And then you find that the learner after finishing grade 7, they end up in the streets because they cannot cope in the main stream and cannot be placed in special schools on time. Then you ask yourself why does the district then not give us remedial teachers and psychologists for maybe a cluster of schools so that then there may not be a need for learners to be moved to special school...the learners can be assisted while they still in the school.

Interviewer: Ya neh! It's a lot of things. Otherwise, thank you for your time.

Interviewee: My pleasure.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant's Pseudonym: P - E

Gender: Female

Position: Principal

School's Pseudonym: School E

Date: 28 May 2018

Time of interview: 15:10

Duration: 58 min 2 sec

Place: School E

Interviewer: Sekhu MS

Interviewer: Good morning mam. Thank you for availing yourself to this interview.

Interviewee: You are welcome madam.

Interviewer: Before we start, I need to confirm if you still consent to the interview?

Interviewee: Yes, I still do.

Interviewer: Thank you. Just to remind you, my study has to do with how schools practice Ubuntu and pastoral care for vulnerable learners.

Interviewee: I remember yes.

Interviewer: Ok. What is your understanding of the concept of pastoral care?

Interviewee: My understanding of pastoral care is that it has to do with the spiritual being, eh! I need to ensure that as a teacher I need to attend to learners in totality including the staff members to ensure that they are well and they can perform optimally. Because as a principal, if one is down spiritually, I need to uplift their morale as a principal and if possible, I need to intervene and follow up with a staff member of learner and also find out what could be bothering them. If it social problems, where possible I should also ensure that I am available for that person to confide in me so that I can assist that particular individual.

Interviewer: Ok. You spoke about spiritual needs and social needs. How do you identify learners with spiritual needs?

Interviewee: We don't have a way that I can say... but we just refer learners to the pastors after we have tried to intervene and we failed. We believe in the power of prayer. But we consult with the parents first because the law does not allow us to just pray for the learners without getting permission from their parents.

Interviewer: How do you know that a learner has a spiritual need?

Interviewee: It is difficult to tell but normally we believe that the total person also has to be catered for in terms of their spiritual need. So normally as a school we emphasise that we should pray for one another and learners will come voluntary to us or the pastor who visits the school to ask for prayers. They see us teachers doing that so they copy that.

Interviewer: Ok. How do you assist in terms of spiritual needs?

Interviewee: Eh! at some point we... let me give this example, we normally start our meetings with a prayer, we also try to uplift one's spirits and in case one of us not well, we normally have a chain of prayer and we normally refer to some of our teachers who are also Christians in our school for...I'll call it sort of counselling of some sort, preferably we also have one lady teacher in our school who also did counselling because you sometimes find out that one might not have the necessary resources financially to consult professionals but amongst ourselves as staff members we also make sure that we take care of ourselves, not having to wait for the professionals because if one's morale is down it will obviously also affect the performance. As a result, we talk amongst ourselves for spiritual and emotional upliftment. And for the learners' spiritual need as well as teachers, we have our pastor who normally comes to us during the week to uplift us spiritually and motivate us and if we have time, he will even have one-on-one prayer sessions with individuals. Learners will also be encouraged to fear God through prayers and being motivated in line with their studies through prayer because for everything, we need to start with prayer. But it is not compulsory because we are also aware that there are learners who do not follow Christianity and so we do not force anyone.

Interviewer: Ok. How do you support the learners in terms of the social needs?

Interviewee: In terms of the social needs eh!... because that now we not trained to can access these learners because you find that there are these learners who are withdrawn. So, what I did, I partnered with UNISA specifically for the same issue of social challenges, social needs so they send student social workers who are in level 4. So, if we intervene with these learners and we cannot reach out to them positively so, we use the skills of these social workers because they are trained in that area. Now they then come and give me feedback after their interventions to say with this learner, this is what is happening and then the family will be invited also if the problem needs the presence of the parents. So, the parents will come and they meet with the social workers. Sometimes we find breakthrough with regard to the social issues. So, in terms of social needs, student social workers from UNISA are helping us in that regard. We also visit the families where there is a need, for example there was one child who did not have a birth certificate due to broken family. The mother passed on and the child was handed over to the father a week before the mother passed on. We are still working on it because the child will be doing grade 8 next year and we followed up with the social workers and also to Home Affairs through the help of the social workers. So, the matter is receiving attention now so that we look at the social being of this learner because if the child does not have a birth certificate, the chances of the child being admitted are very slim because the admission process, they need the birth certificate. This might also frustrate the child because the father is also in the Eastern Cape and has left the child with the caregiver but he does not have proper documentation.

Interviewer: When you talk about social needs, what actually do you mean?

Interviewee: We have learners who do not have for example clothes, school uniform, shoes. So those are not privileges, it is a need. We have learners who do not have lunch boxes, we have learners who do not have a meal when they go home. So those are the needs of these learners so as a school we identify those learners and

also liaise with stakeholders so that they can take care of those learners. Some companies will donate pair of shoes for those learners, some teachers have also adopted some learners whom we sponsor in terms of school uniform and we also identify those learners who are vulnerable and they do not have the means to have it all and such learners we give them food parcels after consulting with the district office and we give them left overs and also some food that is in over supply that these learners can also have something to eat even when they are at home and there are also some who are orphans and it very tough at home and you find that when they have to eat, it's a problem. We also do home visits and we find that unfortunately the environment there is not conducive for children and we refer such cases to Social Development for intervention even though sometimes it is very difficult because you find that these learners they do not have any documentation and there is no any form of help, some of the family members are not even aware as to where to start and so as a school that is where we come in and we give advices, we refer through the help of the social workers. For example, last week I also had one from the district who also assisted me with that child though we are not yet there. So, we are partnering as a school. So, we have a 3-year programme with PFP (Partners For Possibility), so they also help on social issues. They are very much developmental in terms of performance because now if learners are so well taken care of, their social environment also affects their performance. We also have the SBST (School based support team, hereto SBST), they are playing a very crucial role on issues of social needs and that is where now we keep records of such learners, we liaise with the district and such learners are also referred to the district office for intervention and advice.

Interviewer: Earlier on you also spoke about the emotional need. How then do you provide for vulnerable learners' emotional need?

Interviewee: Honestly speaking, most of our learners are vulnerable, some of them come from child headed homes and so emotionally it is taking a lot from them and as a result, some of them they are turning to be bullies and when you start to intervene and dig deeper, you find that there is a problem at home. Both socially and emotionally they go hand in hand because if in the family there is no stability and the parents are fighting or unemployment, it also affects the child emotionally. What we normally do is that we conduct interviews with these learners to try and find out what is happening at home and what is wrong with the child but it is when sit down with the child you find that the child has a lot of anger and it emanates from home and it affects their emotional being. You might find that even the parents are not even aware of the child's behaviour at the school because they become so disruptive eh! the ill-behaviour. Sometimes we need to be in loco parentis because these children they need someone they can talk to, they need someone they can confide in and they do not get such support from home. We managed to get a lot of breakthrough as we talk to these learners and you find that at home, unfortunately there is no one at home who is taking care of this child and the kids are left to fend for themselves and you also find that other learners are also teasing them because of their background. So, what we do is that we talk to all learners so that they treat each other with respect and we teach them not to use their backgrounds to tease them because it is not that their doing to be like that and that is Ubuntu at the same time because if don't care about the person next to you, it becomes a challenge. We also

teach them to tolerate each other and appreciate one another. We also encourage learners to have peers that they can talk amongst themselves and we also encourage them to come and report as long as it is in the benefit of their fellow learners.

Interviewer: Ok. How then do you identify vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Eh! Unfortunately, it is not easy to get through them. Some of them are withdrawn and we have large classes but because of the passion from the staff, you find that... to start with, late coming... when you start to intervene, you find that there is a problem at home. The child is walking a very long distance to school, there is no money for a bus. Others it's hunger. You find that the learner will get the first plate and then go back again to get another plate. And the first plate, the learner will then take it home. Others when they are with friends, their peers will come and tell you that this learner is having serious challenges at home and that is when now we interview the learners and then we find out about the challenges at home. For some teachers will be able to see them from the way they are dressing, without uniform, without shoes or with damaged shoes. But there are these learners that when you look at this particular child and you cannot even see whether the child has challenges or not. So, it becomes very difficult to identify such learners but we encourage our teachers to spend a lot of time with these learners and as you win their hearts that is when now they will come to you and confide and tell you their stories. Then we talk to the student social workers to say consider looking at this particular child and we organize an appointment for them to see the child. So, a lot is then revealed during the interviews because the technique that these social workers are using is different from what we as teachers because they have been trained to dig deeper. And then there are follow ups questions and the child will be able to open up and relate their plight.

Interviewer: What programmes do you have to support these vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: We have links with Department of Health and they help on issues such as deworming and others might have sight problems especially from vulnerable learners so we partnered with the Department of Health and they help us in that regard for eye testing. We also have the support from the district office because when learners do not perform and you start to focus on them, you find that they cannot perform as expected because of their background. That also affects their writing skills, their reading skills, and then we refer them to the ISS (Inclusion and Special schools, hereto ISS) unit and they intervene too. Other programme is, we have learners who are orphans... we have the candle light observation, we have the HIV/AIDS programme where we also teach these learners about such issues and at the same time we also have the Department of Social Development who will also come and provide support and they also have 'Ke Moja' programme from the Department of Social Development and they discuss with the learners issues of drugs and to motivate them so that they don't have to lose hope and end up using drugs. So, we have partnered with a lot of stakeholders with regard to helping such learners.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you have learners who are using drugs?

Interviewee: Yes, we do. Some of them are just naughty, we had a number of them especially last year that were sniffing glue and we referred them to SANCA with the permission and consent of the parents. We invited parents and some parents were not even aware. We only realized that when we observed that they were bunking classes, they smoke marijuana (weed) and some start with cigarettes and others sniff benzene and glue. But what we do is that we invite the families and we show the learners the dangers of using such drugs and we also refer them to student social workers for counselling for these learners before we refer them to SANCA. Sometimes we visit the families and the social workers visit the families too but we prefer to involve the professionals in that regard because they have been trained to handle such challenges. If the professionals realize that the environment at home is not conducive for these kids and that is when now they are then advised, counselled as a family. But unfortunately, most of them are from broken families and the learners are so frustrated and they think that the way to go because they see their parents using drugs too.

Interviewer: Ok. You earlier spoke about Ubuntu. What is your understanding of Ubuntu?

Interviewee: To me Ubuntu is about caring for one another. For example, one's house is burning, as a neighbour you will go and assist to extinguish the fire. If the parents are not there and the children have nothing to eat, as a neighbour I will extend a hand and assist those children. From the school side, we bring clothes from our homes to give to those learners who are in need. You can see that this child is almost the same size as mine, we bring clothes and give to them. We also encourage parents at the end of the year to say if they have clothes at home or the learner is no longer coming back, we request them to donate the uniform to learners who are remaining in the school. So that is the spirit of Ubuntu to say we give out to those who are less fortunate and so that they will not feel that they are isolated from the rest. That's what we normally as staff members and some parents who are supportive of the idea. We also encourage our learners not to write on their shirts to say we can still use this shirt and somebody can still use this shirt.

Interviewer: What would you say is the relationship between pastoral care and Ubuntu?

Interviewee: Eh! Pastoral care and Ubuntu I'll say they go hand-in-hand. It is not easy to can separate the two. Like I said that pastoral care has to do with the spiritual being and Ubuntu is about reaching out, Ubuntu is about to be human and to be kind enough, to avail yourself and go an extra mile to can assist where possible by lending a hand. Pastoral care means that you should give your support as well. So, there is a collaboration between the two, according to my understanding.

Interviewer: Ok. What do you see as your responsibility as a manager to ensure that vulnerable learners are being taken care of?

Interviewee: As a principal I need to ensure that the SBST is functional because that is the vehicle to make sure that vulnerable learners are catered for because if it not

functional, most learners will be left behind and it is going to work for their disadvantage. I ensure that from time to time we liaise with the district office in terms of the referrals of learners, we also follow up in terms of progress for those learners. I also ensure that we support them academically and some of them I'll liaise with one principal from another school which is a special school and if I realize that a learner does not cope in the mainstream, I look at possibilities that he can be accommodated in the special school rather than us wasting their time and fortunately enough, I'm getting support from my colleague on such learners. My other responsibility is that I visit their homes or invite their parents and make them aware about their children to say all learners have potential as long as they are rightfully placed. Unfortunately, some parents have this thing of stigmatizing and as a principal it is my duty to make sure that I talk sense to them and not to convince them but to persuade them to taking the right decision for the future of their kids. As a result, some of them I secure appointment and accompany them to such schools and through an appointment we are able to go to these learners' classrooms so that we can see what these learners are doing so that the parent may have a broader picture as to what the school provides. As a principal I also make the teachers aware that we don't have to be harsh to these learners because some of them are already frustrated and we don't have to add to their frustration and if they frustrate teachers, as we sit down in our briefings we share common challenges and then we refer these learners to some teachers who are coping or just request this teacher to say please observe this learner and maybe you can come with a breakthrough from that learner. We find that this is working for us. We also find that a number of parents, it is not easy. Some of them end up allowing their children to attend special schools. However, there is a procedure that has to be followed and it doesn't necessarily mean that if the learners have been given a referral number it shall happen soon, there is a waiting list there. When they go there these learners they become so happy and later some of these parents come and thank us for advising them accordingly.

Interviewer: What makes educators to be positive to assisting these vulnerable children?

Interviewee: We encourage them during our morning meetings and even after contact time whenever we are just sitting to say that these parents gave us their best children and there is no child who is incompetent. The only way is the approach and the technique that we use when we talk to these learners and the other thing is when these learners are not performing for example, there are other barriers that are also contributing to this non-performance and we also have one educator who is good and she workshops the other teachers to say this is how you can assist these learners and in case you fail, please consult with me and I will assist. The other thing that was a challenge was just to fill in the referral form and the interventions because the most important thing is that you need to intervene first and have evidence because you cannot just refer the learner without intervening first and without making the family aware of the challenges. But I'm very proud to say my school is doing very good in terms of the SBST. Most educators are very passionate about it and we also have one HoD who is also instrumental behind this.

Interviewer: Alright. When you say most are positive, it means some are negative. Now, what then makes other teachers to be negative about providing care for the vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: It is not negative per se. We have new teachers amongst them and they are still lacking knowledge and skills as to how to go about providing care. Mind you, the teachers are not trained on how to care for these vulnerable learners from their training institutions. So, we normally share the good practice with those who are able to identify such challenges and even the referral from one teacher to another with regard to a specific learner it does help because in every class we have learners who are having barriers. At some point you find that even myself I can be a barrier to such learners but through the expertise that we have amongst ourselves and sharing of good practice, we also robe in such teachers and the new ones we also workshop them on how to go about completing the referral form and you go about supporting such learners. As soon as you give those learners support, they start to like you as a teacher and they open up and that also gives you as a teacher the morale because you realize that at least this learner is also coming to the party in terms of learning. And some of them even though they are frustrated in class, the manner in which you approach them and talk to them, they try not to disappoint you during the period and as a result it also works in our favour in that they start to behave better and start to learn. We had some challenges before on the issue of the SBST where some teachers did not want to be part because they thought that maybe it is for some people. Our norm is that before you refer the learner to the SBST you must have intervention records to say what you have done before you can pass the buck. So, teachers do not have the option of not intervening before they refer to the SBST. We also keep on adding new members and we send teachers to workshops and then we allow those coming from the workshops to teach others and practice what they have learnt from the workshops.

Interviewer: Would you say your SBST is functional?

Interviewee: I think it is functional because even the district officials were happy that our school is the one with a lot of referral cases especially of severe cases. The district officials also come and assess these learners and their assessment confirms our findings. Then with such support and even the... for now I have about 3 learners..., although it's a marathon exercise, we have 3 learners who have been successfully referred to full service schools. So, I can say our SBST is functional.

Interviewer: So, is the SBST only dealing with learners with learning barriers?

Interviewee: Not really. We also consider issues, eh! if a child can indicate issues of molestation, we also refer them to the SBST and they involve the police. Those learners who are also sick. We have learners who are taking medication, who are also on treatment for those parents who have indicated and declared the status of these learners, we support those learners by making sure that they take medication on time. We also have learners who are on chronic medication and we support them but that does not mean that it is duty of the committee only, class teachers also assist in making sure that such learners take their medication. We also have learners who would come late to school because they have to take medication before they

come to school. As a principal I am aware of such and even the teachers who are controlling late coming of learners, they are made aware without disclosing the status of those learners to say if such learners come late, these are exceptional cases and they would know how to deal with such learners to say if such and such a learner can come to school, the child will come after 8 and we accommodate such cases.

Interviewer: Ok. Would you say that as a school, you work together to provide support for vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Ya. We work as a team and we continuously challenge those who are lacking behind to also consider themselves as part of the team that also assists the team that is supporting such learners. We believe that these kids are looking at us. When they are frustrated, some of them it is not because they are disrespectful or ill-disciplined but they need help. So, we try to encourage our educators and also remind them that we are in loco parentis and that they are expected to provide pastoral care. We also invite the district officials, especially for the SBST, to come and assist they said there are a lot of good things that we are doing as a school even though according to them previously there were challenges but now they are so happy with what we are doing. We also go to an extent of calling them to come and check if we are still on track in terms of what is expected of us. So, I'm very much optimistic about the team because they are doing their level best considering that we are not specialists in that regard. We also make follow-ups with the district office because also their hands are very tight because they have to service the whole district and they are very few but they continue to motivate us. Last week I visited a family which we believe that their child needs referral, and the parents are also frustrated but it was just to talk to the family to say the sooner we start with the process, the better for the child. At least they are now positive. We have also found that after talking to such families and giving them the advantages of their children attending such schools, then they start to have a clearer picture. We also encourage parents to attend open days in such schools and that's when now psychologically the child and the parents become prepared and start to understand what we talk about when we talk about special schools. Our SBST is functional and all grades and HoDs are represented and it is working well together with the SAT (school assessment team).

Interviewer: Considering what you have told me about what the teachers are doing, what is your take of the expectation from the Norms and Standards for Educators that requires that educators should play a pastoral role for learners?

Interviewee: Eh! Every teacher has the responsibility to ensure that we tap the potential of all these learners. We discourage the issue of the teachers passing the buck to the committee itself, hence all teachers are expected to reach out to all their learners and ensure that all learners perform to the best of their potential and in case they lack the skills, their supervisors who are their HoDs are there to provide guidance and peers are also there to provide support. At the same time the issue of the SBST is not to judge the learner but to ensure that we also create an opportunity for these learners and it is not like the end product of the SBST is to refer learners because we also have learners who belong to mainstream. So we can have remedial

classes but the learner must also be accommodated in the mainstream so we always encourage our teachers to say that the duty of the SBST is not to transfer learners but as teachers we also have a responsibility as a staff to ensure that learners are taken care of and we also have to consult if maybe we are not that competent, we have HoDs and if HoDs cannot help we also have educators who are studying in terms of the SBST and others did it at the university level and others did remedial classes in their studies. We also conduct internal workshops amongst ourselves. So, I think the expectation is reasonable because we cannot ignore the challenges that learners face on a daily basis.

Interviewer: Would you say that as a school you uphold Ubuntu as a team?

Interviewee: We do. We uphold Ubuntu. Eh! we also have parents who also come and bring clothes for the kids from their home... from their families. We also adopt these kids and we also liaise on behalf of these learners with different stakeholders to also encourage them to help the needy learners so that these learners feel special and feel like they belong to the entire group of learners. So that is how we uphold the values and the spirit of Ubuntu.

Interviewer: You said earlier on that the teachers are not trained to take care of these learners. Please elaborate on that statement for me.

Interviewee: Ya. They are 'social workers' when we talk but in fact they are not because there are other issues when they are supposed to reach out to these learners, they are only capable to a certain level. Remember, they have only been trained as teachers. So, when we use the services of social workers, it becomes easier because when we interview such learners and you are not strategic and do not know how to do it, unfortunately you are not going to win. Sometimes they bring these learners to the principal's office and you talk to these learners, you realize that you only get information to a certain limit but when you hand them over to the social workers, they come out with a lot of information and at least a school we will then get a picture of what we are dealing with and such learners we also show support towards them. Even though there also an issue of confidentiality with the social workers but they just give us a brief so that we know what we are dealing with and we try to be considerate when dealing with such learners because we now know the challenges that they are facing and try to be accommodative and supportive towards them. There are other cases that we as a school are able to win them but others are very complicated. For example, last week I had a girl learner fighting another learner and she had a very very bad attitude and when I tried to intervene and tried to find out why she was fighting this other learner, she continued to beat this other learner. I tried to intervene but she was not listening until I had to be tough on her and then I invited the parent and fortunately the parent came and the learner said she does not want to attend school here because there is bullying and I thought of transferring this learner to the school of her choice but later I realized that transferring this learner is not a solution and I needed to assist the learner first. Luckily the parent came, we had a session and then I also invited one of the district officials and the social worker from the district after interviewing this learner, there were so many issues that were then revealed by this learner, the in-fights at home and financial problems. There were so many problems that the learner revealed with the social worker but as a

principal, I did not get that and the parent did not reveal some of the issues. There were family issues that were very difficult for this child to can handle and hence the attitude and ill-behaviour especially towards boys because the fights at home were between mom and dad and as a result, the child is exposed to that. So to me it is also a breakthrough because there are follow-up sessions with regard to such learners but unfortunately, some of them they go unnoticed and the learner will end up exiting the school without you realizing the challenges that the learner is facing. We still have parents who come voluntarily so to see the student social workers.

Interviewer: So how often do the student social workers come to your school?

Interviewee: It is twice a week. There are those who are dealing with social problems like issues of learners and others are dealing with community projects. Although it is not enough but their visits are helping a lot.

Interviewer: Do you have records which you keep for the provision of vulnerable learners?

Interviewee: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: If possible, can you please avail all your records to me at a later stage?

Interviewee: No problem.

Interviewer: So what records do you have?

Interviewee: Lists of learners; correspondence with stakeholders to assist these learners; SNA (Support needs assessment) forms, incidents records and others.

Interviewer: Thank you. I will let you know then when I'll be coming for them. Thank you again for your time and sharing with me. Do you have questions or comments for me?

Interviewee: No. It has just been a pleasure doing the interview.

Interviewer: Thank you for partaking.

Annexure D: Sample of data analysis table

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
<p>1. What is your understanding of Ubuntu, pastoral care and the relationship between the two concepts?</p>				
<p>a) Ubuntu</p>	<p>P – A</p> <p>Ubuntu for me is to feel for other people. It is about sharing. In our school, we uphold Ubuntu in different ways. For example, we have a pastor who comes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. He preaches for our learners. He also guides and motivates the learners. We also have people who donate shoes, those who donate jerseys. They do it annually. Another thing, Ubuntu... I was talking to the educators that if a learner is sick, just going to their home to visit, it is Ubuntu. The parents appreciate that. For example we have a learner who is now deaf. Two weeks back I visited his home. The parents were so happy, the learner was so excited to see me.</p>	<p>P – A</p> <p>Ubuntu for me is to feel for other people. It is about sharing (P-A).</p> <p>I was talking to the educators that if a learner is sick, just going to their home to visit, it is Ubuntu (P-A).</p> <p>Ubuntu is not only material things, it is also about showing that you care (P-A).</p>	<p>Empathy, Sharing</p> <p>Guidance, motivation</p> <p>Caring</p>	<p>Sub-theme: The meaning of the concept of Ubuntu</p> <p>Sympathy and empathy</p> <p>Caring relationships</p> <p>Support (guidance, nurturing, discipline, motivation, giving and sharing)</p> <p>Friendship (listening, confidante) togetherness, neighbourly)</p> <p>Humanity (respect, kindness, helping, love, acceptance, acknowledgement, justice)</p>

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>I feel that is Ubuntu. Ubuntu is not only material things, it is also about showing that you care. To me that is Ubuntu.</p> <p>P – B</p> <p>Well. Ubuntu is an African term which simply means offering support to any person who is in need. It is about caring for others.</p> <p>P – C</p> <p>I would say Ubuntu has to do with sharing...sharing what you have with people that do not have that which you have. It could be that you have something, then you share with those people, it could be clothes, it could be food, it could be other needs such as eh! for example, a parent living with 8 children and then such children do not have benefits or luxuries that are being enjoyed by other children that they are associating with. You find that most of the time, most parents who have stable background take their children to places of interest especially over the weekend or so, so when you come across children then you</p>	<p>P – B</p> <p>Ubuntu is not only material things, it is also about showing that you care (P-B).</p> <p>P – C</p> <p>I would say Ubuntu has to do with sharing...sharing what you have with people that do not have that which you have (P-C).</p>	<p>Caring</p> <p>Support</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>realise that they do not experience that in their lives, you can say like on this day I will give some money that you can go out with other children or so. And you can...my focus is on the learners within the school and you realize that these children would eat whatever that is provided by the school in the nutrition programme during lunch time and after that we have other children then going to buy sweets and other staff and then now by providing a cent for those other children who do not have. So in my explanation of Ubuntu and sharing, maybe I would also couple it with caring. Caring for me would be availing yourself, listening to what these children are saying about their lives, take that seriously and where possible, help. And where you cannot help, try to get help for them from other people.</p> <p>P – D</p> <p>To me, Ubuntu it has to do with helping one another, like I am because you</p>	<p>...by providing a cent for those other children who do not have. So in my explanation of Ubuntu and sharing, maybe I would also couple it with caring. Caring for me would be availing yourself, listening to what these children are saying about their lives, take that seriously and where possible, help (P-C).</p> <p>P – D</p> <p>To me, Ubuntu it has to do with helping one another, like I am because you are...(P-D)</p> <p>...families that stay next to each other, they would know the details of how the other family is and others would even take care of the children of their neighbours. Because there would be people who do not have money to go to school so we would have people who would take care</p>	<p>Sharing</p> <p>Providing</p> <p>Caring</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>Helping</p> <p>Togetherness</p> <p>Know</p> <p>Care</p> <p>Neighbourly</p> <p>Sympathy</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Discipline, Rebuke</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>are... So those things, when you grow up, families that stay next to each other, they would know the details of how the other family is and others would even take care of the children of their neighbours. Because there would be people who do not have money to go to school so we would have people who would take care of those children. So Ubuntu is about support of one another in the areas of need. Ubuntu also has to do with respect and as children and we were growing up, we were taught to respect any parent and any parent would discipline us or rebuke us and even if it is not the biological parent, they will rebuke you if they find you doing anything wrong. So that is the way we should live and support one another.</p> <p>P – E</p> <p>To me Ubuntu is about caring for one another. For example, one's house is burning, as a neighbour you will go and assist to extinguish the fire.</p>	<p>of those children. So Ubuntu is about support of one another in the areas of need. Ubuntu also has to do with respect...(P-D)</p> <p>parent would discipline us or rebuke us... (P-D)</p> <p>P – E</p> <p>To me Ubuntu is about caring for one another.(P-E)</p> <p>For example, one's house is burning, as a neighbour you will go and assist... (P-E)</p>	<p>Care Assist</p> <p>Giving</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>If the parents are not there and the children have nothing to eat, as a neighbour I will extend a hand and assist those children. From the school side, we bring clothes from our homes to give to those learners who are in need. You can see that this child is almost the same size as mine, we bring clothes and give to them. We also encourage parents at the end of the year to say if they have clothes at home or the learner is no longer coming back, we request them to donate the uniform to learners who are remaining in the school. So that is the spirit of Ubuntu to say we give out to those who are less fortunate and so that they will not feel that they are isolated from the rest. That's what we normally as staff members and some parents who are supportive of the idea. We also encourage our learners not to write on their shirts to say we can still use this shirt and somebody can still use this shirt.</p> <p>DP – A</p> <p>Ubuntu to me is showing kindness to the</p>	<p>we give out to those who are less fortunate (P-E)</p> <p>DP – A</p> <p>Ubuntu to me is showing kindness(DP-A)</p> <p>In a school situation, we work with children from different backgrounds and as a teacher you need to show them that you care and love them.(DP-A)</p> <p>During break you can call them and ask them about what they ate or how they slept and they will open up with you because they can see that you care about their well-being</p>	<p>Kindness</p> <p>Love, Care</p> <p>Caring about the well-being</p> <p>Helping, Caring, Nurturing, Love, Respect</p> <p>Assistance</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>person that you are with or you encounter, not just to your family but to everyone. I think Ubuntu is about kindness...showing kindness. In a school situation, we work with children from different backgrounds and as a teacher you need to show them that you care and love them. Even when you are in class, you need to ask how they are and how they slept and what they ate. The learners get very excited to share with you and immediately you can pick on those who are quite. During break you can call them and ask them about what they ate or how they slept and they will open up with you because they can see that you care about their well-being.</p> <p>DP – B</p> <p>Ubuntu is about helping one another. It is about caring and nurturing everyone that you see with love, respect of whoever the person is. Not looking down on others but helping every person without looking at</p>	<p>(DP-A).</p> <p>DP – B</p> <p>Ubuntu is about helping one another. It is about caring and nurturing everyone that you see with love, respect of whoever the person is.(DP-B)</p> <p>It is about assisting that person who needs assistance (DP-B).</p> <p>DP – C</p> <p>Ubuntu is about love. As people we need to love one another and when we love one another, we will also care for others. So, as teachers we need to love these learners irrespective of their background, we need to show that we care and support them to be better people who can rise above their trying situations. When learners come to you with any needs, be it food, clothes or maybe problems at home, as a teacher you need to stand up and help the learner (DP-C).</p>	<p>Love, Care</p> <p>Help</p> <p>Thinking about</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>their background... even if the person is poor or needy or is crying. It is about assisting that person who needs assistance.</p> <p>DP – C</p> <p>Ubuntu is about love. As people we need to love one another and when we love one another, we will also care for others. So, as teachers we need to love these learners irrespective of their background, we need to show that we care and support them to be better people who can rise above their trying situations. When learners come to you with any needs, be it food, clothes or maybe problems at home, as a teacher you need to stand up and help the learner</p> <p>DP – D</p> <p>Ubuntu means caring for one another and providing whatever the person needs. It won't help to just care but not assist, if a person is in need, you need to do all that</p>	<p>DP – D</p> <p>Ubuntu means caring for one another and providing whatever the person needs.(DP-D)</p> <p>It won't help to just care but not assist, if a person is in need, you need to do all that you can to help that person. Ubuntu is about identifying the need that the other person has and closing that gap so that the other person can feel that they are cared for. (DP-D).</p> <p>DP – E</p> <p>Ubuntu is about solidarity and thinking for others, thinking about other people's needs more than your own needs. Not being selfish (DP-E).</p> <p>CT – A</p> <p>Ubuntu is a way of sharing things together... making everybody to get a portion of what you have... being kind to one another... motivating each</p>	<p>others,</p> <p>Putting other people's needs first,</p> <p>Generous</p> <p>Sharing, Kind, Motivation,</p> <p>Care</p> <p>Help, Acceptance, Acknowledgement</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>you can to help that person. Ubuntu is about identifying the need that the other person has and closing that gap so that the other person can feel that they are cared for.</p> <p>DP – E</p> <p>Ubuntu is about solidarity and thinking for others, thinking about other people's needs more than your own needs. Not being selfish.</p> <p>CT – A</p> <p>Ubuntu is a way of sharing things together... making everybody to get a portion of what you have... being kind to one another... motivating each other... talking kindly to one another in a professional way or in a good way.</p> <p>CT – B</p> <p>I would say Ubuntu is the way you care for other people. It is also about the way you behave towards other people. I think it also talks about the</p>	<p>other... talking kindly to one another in a professional way or in a good way (CT-A).</p> <p>CT – B</p> <p>I would say Ubuntu is the way you care for other people. It is also about the way you behave towards other people.(CT-B)</p> <p>CT – C</p> <p>Ubuntu... helping hand... accepting others the way they are and acknowledge where they need help (CT-C)</p> <p>CT – D</p> <p>Then you put yourself in their shoes and you think of what it is that you can do to accommodate them or to assist them... having empathy towards other people</p>	<p>Empathy</p> <p>Care, Share, Helpful</p> <p>Showing concern</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>community... the way you care for the community even the people close to you like, in the school it will be the way you care for the learners and the people you are working with.</p> <p>CT – C</p> <p>Ubuntu... helping hand... accepting others the way they are and acknowledge where they need help and give out help where you can.</p> <p>CT – D</p> <p>Ubuntu for me is about caring... not being selfish...eh! putting other people first... also thinking about how other people feel whether they are in need of something or they have challenges. Then you put yourself in their shoes and you think of what it is that you can do to accommodate them or to assist them... having empathy towards other people.</p> <p>CT – E</p> <p>Ubuntu has to do with caring for other...sharing whatever you have with others, it can be in the form of</p>	<p>(CT-D).</p> <p>CT – E</p> <p>Ubuntu has to do with caring for other...sharing whatever you have with others, it can be in the form of information, ideas, food, clothes, anything. It is about taking care of others and being helpful to other people (CT-E).</p> <p>SBST – A</p> <p>Even if you are not helping but just showing that you have concern about someone (SBST-A).</p> <p>SBST – B</p> <p>I think Ubuntu uh! Is to have humanity, to be human enough to a certain situation that</p>	<p>Humanity, being human</p> <p>Free will</p> <p>Kind, empathy</p> <p>Justice</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>information, ideas, food, clothes, anything. It is about taking care of others and being helpful to other people.</p> <p>SBST – A</p> <p>My understanding of Ubuntu is about caring for each other, big or small. Each and every person in the community must expressing Ubuntu by helping. Even if you are not helping but just showing that you have concern about someone. If that person is a person who is elderly, you can just ask that person to say are you fine? Can I help or do you want something? Even if it is kids and you see that he is not right then you need to ask are you fine? Did you eat anything today? That is an indication of Ubuntu.</p> <p>SBST – B</p> <p>I think Ubuntu uh! Is to have humanity, to be human enough to a certain situation that might arise from another person and then helping that person to get out of that situation...it is a</p>	<p>might arise from another person and then helping that person to get out of that situation...it is a free will.(SBST-B)</p> <p>I think Ubuntu is also about kindness, someone has to be kind enough to put himself or herself into someone else's shoes and also respecting the other person as a human being.(SBST-B)</p> <p>If you really want justice in someone's life, I think it'll make you to practice Ubuntu. Ok. You see if I talk about justice, justice will move you to take some steps to see people living a better life. (SBST-B).</p>	<p>All people succeeding</p> <p>Support, love, care</p>	

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>help the families through the learners to acquire some of the things that will maybe make their lives better.</p> <p>You see, when you want justice, you will want to see all people succeeding in their lives. For example, if you neighbour is hungry, you get concerned and you share with them what you have and also help them so that they can get the grants to maintain themselves in future. Whatever knowledge you might have to better other people's lives, you make sure that you inform them so that they can live better. I know we cannot all be equally blessed but I believe people are blessed so that they can bless others, it can be through knowledge, advice, or just helping through donations and such. That for me is justice.</p> <p>SBST – C</p> <p>Ubuntu is to be caring, like to be caring to learners and loving them and taking care of these learners to make sure that they are</p>	<p>We look at someone's needs, it is about helping each other (SBST-D).</p> <p>SBST – E</p> <p>Ok. My understanding of Ubuntu is that it means taking care of others, loving others and feeling pity for others. I once heard someone saying that love is a verb. You cannot claim that you love someone and when they are in trouble, you don't do anything to help them. You need to feel other people's pain when they are in pain and not be happy that you are doing well when the person next to you is struggling. It is all about love to a point of lending a helping hand when it is needed. (SBST-E).</p>		

Questions and Sub-questions	Responses	Segments	Categories	Themes/Sub-themes
	<p>supported on their needs.</p> <p>SBST – D</p> <p>Ubuntu is the way we people look out to taking care for each other. We look at someone's needs, it is about helping each other.</p> <p>SBST – E</p> <p>Ok. My understanding of Ubuntu is that it means taking care of others, loving others and feeling pity for others. I once heard someone saying that love is a verb. You cannot claim that you love someone and when they are in trouble, you don't do anything to help them. You need to feel other people's pain when they are in pain and not be happy that you are doing well when the person next to you is struggling. It is all about love to a point of lending a helping hand when it is needed.</p>			

Annexure E: Samples from analysed documents

Document Analysis Template

Title: Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools.

School's name (Pseudonym): School: E

No.	Type of Document	Notes
1.	Plans to support vulnerable learners	Resource approach no plan available
2.	SBST (Pastoral care) policy	SBST is available but evident on support for holistic needs of vulnerable learners Learners are profiled i.e. background, orphans + VC.
3.	Learner profiles	
4.	SMT Minutes on pastoral care matters	Very little discussed about supporting VOs. DVN left with the SBST.
5.	SBST Minutes	Members of SBST read meetings. Focus is on learners with material needs.
6.	Observation and Intervention books	Very scanty No intervention done for emotionally distressed VOs

7.	Support Needs Assessment Forms	Completed. Mainly on discipline and academic performance
8.	Reports between educators and SBST	Reports are just referrals No interventions
9.	Reports between SBST and DBST	Done through forms and no evidence of support provided
10.	Correspondence with parents	Available but most parents do not come.
11.	Correspondence with external structures	Support on school shoes, clothes and social issues.
12.	Any other relevant material. e.g. pictures	Pictures → donations.

Document Analysis Template

Title: Ubuntu and pastoral care of vulnerable learners in Soshanguve township primary schools.

School's name (Pseudonym): School: C

No.	Type of Document	Notes
1.	Plans to support vulnerable learners	No structured plan Support is neighborhood support done as and when needed
2.	SBST (Pastoral care) policy	No Pastoral care policy, Only SBST and Pastoral care is left out
3.	Learner profiles	Learners are classified according to their needs but not emotional needs.
4.	SMT Minutes on pastoral care matters	SMT minutes show no support provided by SMT to SBST.
5.	SBST Minutes	Minutes held but just to complete forms for submission to district office
6.	Observation and Intervention books	Observation on Attendance, behavior and performance only.

7.	Support Needs Assessment Forms	Completed but based on & above.
8.	Reports between educators and SBST	Nothing about emotional distress.
9.	Reports between SBST and DBST	Forms (and forms) are completed but no inter- actions on emotional problems.
10.	Correspondence with parents	Invites are sent to parents but very few attend.
11.	Correspondence with external structures	Donations for VLS SAPS → getting social bar & social issues.
12.	Any other relevant material. e.g. pictures	Pictures available during distribution of donations.

SBST POLICY

1. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 To promote healthy living amongst learners and the community at large.
- 1.2 To show respect, care and support to infected and affected educators, learners and their families.
- 1.3 To address barriers in learning.
- 1.4 To develop an inclusive education at our school.
- 1.5 To promote awareness programmes (1st December).
- 1.6 To promote self-confidence in learners with barriers to learning.

2. WORKING PROGRAMME

2.1 MEETINGS

Committee meetings will be held on the first week of each month on Wednesday after school (14h15 – 15h00).

2.2 WORKSHOPS

- 2.2.1 Workshop attendance to be compulsory by all committee members.
- 2.2.2 Each phase to be represented at the workshop (SBST).
- 2.2.3 A feedback to be given by every member who attended the workshop.
- 2.2.4 Written minutes during the meetings to be taken and distributed to each member.

3. ASSISTANCE OF LEARNERS WITH BARRIERS IN LEARNING

- 3.1 Class educators identify the learners in class.
- 3.2 He/she provides assistance to the learner and 450 support forms are filled.
- 3.3 If 3.2 fails, the phase educators apply other strategies to alleviate the problem of the learner.
- 3.4 If this intervention fails (3.3), the learner will be referred to the SBST.
- 3.5 During all these interventions, the parents were informed and involved.
- 3.6 If strategies by SBST fail, learner is referred to relevant stakeholders (specialists).

4. FIRST AID

- 4.1 Each class educator is provided with mini first-aid kit (containing gloves, gauze-dressings and disinfectant, etc)
- 4.2 Administration and PS. staff also receive first-aid kit.

5. PROJECTS

- 5.1 Care of infected and affected educators and learners at school.
- 5.2 Vegetable garden.
- 5.3 Supply of old clothes to infected and affected learners by educators and community.

SAT/ SBST MINUTES –

Date. 30/10/2017

Agenda

1. SASAMS
2. Progression / Promotion requirements
3. Appeals
4. November common examinations
5. End of year submission

1. SASAMS 2018

The followings will be done an SASAMS in 2018

- Grade 12 registrations.
- Promotion, Progression and retention schedules.
- IQMS -capturing of data by educator.
- SIAS -inclusive education.
- Extracurricular.
- School safety and Discipline
- School governance and SGB elections.

There will be training on SASAMS starting from January 2018.

2. Progression/ Promotion requirements

- We were reminded to use N4PR page 17 Paragraph 14(2) and GG 36041 Page 12 Paragraph 6(2) about progression/ promotion requirements.
- For immigrant learners in the foundation phase we should check N4PR Page 4 Paragraph 1(a)(i) ; (b) and GG 36041 Page 23 Paragraph 18(1)(a) and (3).
- No deviation from the promotion requirements.
- We should also check Assessment guideline number 6/2016.
- Terminology to be used on report cards are as follows: .
 - During the year: Achieved and Not Achieved
 - End of year: Promoted (P) to the next grade
 - Progressed (PG) to the next grade
 - Not promoted(NP) to the next grade
- Borderline cases 38 and 48 (Maths; HL; FAL) they fail.

3. Appeals

- We should follow the correct procedure and process.
- The school should start an appeal register immediately.
- Appeal to the district must be done by the parents, they should fill in the form at the District.
- Parents should be given 5 days for responding.
- The school should keep the evidence until the appeal is closed.

4. November common examination

- This is optional.
- The foundation phase CD's will be collected at the District on the second of November.
- The Intermediate Phase CD's on the 7th of November.

5. End of year submission

- Submission of schedules are as follows
 - Foundation phase: 29/11/2017
 - Intermediate phase: 4/12/2017

SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (SNA 1 & 2) (School Level Intervention)

Both SNA 1 and 2 must be completed at school level

A Learner Profile, SNA 1 and SNA 2 will be required when support is requested from the District-based Support Team (DBST).

SNA 1: ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION BY TEACHER

To be completed by the class teacher and/or subject teachers if the learner is taught by more than one teacher.

- To be completed if the Learner Profile or Screening Report or teacher observation or parent interview shows that a learner has additional support needs.
- Captures information that will be needed when support is requested from the School-based Support Team (SBST) by the teacher concerned.

1. AREAS OF CONCERN

Describe your concern about the learner.

ADD
Omission
Reversal of words

When did you become aware of this? Own Observation

How did you become aware of this – own observation or was it reported?

Negatively! The learner becomes aggressive. He loses self confidence

How is this observation currently affecting the learner's learning and development? Describe.

Complete the following table with regard to the learner's scholastic profile (information extracted from Learner Profile)

YEAR	2017					
GRADE	1					
RESULT (Pass/more time/ progressed)						
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ATTENDED	1					

Has any disability been diagnosed by a healthcare professional?

(as captured in the Medical and Health Assessment Form [Annexure D])

