EXPLORING THE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

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DECLARATION

I   Freddy Abilio Mlambo, declare that **EXPLORING THE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE**, is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

(Signature)

21 OCTOBER 2021

(Date)

DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my late father Victor Mshiyeni Mlambo and my mother Angeline Winase Mlambo, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time. I also dedicate the success of this dissertation work to my lovely wife Tebatso Mavis Mlambo and my daughter Lesego.

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ABSTRACT

The South African schooling system faces challenges which appear insurmountable particularly in school leadership. Credible scholarship has found that this is not only a South African problem but an international challenge. Many reports of the Department of Basic Education paint a picture of the education system that is in dire need of ethical leadership. One of the challenges is lack of school leadership that is able to provide the required direction that will assist to achieve the ethical objectives schools set for themselves. Drawing from the theory of ethical leadership, this study investigated the ethical leadership practices of the school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The study further used a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews being used to collect data. The research paradigm that is an interpretative, and constructivist approach was used in the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the generated data and the following were the results of the study: (a) participants demonstrated knowledge of the theorisation of the concepts ethics and ethical leadership; (b) there were differing viewpoints of the demonstration of ethical leadership practices by school management teams. This study recommended strategies to enhance ethical school leadership practices, where guidance, mentoring and support, workshops on ethics focusing on sensitivity and awareness training were identified as intervention strategies to enhance ethical leadership. The introduction of communities of practice was recommended, where colleagues could share best ethical practices as a strategy to enhance ethical leadership in their respective schools.

Key words: Ethics, Ethical leadership, Ethical practices, School leadership, School management teams.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CGAB	Global Corruption Barometer Africa, Afro Barometer
COP	Communities of Practice
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment Equity Act
GLOBE	Global Leadership & Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SMT	School Management Team
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There is a crisis of ethical leadership practices in meeting challenges that schools are faced with in our current educational system. These ethical leadership practices, which manifest in various setbacks, scandals and fraud have put ethical leadership behaviour high on the priority list of organisations, in particular schools. There is abundance of research on school leadership. This study explored the ethical practices of principals, deputy principals and departmental heads in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

Globally, organisations, including schools, are experiencing ethical leadership challenges in many forms, this in their view and assertion, Kalshoven, Den Hartog and De Hoogh (2011) argued that ethical leadership, leadership trust and reputation are constantly becoming a global challenge. Some of these documented unethical leadership practices manifest in the form of various scandals and fraud (Naidoo 2015). The reports on the ethical scandals and fraud concerning school leadership have led to strong public concern over ethical behaviour among school leaders. Considering these distressing occurrences, school management teams (SMTs) must take up responsibility in order to increase their efforts in demonstrating ethical behaviour and promoting ethical leadership. In this study, school leadership refers to the principal, deputy principal and the departmental heads (HODs) that constitute the SMT. In this study, the concept school leadership will be used interchangeably with the word SMT.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

South Africa counts among the many countries that are faced with ethical and moral decay and the cessation of trust in leadership from national level down to organisational level (Cheteni & Shindika, 2017). Amongst the South African public service departments that demonstrate unethical leadership practices is the South African education system. With a myriad of challenges, this study assumes that lack of ethical leadership is one of the challenges that makes matters worse. To mention an example, one of the scandals that was widely reported was the allegation of the selling of teaching posts by trade union members (City Press, 2015). This prompted the Minister of Department of Basic Education (DBE) to commission an investigation to verify these allegations (DBE, 2016). This ethical decline is, however, not only evident at school level but also at national level. The primary contribution the study seeks to make is that the existence or non-existence of a culture of ethical school leadership with integrity, morals, responsibility, accountability, consciousness, liability and a heightened sense of

awareness is needed for schools to succeed. The rationale of this study is further to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Education systems across the world are undergoing challenges that seem insurmountable (Covey, 2007). These challenges not only affect the education systems of the world but also South Africa (Naidoo, 2015). Many reports of the DBE paint a picture of the education system that is in dire need of a positive ethical leadership trajectory but one of the challenges is lack of school leadership that is able to provide required direction that will assist schools to achieve the ethical objectives they set for themselves. According to reports of Department of Education (DoE) (1996) and DBE (2014), the challenges facing the education system manifest themselves in different forms namely behavioural, systemic, transformational and resource related. According to Corruption Watch (2013a), an alarming number of cases of unethical conduct within the South African Education Department have been exposed through the internet, social networks and the media. Many scholars argue that the tone that is set within the organisation's upper echelons that are ethics and non-ethics related has the greatest impact on the organisation (Trevino, Hartman, & Brown, 2003).

Credible and consistent research studies indicate that there is a relationship between school leadership and organisational outcomes (Strukan, Kreso & Fazlić, 2014). Good ethical school leadership influences education outcomes positively. Lepholletse (2008) and Naidoo (2015) asserted that the role of ethical leadership is critical and central to address the situation of moral decay and ethical decline experienced in schools. Bush (2007) suggested that there was a growing concern that the role of ethical leadership in schools was not contributing to acceptable ethical practices as it should. He posited that school leadership which demonstrates ethical leadership practices is likely to be trusted and this will assist in solving some of the ethical challenges facing secondary schools.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question

- What are the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng province?

Sub-questions

- What is the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership?
- To what extent do SMTs demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices?

- What are the ethical leadership challenges SMTs face in secondary schools in Gauteng?
- What are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices?
- Which strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To explore school leadership practices that constitute unethical behaviour in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

Sub-questions

- To explore the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership.
- To investigate whether SMT members demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices.
- To find out what ethical leadership challenges SMTs face in secondary schools in Gauteng
- To investigate the consequences of unethical leadership practices.
- To suggest effective strategies that would mitigate unethical school leadership practices.

1.6 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical leadership is conceptualised differently by various scholars. Heifetz (2006) proposed that the primary responsibility of ethical leaders is to deal with conflict among followers and instruct them in the right way. Akdere and Egan (2020) stated that transformational leadership is the outward display of ethical leadership. Ethical leadership is defined as a social and relational practice concerned with the moral purpose of education (Ehrich, Harris, Klenowski, Smeed & Spina, 2015). To Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman and Christensen (2011), ethical leadership refers to the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. Lickona and Davidson (2005) posited that ethical leadership demonstrates the leaders' ethical beliefs, behaviours and values that they model in their lives. Walumbwa et al. (2011) postulated that effective leadership influences the attitudes and values of their followers. Though slightly different definitions have been constructed, all of these authors agree that ethical leadership is focused on influencing followers to do the right thing. An ethical leader simply leads others in one's deepest held commitments. Thus, it is in these contexts that ethical leadership in secondary school is likely to play a huge role in the school environment and subsequently rubbing off to the society at large.

Souba (2011:14) discussed the being of leadership. The art of being is defined as "awareness, commitment, integrity and authentic joy". The being of leadership involves questioning and re-examining deeply held beliefs and convictions. The process of transforming involves change, and the ethical leader must constantly be transforming. Souba (2011) considered ethical leadership more than a process but a calling. Therefore, ethical leadership is not defined by the task of making the right decision, but rather by who one is a leader. Consequently, as leaders in the school, the SMT must possess the necessary ethical leadership traits required to meet challenges facing the school.

Duffield and McCuen (2000:79) were of the view that "the ethical maturity of a professional is important because it reflects how the individual approaches a dilemma that deals with values". Kaptein, Huberts, Avelino and Lasthuizen (2005) noted that, in the end, ethical leaders can best influence followers by measuring the results of their actions. The authors defined ethical maturity as the ability to deal with complex dilemmas that involved competing values in sociotechnical choices. One matures in ethical understanding when having to weigh up multiple seemingly right options. The authors also noted that ethical maturity is achieved when a leader can make these choices without being influenced by his or her own bias. In 2005, the South African government launched an initiative called Batho Pele, meaning "People First", which was aimed at improving integrity within public administration through tighter monitoring of officials' performance and compliance with ethical practices. However, Raga and Taylor (2005) argued that such legislation and the proliferation of ethical codes of conduct would still be unlikely to put unethical behaviour to an end and suggested that, through appropriate training, public officials could develop attitudes and virtues for guiding human conduct. Integrity training helps officials to gain confidence in providing efficient, ethical and accountable services (Naidoo, 2015).

For the SMT to succeed in encouraging everyone to emulate these virtues and attitudes, they themselves should not be found wanting when it comes to good and sound ethical leadership. There have been several reports about the selling of various promotional and ordinary posts (City Press, 2014) as indicated earlier. This required the Minister of the DBE, Angie Motshekga, to commission an enquiry into the allegations of the selling of posts (DBE, 2016). There are also instances where some members of the SMT were found guilty of various corruption charges (Serfontein & Waal, 2015). These are some of the challenges that require ethical school leadership. The report of the ministerial task team appointed by Minister Angie Motshekga on the investigation of these allegations confirmed the problem.

Although considerable research has been devoted to ethics, Cheteni and Shindika (2017) noted that little attention has been paid to researching ethical leadership, given that a number of African countries have witnessed huge maladministration of public funds and corruption. This study argues that such behaviour is also mainly attributed to unethical leadership conduct that manifest itself within the school context. Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng, while addressing delegates at the Serious Social Investing Conference 2016 in South Africa, pointed out that South Africa needs ethical leaders who are not corrupt (Nicolaides, 2016). The SMTs should always be alert and conscious to the fact that being ethical should be second nature for them to be good examples to their subordinates in their endeavour to meet ethical leadership challenges facing their schools. Plinio, Young and Lavery (2010) found that one of the most serious problems facing organisations today is impoverished ethical behaviour and non-existent ethical leadership. Consequently, the authors noted that trust in leadership is waning. They further noted an alarming increase in misconduct by employees at all levels.

In supporting the assertion above, Darcy (2010) argued that 66% of people were sceptical about the ethical climate of organisations and doubted whether ethics within leadership even existed. This is what the author refers to as "a crisis of trust". Plinio, Young and Lavery (2010) concluded that the biggest problem in organisations and individuals today is a lack of trust.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This section deals with the procedure of how this study was conducted. The following sub-sections deal with the research paradigm, the research approach, the research design and sampling procedure, data collection and analysis and finally the ethics of the study.

1.7.1 Research Paradigm

This research used the constructivist research paradigm because knowledge was constructed from participants' worldviews and the way they understand and interpret the world in which they live. It is, therefore, subjective. Their views, expectations and perceptions of ethical leadership formed the focus that influenced the research paradigm. The ontology of the interpretive paradigm accepts that social reality is the product of an individual's mind as they interpret the world as articulated by McMillan and Schumacher, (2014). This study explores the ethical leadership practices of the SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng.

1.7.2 Research Approach

Various approaches can be employed in a scientific study. This investigation used a qualitative research methodology. It focused on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relied on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The aim of the qualitative approach is to see the world through the eyes of the participant, who can be a valuable source of information (Maree, 2016). Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks in-depth understanding of social phenomena within a natural setting.

1.7.3 Research Design

The research design that was applied in this study is a multiple case study of two secondary schools in Soshanguve. A case study is a research method involving an up-close, in-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case) as well as its related contextual conditions (Milfs, Durepos & Wiebe 2010). The advantage of using a case study is that it is an effective conduit for a broad range of research methods and is not confined to any research approach.

1.7.4 Data Collection Tools

1.7.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

According to Maree (2016), an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. Virtual semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected SMTs, teachers and district officials in Gauteng with specific reference to Soshanguve in order to obtain the information needed and to determine ethical practices of SMTs in the selected cases in Gauteng.

1.7.4.2 Sampling procedure

The population is the group of participants to which inferences are made based on a sample drawn from the population and a representative subset of the population from which generalisations are made about the population. This study engaged 12 participants in semi-structured interviews. The categories of participants were as follows: two circuit managers, two education specialists (Labour Relations) two principals, two deputy principals, two Departmental heads and two teachers. A purposive sample was used in the study as it is a non-representative subset of some larger population and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:199).

All the interviews were virtually recorded and notes were taken during the interviews. The interviews of the participants were then transcribed in order to capture the exact language used by the participants. Semi-structured interviews were employed for the study.

1.7.4.3 Data analysis

Thematic data analysis was used for the study as it provided a highly flexible approach that could be modified for the needs of the study and further enabled the researcher to provide a rich and detailed account of data. King (2004) and (Braun & Clarke, 2006) argued that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences and generating unanticipated insights.

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS, CREDIBILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY OF THE STUDY

It is critical that qualitative researchers produce research outcomes that are trustworthy (Guba, 1989). Trustworthiness of this study refers to how well data and processes of analysis address the problem in question, and, in this case, the exploration of ethical leadership practices in selected secondary schools in Gauteng. It further requires the ability of the researcher to capture the multiple realities of the participants and the schools that were part of the study. Qualitative researchers do not use instruments with established metrics about validity and reliability, but it is pertinent to address how qualitative researchers establish that the research study's findings are credible, transferable, confirmable, and dependable (Maree, 2016). Trustworthiness is all about establishing these four concepts, credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability which are described in chapter 3.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations refer to accountability towards the public by protecting the participants used in the study. Similarly, appropriate usage of public funds and gaining of public support is also important (Kumar, 2014.). Ethical considerations were observed in the study and the researcher endeavoured to take special care in ensuring that ethical standards were met. Protection of the participants' right to self-determination, right to privacy, right to autonomy and confidentiality, right to fair treatment and right to protection from discomfort and harm, right to terminate participation and all other rights associated with ethical considerations featured prominently in the study. The obtaining of informed consent and the institutional review process (Unisa ethical approval in this case) was observed. The researcher provided detailed information on each of these aspects. Informed consent was obtained from the participants as well as the Gauteng Department of Education.

1.10 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations are shortcomings or influences that either cannot be controlled or are the outcomes of the delimitations posed by the researcher. The characteristics that limit and define the scope and boundaries of the study are the internal and external factors within the school's environment.

Limitations include the restraining and restrictive factors that delineate a study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).The limitations of the research allow the researcher to plan the study within such constraints as access, time, participants and finances (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

They can include any features of the research design and methodology that affect the interpretation of the data (Simon & Goes, 2013). This study was limited to the Gauteng area within the Soshanguve district. The schools and the district offices were chosen in this demarcated location because of their proximity to the researcher's place of residence and could be physically and easily accessed. The sources of data were confined to the four district officials, two principals, two deputy principals, two departmental heads and two teachers from two secondary schools who had been teaching for more than five years. These sources would probably be most knowledgeable about ethical leadership practices in their respective schools and would possibly provide enough data about these aspects.

1.11 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

In this study, there are several relevant concepts that have been dominantly used. The concepts are defined below.

1.11.1 Ethical Leadership

Christie (2010) posited that the theory of ethical leadership and trust are repeatedly used interchangeably in the context of schooling. In order to explore their interrelationships, it will be best to make a distinction between these concepts. However, the concept trust is further articulated by Dirks and Ferrin (2002), Burke, Sims, Lazzara and Salas (2007) and Homer (1995) as a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another. Ethics is a philosophical term originating from Greek word "ethos" meaning custom or character. It is concerned with describing and prescribing moral requirements and behaviours, which suggests that there are acceptable and unacceptable ways of behaving that serve as a function of philosophical principles (Minkes, Small & Chatterjee, 1999). Ethical behaviour is defined as behaviour which is morally accepted as "good" and "right" as opposed to "bad" or "wrong" in each situation (Burke et al., 2007).

Ethics is the code of values and moral principles that guides individual or group behaviour with respect to what is right or wrong. Trevino and Brown (2004) also argued that ethical behaviour is both legally and morally acceptable to the larger community argues. Ethical dilemmas arise in uncertain situations, in which different interests, values and beliefs pertaining to multiple stakeholders are in conflict.

1.11.2 Behavioural Integrity

This behavioural trait involves truthfulness and consistency of words and actions, qualities that are related to honesty and ethicality (McShane, Olekalns & Travoline, 2013). Subordinates/employees perceive the consistency between leaders/managers' words and deeds and make attributions about their integrity, honesty and moral character (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Burke et al., 2007; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner, 1998). Integrity is defined as the trustors' perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable (Burke et al., 2007; Stedham & Skaar, 2019). Therefore, Whitener et al. (1998) asserted that two behaviours; i.e., (1) telling the truth and (2) keeping promises are the key behaviours in integrity that affect employee trust in their leaders/managers (Brown et al., 2005).

1.11.3 Behavioural Consistency

Whitener et al. (1998) and Robbins et al. (2009) postulated that employees (subordinates) regard behavioural consistency (i.e., reliability or predictability) as an important element of trust. However, if leaders behave consistently over time and across situations, subordinates can better predict their future behaviour, and their confidence in their ability to make such predictions increases (Robbins et al., 2009; Whitener et al., 1998).

According to Whitener et al. (1998), predictable, positive behaviour reinforces the level of trust in relationship and when leaders consistently display high levels of ethical conduct, they set a positive ethical standard to be followed across the organisation.

1.11.4 Transparency

The concept of transparency is another key element or outcome of ethical positive decisions made by ethical leaders within an organisation. Transparency is an effort to enforce honesty. With transparency, participation in monitoring the entire organisation is accommodated to minimise the potential for dishonesty (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The school leadership must be ethical leaders who are viewed as promoting transparency by sharing information in their relationships with others that is expected to foster greater trust and positive interactions (Hannah et al., 2005).

1.12 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1 focuses on the study orientation that includes amongst others, introduction and background of the study, the rationale for the study, the problem statement, preliminary literature review, the research methodology, ethical considerations and a brief outline of the study

Chapter 2 focuses on the role of ethical leadership in secondary schools. This chapter explores the theoretical discourse of ethical leadership and what constitutes ethical leadership. Related and relevant literature review is also evaluated in this chapter.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology. The researcher elaborates in detail how the empirical study is conducted. This chapter also covers in detail all the phases involved in data collection.

In Chapter 4, data gathered through the semi-structured interviews has been analysed, interpreted and discussed.

Chapter 5 summarises the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study

1.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Ethical leadership practices of SMTs in secondary schools are a critical foundation for enhancing ethical self-awareness. The chapter discussed characteristics and concepts that increase transparency for creating or building a culture of ethical leadership that is more inclusive as well as being explicit in linking it to personal values. The role of ethical leadership and moral awareness were highlighted as very important concepts that are often used interchangeably and interrelated within the school and are clearly referenced in this study.

However, as they are interactional, the study further looked to explore leader-followers' relationships. In addition, for ethical leadership in the schools to become effective and authentic, the SMT need a repertoire of behaviours and skills as moral agents in order to conduct themselves in the manner expected within the school environment. The chapter introduced areas of ethical leadership practices that need to be examined in assisting the SMT to meet ethical leadership challenges facing the school. The next chapter provides a discussion of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW, CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Ethical school leadership is conceptualised within the ethical leadership paradigms of ethics of care, ethics of justice, ethics of critique and ethics of the profession which has over time been considered a value-based activity. The failure of leaders in corporate organisations, and more recently in educational settings, to uphold stakeholders' trust, has led to calls for value-based leadership grounded in ethical and moral foundations (Copeland, 2014). Secondary school management teams (SMTs) continue to grapple with ethical leadership challenges, such as mismanagement of school funds, sexual misconduct, where they have to understand education as a moral and ethical activity that is highly value laden. Ehrich, Cranston, and Kimber (2011) posited that ethical values such as honesty, accountability, integrity and professionalism are viewed as key components of ethical behaviour, which are often seen as prescriptive rather than descriptive since ethical leadership is concerned with "what we ought to do". These ethical values are critical in secondary schools in South Africa because there are ongoing reports on the questionable conduct of school leadership on several issues.

Although school leaders today are encouraged to act with integrity and reflect on their values, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2010) postulated that a considerable amount of literature indicates that they encounter ethical dilemmas such as immorality and lack of trustworthiness. Begley (2005) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2010) further argued that both theoretical and empirical studies illustrate that problematic value conflicts are deeply rooted in the work of school principals and their management teams, in that they are faced with ethical leadership challenges on a daily basis in the pursuit of good governance and administration in the school. Blewitt, Blewitt and Ryan (2018) maintained that a multi-fold approach is required to inculcate ethics leadership in the school environment to reduce scandals.

The authors further argued that more reliable systems such as robust accountability, responsibility and moral awareness training interventions are needed to mitigate these ethical challenges in the school environment, thereby indirectly making changes in the teaching of how these ethical challenges are to be handled. Leithwood and Sun (2012) asserted that discussions of ethical leadership in schools have emerged as a trend not only in South Africa, but also globally.

This section focuses on the following themes: the definition of school leadership; conceptualisation of school leadership; the different forms of leadership related to ethical leadership; attributes of ethical school leadership; ethical dilemmas or challenges facing the education system; behaviours impeding

ethical leadership practices; behaviours enhancing ethical school leadership; and international studies on ethical school leadership.

2.2 THE DEFINITION OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is defined by Ehrich, Harris, Klenowski, Smeed and Ainscow (2015) as a human-centred relational activity: school management represents this relationship. Simply put, it is a collective rather than an individual phenomenon. This research not only focuses on the principal as an individual leader, but it seeks to include the entire SMT and other informal leaders within the school environment. The researcher articulates this in advancing a definition that outlines school leadership as a process that is concerned with the maintenance and execution of school stability by establishing clear and reasonable routines for staff to follow. In the context of this research, the school principal and management team, referred to as SMT are central to ethical leadership challenges and implications. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) postulated that good school leadership is essential but is sometimes a divisive topic in organisational research. Therefore, leadership has an important role to play in determining the moral fibre of a society and organisation by influencing them negatively or positively.

Christie (2010) noted that leadership involves a social relationship of power whereby some are able to influence others. Yukl (2013) further defined leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. Eisenbeiss (2012) and Northouse (2013) concurred on their definition of leadership as the process of influencing others in order to achieve specific goals shared by a leader and their followers and thus comprises two main components, i.e., the task-oriented component of setting goals and making strategic decisions and the interpersonal component of guiding others toward these goals. Seemingly, ethics and leadership are significant aspects that contribute to a school as an organisation and society. As a result, lack of ethics in school leadership may have a negative impact on the school environment and its surroundings. This will occur when the SMT exhibits tendencies of abuse of power, lack of compassion, lack of moral judgement and overall disregard of respect and courtesy for teachers and other subordinates. Brown, et al. (2005) and Spina (2013) postulated that leaders are viewed as caring, honest and principled persons who make balanced decisions and who communicate the importance of ethics and ethical behaviours to their followers. Brown et al. (2005), in support of the definition of school leadership, emphasised that leadership involves how principals and the management team use their status by exhibiting good moral behaviours. De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) supported this argument.

2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

There is escalating evidence and a substantial body of research in literature that has raised concerns about ethics and morality of leadership in the school and organisations in particular, this postulation was advanced by De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog and Folger (2010), Yukl (2013) and Bedi and Green (2015). Ethical leadership was described by Angus (2006) as a social, relational practice concerned with the moral purpose of education. According to Perry, de Graaf, van der Wal and van Montfort (2014), ethics is a key component of good governance and has a significant potential to affect public trust in all forms of governance. Downe, Cowell and Morgan (2016) posited a similar argument in their articulation and conceptualisation of ethical leadership in the school context. Thus, considering the various views on ethics, it is obligatory to delineate leadership and ethical leadership and to reflect on the connection between these concepts in the social and school context.

Cotton (2003) postulated that although it has been argued that school management's leadership skills may not have a direct impact on student outcomes, these skills can influence the leadership's relationship with subordinates. Therefore, ethics, as the moral code of conduct in human interpersonal relationships, remains constant despite changes noticeable in society over time and in different cultures. Consequently, Downe, Cowell and Morgan (2016) described ethics as the bedrock of ethical leadership which has a perennial connotation that transcends socio-cultural or spatial reality. Given that many of a school's basic organisational structures are controlled and greatly influenced by the principal and the leadership team, assessing the impact of an individual leader on their school's climate and student achievement levels has become a crucial area of focus. This assertion was supported by Cohen, McCabe, Michelli and Pickeral (2009). Ethical leadership in the school setting is conceptualised as having two broad components, i.e., moral person and moral manager; however, the term moral manager captures the aspect of ethical leadership more accurately in the school context (Brown et al., 2005). As a moral person, an ethical leader demonstrates fairness, integrity, honesty and foster ethical awareness and respect for others; as a moral manager, an ethical leader holds subordinates accountable to comply with laws and regulations, establishes ethical expectations and make decisions in the best interest of subordinates and the school as an organisation (Yasir & Mohamad, 2016).

Additionally, Resick, Martin, Keating, Dickson, Kwan and Peng (2011) conceptualised ethical leadership by indicating that it comprises four components, i.e. altruism, integrity and character, motivation, encouragement and empowerment. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) found that ethical leadership in the school context plays a crucial role in determining the moral quality of the school as

an organisation. Similarly, every action taken by the SMT and behaviour which is not in line with the shared moral values, may cause moral cynicism, which is like a cancer that has the potential to corrode the moral health of a school.

According to Yasir and Mohamad (2016), unethical school leadership practices have the propensity to negatively influence the school and its community. Derr (2012) argued that moral awareness is one of the key attributes of ethical leadership's competence and ability, required for an SMT to succeed in setting up a good basis for sound ethical leadership in the school setting. In improving their ethical consciousness, SMTs need to examine the various leadership factors that play a role in school effectiveness. The school's ethical leadership ethos is one of the most influential factors in the embodiment of quality, ethics and character of a school. Ethics play a central role in the successful governance of a school and its environment. Price (2003) described ethics as a guiding process in which actions of the SMT can be described as good or bad. Their involvement in fraud, corruption, general organisational malpractice and poor management will have a lasting effect on the moral compass of the subordinates. However, if the leadership is seen to be ethical in all that it does, then that too will have a lasting influence (Tak, Seo & Roh, 2019), and create an ethical foundation for the school on which it could build in the future.

Starratt (2004) further referred to ethics as rules, beliefs, assumptions and values that determine the limits of a moral life. Therefore, ethics and morality are interconnected. Schultz (2005) also referred to ethics as the character, actions and temper of human beings that portray acceptable behaviours. Notably morality forms part of ethics, which deals with the questions of right and wrong, with rights and duties but does not concern itself with what is good. They are intertwined concepts. According to Strike (2007), the reduction of ethics to morality is a mistake and a particularly problematic mistake for educators and school leaders.

Ethics are significant to the role of educational leadership. Furthermore, Strike (2007) suggested that the ethics of school leadership needs to be ethics for educational institutions that teach learners how to flourish in liberal democratic societies. They must create healthy, functional and good educational communities.

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS RELEVANT TO THIS STUDY

For school leadership to demonstrate high ethical behaviour, they have to lead and manage schools within established principles, which constitute the hallmarks of ethical behaviour.

Starratt (2004) Spina (2013) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) identified these principles as follows, which are critical and relevant in school leadership:

2.4.1 The Ethic of Care

Spina (2013) viewed the ethics of care as a standpoint of regard for the dignity and worth of individuals that requires fidelity to a person, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality and a loyalty to the relationship. Spina (2013) further argued that this principle particularly places the SMT at the core of the successful administration of the school. The SMT carries the responsibility of care and of placing human relationships in the school at the centre of leadership where all voices are respected. Therefore, care and concern are crucial components in human relationship and interaction in the school environment. In further supporting this assertion, Eisenbeiss (2012) emphasised that school leadership must treat others with dignity and respect and to see them as ends not as means.

Therefore, school leadership's ethics of caring for teachers and other staff members by not being overly abusive and authoritative should be the foundation for the decision-making of every educational leader. Halstead and Taylor (2000) argued that, it is the relationship between the SMT, subordinates and students that stems from receptivity, relatedness and engrossment. In every educational setting, human relations must be viewed as the most noteworthy in the smooth running of the school. This will, however, exist only when the school leadership acts from the outlook of the ethic of care, by creating an atmosphere among subordinates that they care about them.

2.4.2 The Ethic of Justice

An additional key element crucial to human relationship is trust. According to Dirks and Ferrin (2002), trust is normally correlated with the perceived fairness of leadership actions. Therefore, fairness is viewed when the school leadership considers others' viewpoints, restrains personal biases and explains the decision-making process including providing adequate feedback. The propensity not to treat everyone in the school equally and with respect is likely to negatively affect the principle of this ethic of justice. Consistency in the application of rules and procedures and the possible consequence management when these are not followed must be applied objectively, even-handedly and justifiably to all subordinates in the school. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2010) argued that justice is assumed to be an individual choice to act reasonably. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) further asserted that subordinates' trust in their school leadership will be influenced by the level of perceived fairness or justice in the school's practices or decisions because these practices are likely to be seen as a signal of the nature of the

leadership. Therefore, Halstead and Taylor (2000) and Spina (2013) supported the assertion that the ethic of justice in the school setting is also concerned with fair and equitable treatment of people. Thus, Spina (2013) posited that SMTs who are passionate about the ethic of justice are able to create an environment where democratic practices operate and where a strong school community spirit is nurtured. Burke, Sims, Lazzara and Salas (2007) postulated that for justice to find expression in the school there are three areas of justice allocation, procedure and interaction that need to be examined in conjunction with trust and leadership.

Dirks and Ferrin (2002) identified three types of justice which are relevant to school leadership processes, as follows:

- Distributive justice which involves the allocation of outcomes to all subordinates. It is the type of justice that does not show anything about the exchange of relationship but merely follows standard norms, thus, reflects as an indicator of fairness and integrity of the school leadership.
- Procedural justice which deals with the processes that lead to decision outcomes and demonstrates respect for the subordinates in the school and equal evaluation of their relationship with the leadership team.
- Interactional justice which is the equal interpersonal treatment of subordinates in the school setting in which rules and procedure are endorsed.

These principles and characteristics are mandatory for the SMT to achieve the required levels of ethical conduct and reflects the nature of the relationship. These features are necessary for good school administration and leadership because they involve the degree of respect with which the leaders relate to the subordinates.

2.4.3 The Ethic of Critique

According to Halstead and Taylor (2000) and Spina (2013), the ethic of critique is viewed as "close to the ethic of justice" In an attempt to attain greater social justice it is used as a critical lens by the SMT to continuously reflect and to shed light on injustices they may be inadvertently perpetuating in their daily interactions with subordinates. The role and significance of the ethic of critique in the school setting is to confront norms and power structures that discriminate against subordinates and offer alternative standards. Halstead and Taylor (2000) emphasised that after self-reflection and critique, some school leaders are likely to exhibit an ethical profile reflecting a pronounced ethic of critique, and they can resolve their ethical dilemmas and initiate meaningful changes within their school settings. This exercise has a high probability of return in that the school leadership after reflection will

have the ability to self-correct and by so doing create a good relationship with the subordinates in the school, thus fostering high levels of ethical conduct and a blameless atmosphere within the school environment.

2.4.4 The Ethics of the Profession

Shapiro, Poliner and Gross (2013) brought an awareness to the ethics of the profession in their work on Multiple Ethical Paradigms. They realised the need to bring the ethics of the profession to the consideration of educational leaders. However, Shapiro, Poliner and Gross (2013) were not the only scholars concerned with the ethics of the profession for educational administration. There has been increasing focus placed on ethics for educational leaders by researchers such as Starratt (2004), Leithwood and Sun (2012) and Lai (2014). These researchers posited that prospective school leaders should have some preparation in leadership and moral awareness related to the ethics of the profession. Therefore, according to Greenfield (2003), ethical preparation could enable a prospective SMT member to develop the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills associated with competence in moral reasoning. Shapiro et al. (2013) put the emphasis on the significance of this preparation. The authors posit that failure to provide the opportunity for school administrators to develop such competence constitutes a failure to serve the children they are obligated to serve as public educators. Starratt (2004) and Shapiro et al. (2013) argued that SMTs as educational administrators have a moral obligation to train subordinates to be able to apply these principles, rules, ideals and virtues associated with the development of ethical schools.

2.5 DIFFERENT FORMS OF LEADERSHIP APPROACHES RELATED TO ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

A wide array of leadership approaches has been suggested to incorporate the ethical component within the school environment. In this regard, Northouse (2013) and Smith, Montagno and Kuzmenko (2014) maintained that the consideration of theories such as transformational, servant and authentic leadership are among the well-known leadership theories in leadership literature, which point towards the ethical orientation of leadership. However, the work of Yasir and Mohamad (2016) was used for its relevance to this study. The discussion below provides an overview of these theories.

2.5.1 Transformational Leadership Approach

Accordingly, Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans and May (2004) supported by Yasir and Mohamad (2016) described transformational leadership as a type of leadership based on four dimensions; i.e. charisma, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration and communication.

Wang, Demerouti and Le Blanc (2017) added idealised influence (behaviour) which refers to the charismatic actions of the leaders that focus on a collective sense of mission, beliefs and values. It is therefore critical that school leadership considers individual teachers and communicates effectively with subordinates. Idealised influence (attributes) are also perceived as ethical, confident, trustworthy, idealistic and charismatic. Individualised consideration is regarded as providing a supportive climate for individual development, growth and considering individual needs of teachers which demonstrates that school leadership is ethical. Intellectual stimulation involves critical thinking about solutions to problems and stimulating creativity and inspiration. This is conceived as leadership behaviour that motivates subordinates by portraying optimism, inspiring commitment to a shared vision and communicating high expectations. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) further posited that transformational leadership is associated with the promotion of equality and justice as well as ensuring that fairness exists within the school as an organisation. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) maintained that these transformational leaders need to focus on promoting ethical procedures and policies, an organisational culture that encourages ethical practices and enforcement of ethical conduct. This is a reflection that transformational leadership is more strongly connected to the ethics of care than justice is.

This argument is strengthened by the fact that transformational leaders are charismatic which is a value related to care. The transformational leadership concept is not only related to a specific set of behaviours but as a process through which leaders and followers mutually uplift themselves to a higher level of motivation and morality. Trevino and Brown (2004) and Yasir and Mohamad (2016) postulated that transformational leaders act as role models and if they exhibit good ethical conduct, their followers are likely to reciprocate positively. It is, therefore, critical that the SMT members are seen as role models not only by their subordinates but also by the communities in which they serve. Avolio et al. (2004) viewed transformational leadership as being optimistic, hopeful and developmentally oriented and of high moral character. Leithwood and Sun (2012) maintained that transformational leadership raises the moral consciousness of their followers. In supporting these assertions, Yasir and Mohamad (2016) conceded that ethical leadership has both transformational and transactional elements, inspiring their followers to behave ethically and enacting reward and punishment systems that reinforce ethical conduct.

2.5.2 Servant Leadership Approach

Greenleaf (2002) argued that the servant-leader is a servant first. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) supported this assertion by describing a servant-leader as servant to the followers.

Servant leadership places the needs, well-being and welfare of followers first. Therefore, according to these authors, the literature reveals a model of servant leadership where leadership is based on virtues. In this regard, the model of servant leadership reflects seven virtuous features, namely, vision, humility, love, altruism, service, empowerment and trust that are ethical leadership practices that school leadership should display. In addition, ten characteristics of servant leadership are empathy, healing, listening, persuasion, awareness, stewardship, foresight, conceptualisation, building community and commitment to the growth of people. These features are the bedrock of ethical school leadership and critical components for successful teaching and learning in the school setting. SMTs that exhibit these characteristics in their daily interactions with subordinates build a solid moral and ethical foundation for the school. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) further identified other elements of servant leadership that are related to ethical leadership as follows:

- Emotional healing is an element which refers to the act of exhibiting sensitivity to subordinates' personal concerns, where SMTs provide space for teachers and other school officials to share sensitive issues without fear of judgement.
- The empowering element embraces facilitating and encouraging subordinates to express themselves within their scope of their competence and responsibility in the school setting.
- The element of creating value for the community denotes a genuine concern for helping the community, where the SMT creates and foster a culture of community engagement by consenting subordinates to be assigned to school community projects.
- The element of helping subordinates grow and succeed involves showing genuine concern for staff by providing support, mentoring and guidance in their school academic activities and their individual developmental plans.
- Servanthood element refers to a desire to be known by subordinates as an SMT who serves others first, by making a genuine effort to understand and support others, with an emphasis on fostering long-term relationships with subordinates within the school setting.
- The element of behaving ethically refers to interacting honestly, openly and fairly with the subordinates and by the SMT demonstrating acceptable levels of morality and ethical conduct.
- The element of putting subordinates first, refers to when the SMT uses words and actions and makes it clear to the subordinates that satisfying their work-related needs and school essentials is a top priority.

2.5.3 Authentic Leadership Approach

Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson (2008) defined authentic leadership as a behavioural pattern of a leader that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, an internalised moral perspective, balanced processing of information and relational transparency on the part of the leader working with followers. Hannah, Avolio and May (2011) postulated that the authentic leader acts in accordance with deep personal values and convictions, to build credibility and win the respect and trust of the subordinates in the school environment. Yasir and Mohamad (2016) identified four components that characterise authentic leadership, i.e. self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency and an internalised moral perspective. Self-awareness refers to the SMT understanding of their values, weaknesses and strengths and their impact on others. This self-awareness demonstrated by the SMT has the potential to create a fitting environment where the moral and ethical compass of the school is high. An SMT that is self-aware and conscious of its ethical leadership obligation will inspire confidence within the school environment. Balanced processing is a component that speaks of relational transparency where the SMT is expected to express their genuine selves to others and openly sharing the information with subordinates. In the process, the school leadership creates a balanced atmosphere where subordinates are willing to open up regarding unethical practices that they feel should be attended to.

Relational transparency involves the school leadership's ability to objectively analyse all relevant information before making any decision likely to affect the ethical conduct, situational demands and relationship with subordinates in the school setting. An internalised moral perspective denotes the school leadership's ethical conduct guided by internal morals and aligning their behaviour with these values. As a result, authenticity of their leadership will involve high levels of self-awareness and likely to present an SMT high in morals and ethical dimensions.

2.6 CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES OF ETHICAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR CONSIDERATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Lai (2014) and Waite (2016) posited that good moral attributes force school leaders to be more proactive towards development so that they can survive and thrive in these educational settings. Ethical behaviours and conduct on the part of leaders are essential prerequisites for effective change. The behaviour of leaders in the school environment is important in upholding good conduct and fostering an exemplary ethical culture in pursuit of a school built on respectable moral and ethical principles. The school principal and the leadership team's ethical behaviours and conduct are prerequisites for

effective governance of the educational setting. Perry, de Graaf, Zeger, van der Wal and van Montfort (2014) supported by Joyce (2014) concurred that ethics is a key component of good governance and has significant potential to affect public trust in all forms of governance. Thus, the actions of principals as schools' leaders are important in promoting good conduct and fostering an ethical culture. Their personal moral credibility can be critical in enhancing the efficiency of formal ethics regulation. The following attributes are critical for ethical leadership expected from the principal and the leadership team.

2.6.1 Transparency

Dirk and Ferrin (2002) posited that transparency refers to a key element or outcome of morally positive decisions made by ethical leaders within an organisation. They further argued that it is an effort to enforce honesty. Hannah et al. (2011) postulated that with transparency, participation in monitoring the entire organisation is accommodated to minimise the potential for dishonesty. Ethical leaders are viewed as promoting transparency concerning information sharing in their relationships with others, which is therefore expected to foster greater trust and positive interactions. Therefore, the positive effects of transparency may be noticeable in part through open participation in their deliberations on moral matters (Hannah et al., 2011).

This is demonstrable where the SMT creates and practises a culture of involving subordinates by including them in work allocation committees, teaching and learning committees and other relevant operational platforms when decisions are taken on issues that affect them and their scope of responsibility. The implications of such practice have the potential to create a transparent, conducive working environment where subordinates will exhibit a high work ethic.

2.6.2 Professional Conduct

Managerialism has a significant impact on the work of school principals and the management team as well as subordinates. According to my recent observation, educational environmental restructuring patterns in the school environment may require the SMT to move from the role of senior management to one of institutional managers, where they are now required to act outside of their traditionally confined managerial roles, but take responsibility and accountability for the entire institution. Leithwood and Sun (2012) postulated that these reforms on the teaching profession encapsulate conduct that is inclusive of expectations for how individuals treat others from diverse backgrounds. In the regulated profession of teaching in South Africa, codes of conduct and professional ethics serve several essential purposes. The South African Council for Educators (SACE) articulates these for

teachers which, amongst other things, are to ensure high standards of practice and to protect the public. The code of professional ethics further instructs educators to refrain from engaging in illegal activities, behaving in a way that enhances the dignity and status of the teaching profession and does not bring the profession into disrepute. These ethical codes of conduct in the educational setting are designed to regulate teacher behaviour, both inside and outside the school setting and in the classroom. These include prohibitions against certain behaviours and a set of rules for action when certain underlying principles appear to be in conflict. This view is critical for good ethical conduct within the school environment.

2.6.3 Moral Awareness

Lickona and Davidson (2005) argued that the SMT, in order to create a climate conducive for ethical conduct, must be able to create a school environment that stimulates cognitive awareness and social role-play in order to heighten subordinate's moral awareness within the school setting. The authors further posited that a higher premium be placed on this cognitive attitude towards this attribute of ethical leadership in the school environment, for good ethical leadership to be inculcated.

2.6.4 Moral Feeling

Dirk and Ferrin (2002) posited that the moral agent not only possesses raw intellect or disembodied reasoning, but also has feelings and passions that play a part in moral life. It is for this reason that SMTs should provide the requisite moral guidance to subordinates and give responses that are congruent with the moral sensitivities of the subordinates. This affective component is considered as an energetic, vital moral engine that should pervade the operations of the SMT as a moral agent with the primary focus being on the creation of a high moral compass in the school. Lickona and Davidson (2005) argued that this focus drives ethical decision-making of the school leadership and lends itself to assisting their followers in acquiring not simply intellectual skills and habits of the mind, but also habits of the heart. Therefore, this attribute is critical to the establishment of the emotional and moral life of the school and as a conduit for sound relationships between the SMT and subordinates.

2.6.5 Conscience

Conscience has two sides, a cognitive aspect which includes knowing what is right, and an emotional aspect that leads to the obligation to do what is right. The conscience of school leadership has to do with justice and care about subordinates and others. It refers to the inner voice that warns them that someone may be looking at what they are doing. Conversely, Covey (2007) defined conscience as the ability to detect our own uniqueness and the personal, moral and ethical guidelines which we use to

direct our behaviour. Lickona and Davidson (2005) posited that most leaders lack a fully developed conscience in that they do not feel obligated to avoid the behaviour they judge to be wrong. It is for this very reason that SMTs must have the inherent ability to practise good ethics and lead by example in addressing ethical challenges both inside and outside the school setting.

2.6.6 Empathy

Hannah et al. (2011) suggested that empathy can create pro-social emotions such as sympathy, compassion and tenderness towards individuals. The author in the empathy-altruism hypothesis supports this assertion. However, the SMT as moral leaders must regard moral ownership and self-sacrifice as fundamental to their self-concept.

Through the activation of these aspects in their working self-concept, moral or authentic school leadership should raise their levels of moral engagement through a heightened propensity to form moral intentions that are geared at raising the moral and ethical compass in the school when engaged with the subordinates. These actions must be strengthened to protect subordinates against insults, abuse and lack of empathy which could be exhibited by the SMT.

2.7 IMPLICATIONS OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Ethical leadership has the potential to influence subordinates' job satisfaction. Weiss (1999) asserted that job satisfaction is commonly defined as positive or negative evaluative judgements that people make regarding their work. This definition follows a conceptualisation of job satisfaction in a school environment as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job. Similarly, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2014) defined teacher job satisfaction as teacher's affective reactions to their work and their teaching role. A teacher may be satisfied with some aspects of the job, such as a high degree of autonomy and behavioural attitudes of fellow colleagues, and less satisfied with other aspects, such as a heavy workload leading to time pressure and having to do much of their lesson preparation after working hours. Ethical attitudes and behaviours of fellow teachers and the moral conduct of the SMT also play a part in job satisfaction. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) investigated job satisfaction and found that it is either a facet-specific construct measuring satisfaction with specified aspects of the work or an overall sense of satisfaction with working as a teacher. Accordingly, research by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) showed that overall job satisfaction is positively related to teacher autonomy and self-efficacy and negatively related to teacher burnout, which resonates with how attitudes and behaviours play a pivotal role in job satisfaction and its resultant benefits.

According to Yukl (2013), empirical studies have shown a positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in the leader. The development of trust in schools appears to be important to the extent that policymakers make the principals responsible for this. Shih, Chiang and Chen (2012) reasoned that where trust is prevalent, all employees are willing to contribute and do not hesitate to exchange ideas with their colleagues and their leader. Trust, therefore, contributes significantly to ethical and moral conduct in the school environment.

The SMT ethical leadership behaviour, leadership style and attitude remain central and key to the behaviour expected from the teachers and students in the school. Shen, Leslie and Spybrook (2012) concluded that principals are the key factor in shaping a school climate that supports students and teachers.

Additional research by Wallace Foundation (2013) established the link between school leadership and improved student achievement as well as job satisfaction of teachers, which has a huge impact on their behaviour and ethical consciousness. This further supports the contention that good ethical leadership of the principal and the leadership team in the school context has a direct effect on the moral and ethical awareness of all stakeholders involved in the school environment. The next section explores the definition of school leadership and the critical roles played by ethics and how it influences leadership in school.

2.8 ETHICAL DILEMMAS OR CHALLENGES FACING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

An ethical paradox or moral dilemma is a problem in the decision-making process between two or more possible options, neither of which is acceptable from an ethical perspective. Nadica and Đorđević (2016) described an ethical dilemma as a situation in which the agent has to choose the best ethical alternative for the circumstance. The same person can be in the role of an agent and in the role of an authoritative figure in the situation. In the educational setting, a conflict between personal and school ethics can arise. If the SMT gives priority to their own interests, they will then be choosing an egotistical alternative; if they give priority to the interests of subordinates, they will then be opting for an altruistic alternative. The authors further posited that if the school leadership stretches that priority to the interests of the majority in the school environment, with respect to their own interests, they will ultimately be settling for an ethical alternative. Brown and Mitchell (2010) postulated that ethical leadership may be effective in preventing an exclusive focus on bottom-line outcomes that could lead to specific forms of unethical behaviour; e.g., accounting fraud on school finances, misrepresenting contractual terms that the school has entered into, unethical acts of misconduct and general fraudulent activities. School leadership grounded on good ethical conduct that require consideration of financial

and market-oriented outcomes is also likely to face ethical dilemmas of accountability, corruption, fraud, mismanagement of resources, and many other misfortunes that have the propensity to collapse the entire education system within the school setting.

The education system in its pursuit of employing ethically conscious principals and their management teams must, according to Yukl (2013), choose leaders who are more likely to empower employees, give subordinates more control over their own work and making them less dependent on their leaders and the education system as a whole. Trevino and Brown (2004) also found them to express care and concern for how education related outcomes are attained. Ulvik, Smith, and Helleve (2017) argued that the ability to find optimal solutions for ethical dilemmas in the school system is critical. This, therefore, requires the SMTs to be vigilant as they will encounter ethical dilemmas in almost every aspect of their engagement with subordinates, including on a personal, social, and professional level.

2.8.1 Ethical Dilemmas in South African Secondary Schools

Rest, Narvaez, Thoma and Bebeau (1999) suggested that ethical behaviours are judged as right when people fulfil the duties to which they have agreed or when they contribute to the society, group, or intent of the teaching profession. At this level, all relevant laws regulating ethical and moral conduct are to be upheld. Professional sensitivity, judgement, motivation and character evolve from an interpretation of those laws and norms. However, that interpretation may have create moral and ethical dilemmas. According to Kessler (2010), only once school leadership acts in an accountable manner, implementation of powers vested in it is generally accepted. It is in this regard that Stefkovich, O'Brien and Moore (2002) accentuated the fact that SMTs should display exemplary ethical behaviour by acting with integrity.

Public school principals leading their management teams are regarded by the DBE not only as the key delivery agents of the professional management of their schools but also empowered by the act (DoE, 1996:16A (1) (c) (i)) for the preparation of plans to improve schools' academic performances. Van der Westhuizen, Mosoge, Swanepoel and Coetsee (2005) identified the link between schools' organisational culture and academic performance, especially underscoring the fact that non-functional schools suffer from poor management and weak leadership because of the ethical dilemmas encountered by the school. Ulvik, Smith and Helleve (2017) postulated that ethical and moral dilemmas are part of daily life. They argued that human beings sometimes make questionable decisions to avoid bigger problems. At times, SMTs make morally ambiguous decisions that are self-serving or benefit specific groups at the expense of others. Educators and SMTs face ethical dilemmas in their day-to-day interactions.

Research that looked at the ethical dilemmas faced by school leadership conducted by Rossouw and Van Vuuren (2006), Weiss (2009) and Desjardins (2009) found that the dichotomy between what is considered as good and bad, just and unjust, moral and immoral behaviour is at the heart of the predicament. As the ability to do good and right is equated with morals, ethics is considered the science of studying morality where morality is evaluated in terms of elements critical for the moral compass of the school. Rossouw and Van Vuuren (2006) asserted that these elements in terms of the common good, personal interests and the interest of the others were key contributors to ethical dilemmas in the school setting. Common good means that the behaviour of school leadership should be in the school's interest or in the interest of the subordinates. Corruption Watch (2019), a non-governmental organisation based in South Africa, conducted research which concluded that corruption in South Africa's public schools was a major problem that stifled access to quality education for the majority of learners in the country. The research exposed acts of unethical conduct in relation to embezzlement of school funds. Selling of employment positions or posts by trade unions was also exposed. The irregular awarding of school contracts to carry out minor repairs or work falling in the scope of the SMT was also widespread. These findings were earlier echoed by the 'Loss of Principle' report, where Corruption Watch (2013) had received 1 128 reports of school corruption from the public. A total of 37% had to do with financial mismanagement, 20% theft of funds, 13% tender corruption, 9% employment corruption, 3% theft of goods, which included food for school feeding schemes, and 18% on other corruption-related issues.

The three most cited types of corruption across all provinces were financial mismanagement, theft of goods or funds, and corruption related to tenders. Corruption Watch (2019) reported that 22% of reported incidents of corruption were about education. These ethical dilemmas continue to obstruct teaching, learning and the maintenance of good ethical and moral standards within the school setting. Personal interests of the SMT should be excluded from their interactions with subordinates and other relevant stakeholders to encourage altruistic behaviour which would take into account only the interests of subordinates. Altruism expected from the SMT is paramount in addressing these dilemmas, and ethical behaviour must, therefore, involve respect for the interests of all the others, because only in this manner will the requirement for general goodness be achievable. Bebeau and Thoma (2003) concluded that the final product expected from the school leadership when confronting these ethical dilemmas should be to uphold the basic rights, values and legal precepts of society even when they conflict with their concrete beliefs, for the betterment of good ethical leadership of the school.

2.8.2 Behaviours and Attitudes Impeding Ethical Practices in Schools

2.8.2.1 Corruption

Webb (2005) Oosthuizen (2010) and Pattillo (2012) posited that corruption in the school as an organisation manifests itself as bribery, embezzlement, fraud, extortion, abuse of power, nepotism, conflicts of interest, abuse of privileged information and favouritism, among many other ills. These acts have a high net effect on behaviours and attitudes that inhibit moral practice in the school setting. Corruption Watch (2014) reported that it conducted 10 investigations and in nine of the allegations, the principals of the schools were involved in the abuse of resources. The report of the task team appointed by Minister of Basic Education to investigate corrupt activities, led by Volmink, Gardiner and Msimang (2016) identified the selling of employment posts by members of the trade unions in collusion with departmental officials, as one of the unethical behaviours hampering good morals in the school setting.

Figures produced by Transparency International (2020), an organisation set up to monitor and combat corruption internationally, showed that South Africa ranked 71 out of 180 countries on the organisation's corruption index. The index which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of 0-100 where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. South Africa scored 43 on this index, indicating perceived high levels of corruption. Zengele (2011) commented on the unauthorised use of school funds, blatant disregard for ethical conduct, and unauthorised use of school resources as predominant problems that impeded the implementation of ethical conduct in the school environment. Pearsall and Hanks (2006) summarised corruption as an umbrella term for not following accepted standards of behaviour, thus ranking it high as a practice, behaviour and attitude impeding ethical practices in schools.

2.8.2.2 Favouritism – Nepotism

This phenomenon and behavioural attitude continue to hamper attempts to realise good ethical leadership in the school environment and is unfavourable for the development of the school. Bramoullé and Goyal (2016) referred to this behaviour by school leadership as the act of offering jobs, contracts and resources to members of one's own social group in preference to others who are outside the group. This practice impedes the establishment of noble ethical conduct expected from those bestowed with the responsibility to lead and manage the school. Equal respect for subordinates and peers without favouritism by school leadership enhances good conduct in the school setting.

Anderson (2017) supported this assertion, postulating that education leaders may benefit from training and development in transformational leadership styles proven to enhance performance in business organisations and educational settings.

2.8.2.3 Unprofessional conduct

Actions that lack ethical and moral conduct or behaviour that is inappropriate have the propensity to contribute towards behaviours and attitudes hindering ethical practices in schools. Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) added further examples of rule-bending and unprofessional conduct related to school norms permeated by a lack of ethical leadership. The authors posited that unprofessional conduct by educators, such as fabricating learner marks, chronic absenteeism, inability to make sound pedagogic decisions because of vested stakes, and the inability to communicate effectively with subordinates, is the result of lack of ethical leadership expected from the SMT. These cases indicate that the absence of sound leadership actions at schools inevitably send negative ethical messages. Teachers that continue to arrive late at school are more likely to have a negative effect on attempts by the SMT to enforce discipline in the school, where late coming has become a norm. Bergman et al. (2011) posited that chronic absenteeism by both teachers and learners had a huge knock-on effect on the morale and discipline in the school and such actions contributed to ineffective teaching and learning. The inability of the SMT to conduct itself professionally with subordinates and ethical misconduct in the school administration are indicators of behaviours and attitudes impeding ethical practices in schools.

Power and Veriava (2017) posited that unwelcome sexual attention which includes suggestive behaviour, messages or remarks of a sexual nature, intimidating or humiliating a learner, and implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request, are some examples of unprofessional practices that continue to impede good ethical behaviour in the school setting. They further postulated that sexual misconduct by school employees has become one of the most pressing challenges facing secondary schools today. These acts of misconduct continue to have negative effects on the ethical climate of the school and need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

2.8.2.4 Mismanagement of resources

The constitutional right of learners to a basic education in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA), section 29(1) is infringed upon when funds are misused or misappropriated by the leadership of a school. The principal and his senior management team have a duty to manage fiscal and operational resources.

The DBE (2014) reported that a practical example of corruption at schools included a principal's dismissal for misappropriating approximately R5 millions of school funds through tenders intended for the school feeding scheme for impoverished learners. Corruption Watch (2014) documented that these unethical practices occur when the SMT, fraudulently allocate school resources, interfere with procurement processes, misuse school property and misuse money intended for the school. The SACE annual reports (2014/2015) supported these allegations by Corruption Watch (2019). The SACE reports pointed out that most complaints on the mismanagement of resources were in Gauteng and the Western Cape. SMT should strive to equip themselves with financial management competencies and involve teachers in decision-making. To safeguard schools from financial mismanagement or maladministration of funds, the SASA (DoE, 1996, 16A (2) (I)) gives public school principals the responsibility of taking all the practical steps to prevent it from occurring.

SMTs should continuously organise seminars and workshops for their professional advancement and awareness about the required ethical acumen on how to manage resources allocated to the school by the DBE. The mismanagement of these resources invariably contributes to behaviours and attitudes that impede ethical practices in the school. The principal's role as an instructional leader has become increasingly significant in this regard.

It is critical that the school management should employ sound accounting practices in order to insure the equitable and legal use of school funds. Section 16A (2) (I) of the SASA mandates the principal to ensure appropriate processes exist and are followed to the letter in order to maintain sound ethical practices. Failure to adhere to these practices is likely to accelerate behaviours and attitudes hindering the implementation of ethical practices in schools.

2.9 BEHAVIOURS AND ATTITUDES ENHANCING ETHICAL PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

In a study about the relationships between school management's instructional leadership behaviours and self-efficacy of teachers and collective teacher effectiveness, Calik, Sezgin, Kavagaci and Kilinc (2012) established that instructional leadership in the school setting had a significant direct and positive impact on collective teacher effectiveness. Given the essential role of education and the pivotal role of the SMT in harnessing ethical leadership, self-efficacy of the subordinates is important to enhance moral practices in the school environment. Ghasemi (2010) found that there was a consistent significant relationship between transformational leadership style and self-efficacy. Calik et al. (2012) postulated that school leadership that consistently placed emphasis on authenticity, responsibility, openness, honesty and integrity, sound ethical practices and commitment to acting in an exemplary manner created the environment for the promotion of good ethical practices in the school.

Walker and Slear (2011) suggested that much of the scholarship surrounding behaviours and attitudes enhancing ethical practices in schools focuses on the content of what is taught and the broad political issue of what the ultimate purposes of schooling should be, as opposed to how subordinates' ethical behaviour should uphold their visions and stances. It could be argued that teachers who are ethically conscious and oriented to social justice should help to develop ethical habits that alleviate suffering, cultivate critical consciousness, sustain diversity, and create more humane social relationships. This would enhance behaviours and attitudes that seek to promote good and acceptable ethical conduct in the school environment, in order to foster successful teaching and learning.

Therefore, attention to behaviours and attitudes that enhance ethical practices in schools, if properly managed, can challenge dominant, individualistic, meritocratic views of school leadership for the benefit of the school. According to Delpit (2006), reflective humility further requires a special kind of listening to others, with open hearts and minds, and a vulnerability to change. This openness of character is also connected to an intellectual open-mindedness expected from SMTs in their daily conduct that is expected to enhance ethical awareness. Such open-mindedness could lead to ethical activism to develop exemplary moral conduct in the school.

Starratt (2004) argued there is an ethical dimension to leadership that requires formal leaders like SMTs to share their leadership responsibilities with others. Above all, they should engage with teachers and other key stakeholders to take collective responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning in their school. The core focus for educational leaders is on the enhancement of teaching and learning. This focus challenges them to be more fully aware of and present to the transformative possibilities in student learning as well as to be more proactively responsible for inviting, encouraging and supporting teachers to cultivate those deeper dimensions of learning. According to Starratt (2004), the bottom line for educational leaders is that they should create and support the conditions that promote quality teaching and learning in their schools. To encourage behaviour and attitudes that underpin ethical practices in schools, SMTs need to be committed to the ethic of authenticity and ethic of responsibility.

2.9.1 Authenticity

Gross (2015) supported the concept of the functionality and authenticity of emotions and described them as being either helpful or harmful, depending on the context. For example, SMTs need to have emotional integrity to guide their decision-making, accurately interpreting and demonstrating behaviours and responses that support their chosen courses of action. Thus, leadership authenticity would assist them to develop a culture consistent with the required behaviour and attitudes meant to

enhance noble ethical practices within the school setting. Schools leadership should bring their deepest principles, beliefs, values and convictions to their work and interactions with subordinates.

The ethic of authenticity is foundational to educational leadership as it points these leaders toward a more self-responsible form of relationship-building and leadership that should act for the good of others (e.g. students, teachers, parents). It is this engagement of the self with the other that provides the school leadership with a deep sense of personal and professional responsibility for what is happening to subordinates in their pursuit of providing ethical leadership within the school setting. According to Starratt (2004), this practice of promoting legitimate ethical leadership constitutes an ethic of authenticity, which obligates them to focus primarily on the core values (e.g., respect for the dignity and worth of others), the core people (teachers and students), and the core business (high quality or authentic teaching and learning). This feature of genuineness contributes greatly to the attitude and behaviour that promote sound ethical practice in the school.

2.9.2 Responsibility

Roeser, Skinner, Beers and Jennings (2012) postulated that teaching is a human service profession. They further argued that an ethic of responsibility is based on the principle of collective reasonability. Thus, school leadership in their application of practices that enhance comprehensive ethical practices are bound to the subordinates through an ethic of responsibility. Starratt (2004) advanced that schools management teams should feel deeply responsible for the quality or authenticity of the learning for students in their schools. The SMT, in inculcating the principle of responsibility and in encouraging and enhancing ethical practices in schools, should name, challenge and change, if possible, unauthentic and unethical learning processes (e.g. teaching narrowly to the test).

Roeser et al. (2012) posited that responsible school leadership should ensure that due consideration is given to the circumstances, values and processes involved in creating the conditions for authentic learning, as well as listening to and caring for the people making the decisions related to this learning. Schools principals should have the courage of their convictions, stand up for what is ethically and morally right, especially regarding the ways in which teachers and learners are engaged with learning content and processes. They should get directly involved with and be present for others in the teaching and learning environment in the school.

2.10 INTERNATIONAL TRENDS ON ETHICAL ISSUES IN SCHOOLS

Education systems and institutions globally are responding to the need for ensuring ethical practices and implementing codes of conduct for its various stakeholders.

Couch and Dodd (2005) posited that this international trend on the implementation of ethical policies and practices in the school environment goes beyond the mere adherence to laws and regulations. It indicates a set of core values and core ethical practices to be followed in the school setting.

Sadowski (2014) emphasised that the attention of these institutions on implementation of ethical standards for their subordinates is based on their inherent utilitarian value such as discouraging unethical actions in the schools. Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2019) posited that there is a wide international agreement about the need to have school leaders who exhibit the capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in their schools, thus creating a good culture of ethical leadership. Merchant, Ärlestig, Garza, Johansson, Olof, Murakami-Ramalho and Törnsén, (2012) postulated that in recent years, taking ethical issues in schools seriously has developed in many countries throughout the world.

This development became evident when stakeholders came to realise the importance of investing in school leadership support systems. Policymakers in Europe, North America and Australasia launched programmes designed to support school leadership programmes, which were often offered by private enterprises. The movement of public services into direct competition with their private enterprise counterparts is a common feature of public sector policy throughout the developed world as posited by Dempster and Mahony (1998). They further argued that in the developing world, student demographics are changing; for example, ethnic and racial diversity of schools has increased dramatically creating a rich cultural environment for learning. Merchant et al. (2012) argued that the diversity of learners entering schools at an early age presents challenges to school leadership. Such learners may not previously have been exposed to rules and regulations for behaviour that are part of the ethical culture of the school. This necessitates greater flexibility in leadership approaches in the school setting and requires enhanced ethical leadership.

2.11 ETHICS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

South Africa is a developing country and a young, all-inclusive democratic state. The country is a member of the BRICS Community with Brazil, Russia, India and China, as well as a member of the G20 economic forum. However according to Statistics South Africa (2014), the country has an unemployment rate of 52% and faces diverse contextual challenges of ethical leadership in the schooling system (Heystek, 2015). Developing countries in Southern African like, Botswana, Malawi, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe experience ethical challenges with sexual harassment, financial embezzlement, mismanagement of school resources, integrity and accountability (Rasheed, 2014).

The statement is consistent with Rasheed's (2014) observations that the lack of accountability, unethical behaviour and corrupt practices have become so pervasive and institutionalised norms of behaviour in Africa, to the extent that one may conveniently speak of a crisis of ethics in African public services. The economic and social challenges in developing countries lead to waves of migrating people. Boon and Lewthwaite (2015) posited that the countries where migrants, be they social, economic or political refugees are ethnically diverse and multilingual such as in South Africa, Botswana and Tanzania may be subjugated and marginalised. Marumo, Chakale and Mothelesi (2019) posit xenophobia as an ongoing problem in South Africa that contributes to the marginalisation of refugee communities. A significant consequence of migration is the absorption of children into the local educational system.

Boon and Lewthwaite (2015) further postulated that migrant children, much like the local indigenous marginalised children in the host countries, have language barriers and different customs from those of the host country. Cultural mismatches between the culture of the learner and that of their teachers have been found to result in a range of negative outcomes for the child or learner, including behavioural infractions, low academic outcomes and dropping out of school. Lui (2004) noted that poor institutional capacity exists at global, national and community levels to provide displaced people with the economic, social and political rights as defined by the institutions of human rights and citizenship. Government working in concert with the SMT have a legal and moral responsibility to act in an ethical manner when facilitating the inclusion of these learners in the school environment.

Arnot and Pinson (2005) identified an ethos of inclusion and the celebration of diversity as important characteristics of what they termed good practice schools. It is this moral belief that is required to drive the government and the schools to create a conducive environment within which the entire school system models its ethical behaviour and culture. Arnot and Pinson (2005) stated that the governments of South Africa and Botswana have prescribed processes that facilitate inclusion into both the public and private school environment that require ethics of care and moral conduct.

2.11.1 Matters Influencing Ethical Issues in Schools in the Developing Countries

The education sector is the most vital sector of a country, requiring attention from politicians, bureaucrats, and legislators in drafting effective policies. Most of these groups do not feel the need to involve legal practitioners in the process. This has both positive and negative impacts on ethical practices and conduct in the school environment. Alam (2009) posited that although research has been conducted to resolve the problems that prevent development of an ethical environment, a complete solution is far from being achieved.

The major constraints in the developing countries are largely connected to the provision of education laws and permeate the education systems. Yang and Wei (2017) argued that ethical leadership in schools and in general has become a complex construct in the developing nations with characteristics such as people orientation, integrity, fairness, responsibility, corruption, recruitment, sexual exploitation, ethnicity, favouritism and nepotism. These are among many other matters that influence ethical issues in the schools in developing societies. Some of these factors are discussed below.

2.11.1.1 Corruption

The education sector is considered one of the major financially corrupt sectors in the developing world. Sun HP, Sun WF, Geng and Kong (2018) posited that during the allocation of budgets, preference is given to the sector to allow more infrastructure development and continuous development of projects. In addition, many private investments are made through various initiatives. However, these budgets are often misappropriated by school leadership and channelled into projects for which they were not intended. Tan (2002) posited that according to a report by Transparency International, the education sector, the public service sector, and the police are the most corrupt sectors in developing countries.

Tan (2002) further argued that because of the rapid privatisation of the public service sector, micro level transparency can still be achieved even though macro level corruption is increasing. This leads to role players in the education sector becoming even more financially corrupt. It is common practice to give a bribe in order to attain a high position connected to monetary affairs within the police or the education sector, argued Zengele (2011) who further postulated that the filling of promotional posts in South Africa has been marked by controversy since the advent of the newly formed democratic government in 1994. This happened despite regulatory measures in the form of circulars 42/2006, 43/2006, 47/2007 and 55/2008 of the Gauteng Provincial Government and the Employment of Educators' Act 74 of 1998 (EEA).

The police are involved as law enforcing agencies, thus it is easy for them to break the law. Financial corruption in the education sector has also reached a high point with involvement by law enforcement agencies.

Principals remain central to ethical conduct expected of them in the entire value chain within the school educational system. It is for this very reason that SMTs need to be beyond reproach. In the South African context, for example, other institutions of oversight that support democracy and enhance the work of the legislatures include the Office of the Auditor-General, the Office of the Public Protector and the Office of the Public Service Commission.

These institutions often produce oversight reports that reveal the level of financial waste (irregular expenditure, unauthorised expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure) and noncompliance with laws and regulations. They further reveal the level of corruption and impropriety in the civil service as well as the level of irregular appointments, among others. These issues continue to negatively impact on the good moral conduct required in the school environment.

2.11.1.2 Recruitment

Meritocracy should be the only parameter in the recruitment and selection process within institutions of education. Durand and Pujadas (2004) argued that political interference, bribery and corruption are the main constraints in the recruitment of teachers and staff at institutions of education. Without an environment of meritocracy, the desired level of development through education cannot possibly be achieved.

Du Gay (2000) also argued that political principals dispense political patronage via state jobs to tame the power of school officials and to enhance their (politicians) own positions within government, and this action has been found to compromise the role of principals in the governance of the schooling system. The Public Service Commission Report (2014) reflected data from the Public Service Commission's roundtable meetings held throughout South Africa indicating that patronage politics creates bureaucratic frustrations pertaining to recruitment practices in state institutions including schools. It further revealed that this practice influences ethical issues in schools in the developing countries and leads to tension between political principals and the state agents as they sometimes fight about who should be hired or not hired, at the institutional level. These tendencies have further exacerbated high levels of unethical behaviours that affect the smooth running of schools and the ability of the SMTs to exercise the required ethical diligence.

2.11.1.3 Sexual exploitation

Schools are considered the apex body of ethics and values, yet criminal activities of sexual abuse and exploitation continue to be widely ignored and accepted. This exploitation that continues to find expression in the schooling system has the propensity to influence ethical issues in schools in the developing countries, and so, sexual abuse should not be accepted within the compound and campus of institutions of education. Tunde, Oke and Alam (2010) posited that despite this, sexual exploitation is fast becoming a common culture within the academic environment and within schools. Teachers insist that students agree to activities connected to sexual abuse and exploitation.

High officials of institutions of education also force or coerce colleagues to be involved in these acts for their direct or indirect gain (Tunde et al., 2010). Many countries, including South Africa, have laws for sexual harassment at the employment or at any place of a state to curb this unethical practice.

McArthur (2015) postulated that there is a clear sense of unhappiness and frustration which is linked to the workings of an oppressive milieu operating at schools, in which a culture of violence thrives. It is this myriad of unethical behaviours that continue to set back developing countries in their pursuit of a culture of zero sexual abuse within its schooling system. In another study in the Gauteng Province of South Africa, Wells and Polders (2006) reported on victimisation and homophobia experienced in school. Their findings highlight that victimisation based on sexual orientation was widespread and included verbal and physical abuse including rape.

Similarly, a study by Human Rights Watch (2011) provides empirical evidence that schools perpetuate and reinforce social prejudices and discrimination toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender learners (LGBT). These ethical lapses in the education system and the schools have a major negative impact on the ethical morality and makeup of the schools.

2.11.1.4 Ethnicity, favouritism, and nepotism

Arasli, Bavik, and Ekiz (2006) highlighted that favouritism, nepotism and ethnicity, giving preferential treatment to relatives, associates and friends in employment and any dealings connected to the organisation are unprofessional practices. Nepotism, favouritism and ethnicity if not managed properly create job stress in the workplace for subordinates and this increases dissatisfaction of everyone about their organisations. These factors have the ability of influencing ethical issues in schools in the developing countries. Ethnicity has the greatest negative effect on job stress and ethical leadership. Dasborough, Ashkanasy, Tee and Tse (2009) posited that studies on transformational and task-oriented leadership behaviour have a negative relationship with ethnicity, nepotism and favouritism. These studies reflect that transformational and task-oriented leadership cannot foster an environment where ethnicity, nepotism and favouritism are present, and has a direct link with and influence on ethical conduct. Uymaz (2013) argued that destructive leadership behaviour has a positive relationship with nepotism, ethnicity and favouritism and this has an adverse effect on ethical leadership.

Additionally, Dasborough et al. (2009) further highlighted the relationship between individual leadership and favouritism. Nyambegera (2002) posited that ethnic differences in organisations have been neglected in studies in the sub-Saharan region. However, schools need to have a leadership that can handle ethnicity.

A lack of consideration of inclusion of ethnic diversity in the school setting can be a basis for poor leadership and management of human resources and may lead to subsequent poor performance in the organisation. Nyambegera (2002) supported this assertion, in that, ethnicity plays out in all aspects of human resources management in organisations in the sub-Saharan region and has a huge effect on ethical school leadership. Leach (2003) postulated that in the school environment and the educational setting at large, the process of recruitment without favouritism, nepotism and ethnicity is one of the fundamental and prime activities, that has the ability to foster and create an atmosphere of good ethical behaviour, as it eliminate assumed biases.

Therefore, school leadership when managing recruitment practices should interact with subordinates without bias of gender, race, sex, colour and economic background for the benefit of good ethical leadership in the school. Acceptable moral and ethical judgement without exhibiting preferences for ethnicity by the leadership of the school and vigilant support provided by relevant government authorities, continue to be of paramount importance, to achieve a measure of required ethical culture in the school environment. Conversations about ethnicity if not properly managed have the potential to damage the ethos of the school and may lead to poor school management and leadership.

2.12 ETHICS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Maxwell and Schwimmer (2016) postulated that in most international education systems, the main objective of a code of ethics is to provide self-control guidelines through the formulation of necessary ethical norms and standards of professional conduct. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2010) posited that codes of ethics determine the confines for what is considered acceptable behaviour, and this helps educational leaders in the developed societies to solve conflicts of interest in a balanced and flexible manner, when proving leadership in the school setting. Garcia-Zamor (2017) posited that western countries are facing rapid behavioural and ethical population shifts driven by migration arising from economic or political drivers, to escape poverty, war, oppression or persecution. Political changes and the problems that are often associated with poor and authoritarian political governance, are driving waves of refugees to countries in the western world in numbers rarely seen before.

This cultural and political shift has the propensity to create an ethical dichotomy between developed and developing nations that are now forced to coexist. King, Bird, Haynes, Boon, Cottrell, Millar, Okadac, Boxe, Keogh and Thomas (2014) argued that Europe's population was fast changing as ethnic, racial, religious and economic diversity increased due to global economic forces and migration. This has begun to influence the school leadership debate.

Trandis (2018) posited that some developed countries like Germany, its societal cultural practices are characterised by low levels of humane orientation and collectivism, both institutional and in-group, the latter suggesting a strongly individualised society that has a strong influence on how school leadership has evolved.

According to the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) as noted by Trandis (2018) that while charismatic or values-based and team-oriented leadership styles are perceived to facilitate effective leadership, German business leadership and their strong school culture are renowned for their strong emphasis on participation, high autonomy and high humane orientation.

Ćurko and Kovačević (2015) postulated that school leadership ethics and values in educational setting in developed societies applies to all aspects of education which either explicitly relate to ethical dimensions of life and are such that can be structured, regulated and monitored with appropriate educational methods and tools. Strahovnik (2017) in support, posit that the developed societies have the capacity to stimulate ethical reflection, awareness, responsibility, and compassion in the schooling system. Developed countries such as Italy, Germany, the USA and Singapore, can provide all stakeholders in the school environment with insight into important ethical principles and values, equip them with intellectual capacities. These cognitive abilities like critical thinking and evaluation, reflection, discovery, understanding, decision-making and non-cognitive abilities like compassion for responsible moral judgement, provide the school leadership in the school setting to develop approaches to build a classroom or school environment as an ethical community. Accordingly, these societies exhibit high school leadership abilities.

A disposition, which accepts that diversity enriches the classroom rather than bringing a set of deficits to it and it is the approach that continue to set them apart from their developing counterparts.

These developed countries use a multicultural approach to the teaching and learning process. This method requires the school leadership and teachers to be aware of their ethical responsibilities and cultural diversities, as advocated and argued by Vygotsky (1978) decades ago, where the findings support the contention that quality teaching is based on an ethical disposition that respects and values cultural diversity and uses cultural knowledge as a teaching tool. The European Commission Reports (2011a, 2011b, and 2013) endorse a view that maintains that quality ethical school leadership is best described as a complex combination of knowledge and understanding, skills and appropriate dispositions or attitudes. Such an ethical disposition must be operationalised as an ethic of care in the school setting. The research into school leadership in developed nations by the European Commission (2013) found leadership to be highly correlated with attributes of quality teachers, explicit teaching,

literacy teaching, behaviour support, self-regulation support and pedagogical expertise. Zhu, Trevino and Zheng (2016) postulated that in school leadership in the Malaysian context, ethical leaders demonstrate ethically appropriate values and practices in schools and promote such behaviours and values among the members.

The data revealed that leaders in developed schools demonstrated ethically appropriate values and practices and the government plays a huge advocacy and strategic part in the entire exercise. The existence of such ethical values and practices helped leaders develop the required dimensions of ethical leadership in their respective schools. Zhu, Trevino, and Zheng (2016) commented that school leaders from other developing countries are referred to as principals, while a leader from Malaysian school-based environment are referred to as the headmistress/ headmaster; however, both are collectively being referred to as leaders. The leaders in both schools have a friendly and trusting relationship with teachers, staff, management team, parents and other school members. Zhu et al. (2016) posited that schools in western societies have a productive communication and friendly relationship with school members through ethical practices showing warmth, respect and care. Amar (2017) accordingly revealed that leaders emphasised promoting ethical conduct and behaviours in school and preventing unethical conduct. In order to create a culture that promotes ethical conduct in the school, they use rewards to appreciate ethically appropriate conduct and punishments to prevent unethical conduct. Amar (2017) posited that school leadership in the developed societies and countries do not compromise on ethical behaviours, and therefore do not hesitate to take action to minimise such practices.

School leadership is encouraged to use soft approaches, such as negotiation, consultations and counselling to prevent unethical behaviours and approaches. This is premised on their solid governmental approach to ethical and moral leadership (Amar, 2017).

2.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, five main themes from literature that are critical in ethical school leadership were identified: i.e. accountability, consideration and respect, character, collective orientation and lastly fairness and non-discriminatory treatment among the colleagues. These themes and sample attributes and behaviours are regarded as critical in ethical school leadership practices. The critical and first key category, accountability, included complying with laws and regulations, taking personal accountability, and holding others accountable. The second category, consideration and respect for others, incorporated treating others with dignity and respect, being approachable and demonstrating empathy and understanding. The third most crucial category, fairness and non-discriminatory treatment, included making fair, just and objective decisions, and not discriminating against others.

The fourth category, character, included demonstrating honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity, and having a moral code and self-discipline.

The fifth category, collective orientation focused on school leaders putting the interests of the organisation ahead of personal interests, considering the sustainability and long-term impact of decisions, protecting the interests of the school and society, and acting responsibly, by demonstrating high ethics of care. SMTs that find themselves struggling to comply with the principles of openness and flexibility, which includes openness to different opinions and diversity, and being a good communicator and listener, are likely to inculcate an environment highly prone and conducive to unethical conduct, which in turn has the propensity to influence the school negatively. It is also in the context of an unethical leadership environment where the principal and the leadership team, acting in self-interest and misusing power, coupled with pushing blame onto others, personal face-saving and acting in self-interest, that the school's moral compass will be distorted. Ethical leadership in schools cannot be harnessed when there is deception and dishonesty that includes collusion and corruption.

Lack of accountability, compliance and transparency, including failure to accept culpability, secretive behaviour, hidden agendas, and contravening laws and norms remain major contributors to unethical leadership.

Principals and school leadership establishments that lack personal values or a moral code, including having questionable ethics, morals or values, and lacking moral courage, will negatively impact the morale and performance of the school. In a school environment where elements of incivility are allowed, such as bullying, exploiting or manipulating others, malicious or vindictive behaviours, condescending behaviour toward staff, and sexual harassment, SMTs will be unable to achieve all positive leadership intentions that they may have set. The next chapter addresses the research design that was used to carry out the empirical research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provides an in-depth review of literature relevant to this study. In this chapter, the emphasis is on the research methodology and the research design which assisted in exploring the topic of this study, namely, to investigate the ethical leadership practices of SMT in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The chapter provides a framework for a systematic study that addresses the main research questions and objectives. It also outlines the research paradigm and a summary of the research approach. The chapter provides insight into the research paradigm, research approach, research design, the population of the study, the sampling method, the size of the sample, data collection strategy, and how data were analysed and finally the trustworthiness and credibility of the study as well as a description of ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.2.1 Research Paradigm

This research is located within the constructivist or interpretivist research paradigm because knowledge has been constructed from participants' worldviews and the way they understand and interpret the domain and environment in which they live and is consequently subjective. Their views, expectations and perceptions of ethical school leadership shaped the centre that influenced the research paradigm. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) asserted that, originally, the social sciences such as sociology, psychology, and education used the same research approach as the natural and physical sciences, which is the scientific method. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) posited that the ontology of the interpretive paradigm admits that social reality is the product of an individual's mind as they construe the world. This study explored the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The ontological truth is that schools face challenges for various reasons and this study assumes that the absence of ethical leadership contributes towards these challenges of an ethical dilemma. Okeke and van Wyk (2015) affirmed that the interpretive paradigm assumes that people construct and merge their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them.

This means that the researcher as an interpretive researcher looked upon life as primarily an interpretive process where people, individually or collectively describe and define their social worlds. It is because constructivist or interpretivist research paradigm can be applied with success to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

3.2.2 Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was employed in this study. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) postulated that qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. In support of their view, the researcher looked to focus on the "why" rather than the "what" of social occurrences and relied on the direct understandings of participants as human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives. Maree (2016) posited that the main objective of qualitative research is to perceive the world through the eyes of the participant. Mills and Gay (2016) supported this view in defining a qualitative research approach as the collection, analysis and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e. non-numerical) data to gain insights into a phenomenon of interest. This means that a qualitative research approach is based on different beliefs and is designed for different purposes. In this study, this approach is apposite because it assisted in acquiring knowledge on the views of the participants on the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

3.2.3 Research Design

The research design used in this study is a case study of two secondary schools in Soshanguve. It is a research method involving an up-close, in-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case), as well as its related contextual conditions. Milfs, Durepos and Wiebe (2010) posited that the advantage of using a case study is that it is a genuine conduit for an extensive range of research methods. Yin (2014) asserted that a case study is an empirical inquiry that examines a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the case and the context may not be evident. Henry (2009) emphasised that a case study examines a social unit. This means that the social unit to be examined may be a person, a family, a social group, a social institution, or a community as in this study.

The rationale for the choice of this design is that it is a fit-for-purpose because the researcher carefully selected participants that shed light on the ethical leadership practices of SMT members in Gauteng Province.

3.3 POPULATION AND THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Henry (2009) defined a population as a group of individuals with at least one common characteristic which distinguishes that group from other individuals. A population represents many individuals. A large population presents difficulties for researchers as the people in the population are different in

terms of characteristics such as age, educational levels, and so on. Thus, a study on this population would be impossible because of its size and not useful due to its diversity.

Sampling plays a crucial role in research as contended by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) who asserted that it is a process where a researcher selects a portion of a population for a study, with that portion being representative of a bigger population. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) affirmed that sampling involves making decisions about which people, settings, events or behaviours to include in the study. They stated that the researcher needs to decide how many individuals, groups or objects, such as schools, will be part of the investigation. Okeke and van Wyk (2015) defined a sample as a set of respondents or participants carefully chosen from a larger population to conduct research.

A purposive sample has been used in this study as it is a non-representative subset of some larger population and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose. The purposive sampling technique used in this study, is the deliberate choice of a participants due to the qualities the participant possesses. This study was conducted in two secondary schools in the Soshanguve area of Gauteng. The researcher purposefully selected the sample to represent the population. For this study, the researcher selected 12 participants to be interviewed; the categories of participants were as follows: two circuit managers, two education specialists (Labour Relations), two principals, two deputy principals, two heads of departments at the school and two teachers. Two circuit managers were selected because they are direct representatives of the provincial head of the department as the National Department of Education is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the norms in terms of section 8 of the National Educational Policy, Act 1996 (No. 27 of 1996).

The two education specialists (Labour Relations) were selected based on their involvement in interactive dispute resolution interventions and other Labour Relations engagements with schools located in their area of jurisdiction. The two principals were selected because they are leaders of the SMTs, inherent representatives of the Ministry of Basic Education at the school and ex-officio members of the school governing body and therefore must lead by example and set high standards for the school, as articulated by SASA 84 of 1996, Section 23(b). Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) affirmed that the principal is responsible for the professional management of the school. This entails that in matters of school governance, the principal is answerable to the employer by assisting the school with the performance of its functions and responsibilities in terms of policy and legislation.

Deputy Principals from the secondary schools were selected based on their actual involvement in the day-to-day running of the schools, and in most cases, act as principals in the absence of the principals. Departmental heads from the secondary schools were carefully chosen for their leadership role and

because of the responsibility they have of being the conduit between the rest of the teaching staff and the leadership of the schools and in some cases act as senior teachers within the school environment. The two teachers were purposefully selected as a subset representative of the larger populace of the teachers in the school environment and hold no leadership management role in the school. The researcher believed that their involvement could provide information that might not be provided by school leadership related to leadership ethical challenges.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

Any scientific study uses scientific procedures that will assist in the collection of data. This subsection provides a detailed explanation of the instruments of data collection and how the researcher collected data. According to Creswell (2014), data collection focuses on the collection of information either through interviews, observations and/or other techniques to collect data from participants. As a data collection strategy, the researcher used virtual semi-structured interviews.

3.4.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Punch and Oancea (2014) posit that the most prominent data collection technique in qualitative research is the interview method. They assert that an interview is a good way of exploring people's perceptions, meanings and definitions of situations and constructions of reality. They further state that it is the most powerful method of understanding others.

Maree (2016) refers to an interview as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant's questions to collect data and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) concur with this assertion by also postulating that semi-structured interviews allow for individual open-ended responses and opinion-sharing.

Supporting the views of Maree (2016) and McMillan and Schumacher (2014), Punch and Oancea (2014) believed that the semi-structured interview is neither fully fixed nor fully free and is very flexible and described these interviews as those that take the form of several major questions, accompanied by sub-questions and a possibility of follow-up questions. Thus, the researcher used semi-structured interviews. Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen and Walker (2014) emphasised that interviews are used to help understand the experiences people have and the meanings they make of them rather than to test hypotheses. They stated that interviews may provide information that cannot be obtained through observation or they can be used to verify observations. They affirmed that qualitative interviews are usually more probing and open-ended and less structured than the surveys used in quantitative research, however they vary considerably in the way they are conducted.

They pointed out that the advantage of an interview is that it supplies a large volume of in-depth data quite quickly. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) presented some advantages of interviews as follows:

- The researcher is present during the interview process with the respondent and therefore can make the questions clear.
- The researcher can ask more probing questions to find more detailed data if the participant has not given enough detail in the beginning.
- It is easier for respondents to talk to the researcher in an interview and the researcher can thus collect much more detailed and descriptive data.
- An interview is a good method to use for gaining in-depth data from a small number of participants.

Virtual semi-structured interviews on Microsoft Teams and Zoom were conducted with selected SMT members, teachers and district officials in Gauteng with specific reference to Soshanguve to obtain the data related to the objectives as indicated in subsection 1.5 in Chapter 1. The researcher used interview guides during this process (see APPENDICES M1-M6). The interview questions for all the participants were almost the same except for a few questions depending on the positions held by participants. The interview questions were guided by the research questions, the objectives of the study and the problem under investigation.

During the interview sessions, the researcher probed and prompted where possible to have a thorough understanding of the responses of the participants. During the virtual interviews, where, with consent of the participants, videos of themselves were displayed, the researcher was also vigilant of facial and other expressions of the interviewees as these are critical in qualitative research. The interviews were conducted mainly in English unless the interviewee requested clarity in a language that they preferred.

The researcher ensured that interview sessions did not interfere with official working hours of the participants as part of ethical protocol observation. With the permission of the participants, the researcher recorded the interview sessions on Microsoft Teams call and Zoom as the chosen online virtual platforms selected by the participants. The rationale for recording the interviews was that it helped during the process of interview transcription. In supplementing the recorded process, the researcher also made efforts to take notes of critical value adding inputs during the interview. In this study, the researcher interviewed 12 participants virtually to explore their perceptions and views about the ethical leadership practices of SMT in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The rationale for the selection of virtual semi-structured interviews using Microsoft Teams call and Zoom

was that due to Covid 19 protocols limiting physical interaction at that time, the researcher needed to engage in a virtual interaction with participants.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Maree (2016), qualitative data analysis (QDA) is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining the meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. In relation to this study, qualitative data presented was analysed to make meaning from the perceptions of the participants, namely, the circuit managers, education specialists, principals and their deputies, Departmental heads in the school and teachers regarding ethical leadership practices of SMT members in selected secondary schools in Gauteng.

The analysis was based on the attitudes, understanding, values, experiences and feelings of the participants. Thematic data analysis was used for this study. King (2004) and Braun and Clarke (2006) postulated that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unanticipated insights.

The researcher organised and transcribed the information obtained from the participant. This was repeated by a process of viewing and listening many times to the virtually recorded interviews. The process was supplemented by referring to the notes taken verbatim by the researcher during the interviews. The researcher then repeated the process to have a deeper understanding of the data. Where there were issues which required further clarity, a follow-up interview was scheduled with the concerned participant either, virtually or by telephonic conversation. As indicated, the researcher then perused the whole data set numerous times to get a sense of what it contained as a whole.

The researcher then read the data to attain an overall sense of information and reflected on the complete meaning. The researcher further identified general categories or themes, and perhaps sub-categories or sub-themes, and then classified each piece of data given to get a general sense of what the data meant. This study followed the six steps in the process of analysing and interpreting qualitative data as summarised by Creswell (2014:261)

Step 1: The researcher organised and prepared data for analysis. During this process, the researcher then transcribed the interviews.

Step 2: The researcher read all the data, made notes and recorded general thoughts from the transcribed interviews.

Step 3: During this step, the researcher began a detailed analysis with a coding process, and then organised data into amounts or segments of text before bringing meaning to data.

Step 4: The researcher used the coding process to generate a description of the setting of participants and the categories of themes for analysis.

Step 5: The researcher decided on how the description and themes were to be represented in the qualitative narrative. In this study, the researcher used narratives to convey the findings of the study.

Step 6: The last step involved the researcher making an interpretation or deriving meaning from the data.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY

Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) stated the point that since qualitative researchers do not use numbers as evidence, they use different criteria to determine the trustworthiness or credibility of research findings. Moretti, van Vliet, Bensing, Deledda, Mazzi, Rimondini and Fletcher (2011) contended that the benefit of qualitative research is the fruitfulness of the collected data and such data needs to be interpreted and coded validly and reliably. In qualitative research, validity and reliability are measured using the concept trustworthiness. According to White, Olke and Friesen (2012), trustworthiness of a study refers to how well data and processes are analysed. The researcher in the process of analysing data that was exposed in dealing with ethical leadership practices of SMT in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province, ensured that the process stood the test of trustworthiness. This included the following critical concepts: credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability which are briefly described below.

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility relates to how confident the qualitative researcher is in the truth of the research study's findings (White et al., 2012). This boils down to the question of "How do you know that your findings are true and accurate?"

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability is how the qualitative researcher demonstrates that the research study's findings are applicable to other contexts. In this case, "other contexts" can mean similar situations, similar populations and similar phenomena. Qualitative researchers can use thick description to show that the research study's findings can be applicable to other contexts, circumstances, and situations. (Maree 2016).

3.6.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree of neutrality in the research study's findings (White et al., 2012). In other words, this means that the findings are based on participants' responses and not any potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher.

This involves making sure that researcher bias does not skew the interpretation of the views of the research participants. To establish confirmability, qualitative researchers can provide an audit trail, which highlights every step in the data analysis that was made to provide a rationale for the decisions made. This helps establish that the research study's findings accurately portray participants' responses (Maree, 2016). T

3.6.4 Dependability

Dependability is the extent that other researchers could repeat the study and that the findings would be consistent. In other words, if a person wanted to replicate this study, they should have enough information from the research report to do so and obtain similar findings as the study did. The researcher can use inquiry audit in order to establish dependability, which requires an outside person to review and examine the research process and the data analysis in order to ensure that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Maree 2016). This is usually done by means of member-checking, i.e. going back to the participants to confirm that what they said has been reflected accurately.

3.7 THE APPLICATION OF TRUSTWORTHINESS IN THIS STUDY

That was done by ensuring that that the study was not tampered with to ascertain credibility, confirmability, and dependability of data in its analysis and that such data would be able to stay relevant and authentic for a long period to be used by other researchers (Guba, 1989, King & Horrocks 2010, Maree 2016). The process of data analysis further focused on the aptitude of the researcher to capture the multiple realities of circuit managers, education specialists dealing with Labour Relations, principals and deputy principals, Departmental heads and the teachers sampled. To establish confirmability and credibility, the researcher kept the interview records safe and provided a step-by-step description of the process of how analysis of data was conducted. In conducting the analysis, where there were uncertainties, I revisited the participants' recordings to further understand what they meant during the interview process. This ensured that the researcher did not compromise data interpretation and skew the interpretation of what the research participants said to fit a certain narrative. This process ensured that the findings correlated with data collected. Even though the study was a case of only two schools around Soshanguve in Gauteng Province, the results could be transferred to schools

with similar features. In this study, to establish dependability, the researcher ensured that the findings of the study were consistent with data collected.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Scientific studies follow specific protocols and because this study involved human beings, as a researcher, I made sure that this research project complied with ethical protocols to the letter. Brynard et al. (2014) argued that research should be conducted honestly, responsibly and confidently. To them, honesty should also apply to how results are reported. This entails that the researcher should at all times and under all circumstances report the truth and should never present the truth in a biased manner. They further affirmed that the researcher should bear in mind that the truth should be verified to see whether the researcher is indeed reporting precise truth.

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study from the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee (Appendix A). This authorisation was used to apply for permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the study in two secondary schools in Soshanguve with the assurance that the findings of the study are shared with the Ministry of Basic Education, to benefit the wider education community (Appendix B–C). The researcher then informed participants of the purpose of the study, which was to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The researcher wrote letters to the circuit managers, education specialist (Labour Relations), principals, deputy principals, Departmental heads in the schools, and teachers that were involved in the study, explaining the purpose of the research, and their rights during the whole research process (See Appendices F–K). The generally acceptable principles of research being avoidance of deception, privacy, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity that the researcher took into cognisance are articulated below:

3.8.1 Deception

Yanow and Schwartz (2018) posited that deception occurs as the consequence of the researcher furnishing false or inadequate information to participants to deceive research subjects. The researcher did not deceive participants in this research, which is commonly used to promote scientific validity. Participants were supplied with complete information about the research to achieve unbiased data concerning their attitudes and behaviour. Complete or truthful disclosure is anticipated to produce biased results. This study assured the participants of the transparency of the study.

3.8.2 Privacy

The researcher respected the obligation to protect the rights of participants in the study, their privacy, and sensitivity. Concealment of participants' identities was preserved to safeguard their anonymity and privacy. This meant that the researcher could stumble upon data of a confidential nature, the publication of which could be harmful to the persons or groups involved. The researcher considered that the interests of the participants should prevail, and that no confidential data should be recorded or published.

3.8.3 Informed Consent

All participants in the study were informed of the research being conducted. Participants were advised of the purpose of the study, any information regarding the funding of such study, that their participation would attract any reward in cash or in kind, and how the conclusions would affect them or their organisations. Participants were assured that their involvement in the study will have no adverse impact on them and who will have access to the findings. The main objective of informed consent is that the participants would be able to make an informed decision about whether they would participate in the research or not. The researcher provided supplementary information to participants who needed it during their participation. This practice of informed consent was used to make sure that participants were at ease during the study (see Appendix L).

3.8.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher ensured that confidentiality was observed in that any demonstrable and noticeable information would not be made available to or retrieved by anyone. The researcher further ensured that such information was omitted from any reports or published documents. Given that there are frequently other peer-based research programmes, to ensure anonymity, the researcher worded the research report to ensure that there was no possibility for people to be identified even though names will not be used. The researcher continuously maintained confidentiality throughout the study, and no information was made available to any unauthorised person without the permission of the participant. Mills (2014) posited that anonymity means the researcher has an obligation to keep identities of the participants in the study unknown to anyone. This process involved the use of pseudonyms to conceal identities of the participants.

3.9 BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

There are many studies on school leadership but what makes this study unique is that it contributes to the body of knowledge on ethical school leadership, particularly in schools in Gauteng Province. The study further positively contributes to the national discourse in relation to the role of ethical leadership in secondary schools in ensuring successful teaching and learning and the realisation of an acceptable ethical leadership culture.

The intention of this research was also to contribute towards policy issues related to school leadership, particularly the role of principals in secondary schools.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explained in detail what the researcher did during the research process. The chapter explained the research paradigm, approach and design that were adopted for the study. The researcher then went on to describe the population of the study, the sampling method and size of the sample. The data collection technique of semi-structured interviews was also explained in this chapter. Data analysis, trustworthiness and credibility of the study were discussed as well as ethical considerations critical for this study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explained and described the research design and methodology of this study. The main aim of this study was to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in the Soshanguve area of Gauteng Province. This chapter provides an exposition of the presentation, analysis and the discussion of the discussion of the findings. The researcher recorded the interviews with the permission of the participants. This assisted the researcher to transcribe each of the participants' responses. The presentation, analysis and the discussion of data was based on the research questions of the study. The views of the participants were presented verbatim to enhance trustworthiness of the study. In addition, the participants' responses were probed, analysed and evaluated by the researcher. Furthermore, the findings of this study were presented in relation to reviewed literature in Chapter 2 and the theory underpinning this study, namely ethical leadership. Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the enforcement of the protocols by the DBE, the interviews as prescribed by the ethical clearance were conducted using different virtual platforms such as the telephone, Zoom and Microsoft Teams. This study explored the following main and sub-research questions:

Main research question:

- What are the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province?

Sub-questions:

- What is the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership?
- What Ethical Practices do SMTs Demonstrate in Selected Secondary Schools?
- What are the ethical leadership challenges that SMTs face in secondary schools in Gauteng?
- What are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices?
- Which strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

This investigation further pursued the following critical research objectives:

- To explore the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership.
- To investigate whether SMT members demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in selected cases in Gauteng Province.

- To find out what ethical leadership challenges SMTs face in secondary schools in Gauteng?
- To investigate the consequences of unethical leadership practices.
- To suggest effective strategies that would mitigate unethical school leadership practices.

The data produced from the semi-structured interviews involved two circuit managers, two education specialists (Labour Relations) from both the Tshwane East and West regions, two principals, two deputy principals, two heads of department, and two teachers from each of the two secondary schools in the same region. Themes that arose from the examination of participants' responses were analysed and synthesised and linked to existing literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the theory which underpinned this study. A concerted and deliberate effort was made to establish connections between the findings to existing literature on the themes under discussion.

The researcher displayed participants' intimate knowledge, perspectives and experiences in a logical, consolidated and orderly manner. In order to maintain continuous anonymity and confidentiality, the two schools involved in the study were coded as school "A" and school "B". Code "D" is used for the district office. Codes C1 and C2 were used to represent the two circuit managers with whom the researcher had individual virtual interviews. Codes L1 and L2 were used to represent the two circuit-based education specialists on Labour Relations whom the researcher also interviewed and engaged online. The codes P1 and P2 represents the principals from both schools. The codes DP1 and DP2 represents the deputy principals from both school A and B. The codes H1 and H2 represent the head of departments from both schools. T1 and T2, represent the two teachers from school A and B that participated in the study. They were not necessarily part of the SMT, but their involvement in the study was critical to get balanced views, insights and perspectives of teachers on ethical leadership. The participants' responses are verbatim in the following sections.

4.2 THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Initially, the researcher planned to use two weeks to virtually interview twelve participants, namely two circuit managers, two education specialists (Labour Relations), two principals, two deputy principals, two Departmental heads, and two teachers (see Section 4.4). The process was characterised by some frustrations, particularly with circuit managers and education specialists in the sample. Letters informing participants in the sample were sent to their various destinations, namely schools and circuit offices. Attached to these letters, were permission letters from both the district and head offices of the Gauteng Department of Education. Appointment dates for conducting interviews were arranged with the participants.

Participants were also informed in the letters that recorded virtual interviews would be used: this was not a problem with any of the participants. Where participants raised questions why the virtual recording of the interviews was used, the researcher was able to supplement the explanation before the interviews commenced even though the use of virtual interviews was explained in the letters. Selected SMTs and the teachers respected the dates and times agreed upon to conduct the virtual interviews. During the interviews, all the sampled participants gave their responses in English. Regarding circuit managers and the education specialists, it was very difficult and challenging to secure appointments right away. Dates and times agreed upon were changed from time to time as the frequency of visits to schools were unprecedented due to Covid 19. The interviews with them were ultimately conducted after about two weeks. As indicated earlier, interviews were based on the interview protocol prepared. During the interviewing process, the researcher probed and prompted to get to the bottom of issues. During probing and further prompting, the objectives of the investigation were constantly kept in mind.

4.3 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants were selected from the Tshwane East and West district offices and the two secondary schools contacted by the researcher. The district officials, school principals, Departmental heads and ordinary teachers participated in these interviews. These participants were chosen because the researcher intended to acquire information-rich opinions, insights, experiences and their perceptions in exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

4.4 THE PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The information in the tables below indicates the characteristics of the participants who participated in individual virtual interviews in the sampled educational settings, these characteristics are shown in Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 below. A total number of participants that participated in the research was 12. The participants in the study were characterised by gender mix, with more women than men as demonstrated in tables below.

Table 4.1: The Profile of Participants of Tshwane East and West District Office

Participants	Age	Gender	Occupation Status	Experience in Years
C1	54	Female	Circuit Manager	16
C2	52	Male	Circuit Manager	15
L1	52	Male	Education Specialist (Labour Relations)	12
L2	52	Male	Education Specialist (Labour Relations)	10

Table 4.2: The Profile of Participants of School A

Participants	Age	Gender	Occupation Status	Experience in Years
P1	55	Female	Principal	15
DP1	50	Male	Deputy Principal	10
H1	52	Female	Departmental heads	12
T1	38	Female	Teacher	12

Table 4.3: The Profile of Participants of School B

Participants	Age	Gender	Occupation Status	Experience in Years
P2	60	Female	Principal	18
DP2	52	Male	Deputy Principal	12
H2	48	Female	Departmental heads	10
T2	35	Female	Teacher	10

4.5 DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

The interview data was transcribed from the virtual platforms after listening to the recordings several times. The following data is presented under themes that developed from the examination and study of the interview transcripts. The presentation and discussion of the findings of this inquiry was guided through the work of Braun and Clarke (2006) supported by King and Horrocks (2010) who argued that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the experiences and perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and unanticipated insights. The five main themes were detected through the process of open and axial coding and categorising as posited by Creswell (2014).

Data presentation and discussion in this study was characterised based on an interpretative philosophy that was aimed at examining the meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data (Maree, 2016). Qualitative data presented was analysed to make meaning from the perceptions of the participants.

The five themes are briefly discussed as follows:

- Theme 1 addressed the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership and emphasised what constitutes good ethical school leadership and its meaning, both real and perceived. The theme further underlined a clear understanding of ethical leadership and its attributes.
- Theme 2 was centred on the SMTs' ethical leadership behaviours demonstrated in their leadership practices: their relationship with subordinates, interactions, and enforcement of discipline.
- Theme 3 articulated the challenges which are faced by SMT namely: late-coming, insubordination, absenteeism, teacher and learners engaged in intimate relationships.
- Theme 4 focused on the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools: discipline, dismissal, demotions, school performance, teachers' and SMTs' increasing discomfort about learner indiscipline in schools, poor academic performance and results, and feelings of being unsafe for teachers and learners.
- Theme 5 articulated the strategies that can be developed to enhance ethical leadership in schools: guidance and support, workshops on ethics, mentoring, involvement in drafting rules and regulations and preventative disciplinary methods.

Figure 4.1 below provides in summary themes that emerged from the investigation. An in-depth-analytical discussion of these themes then follows the graphical presentation.

Figure 4.1: Graphical representation of emergent themes
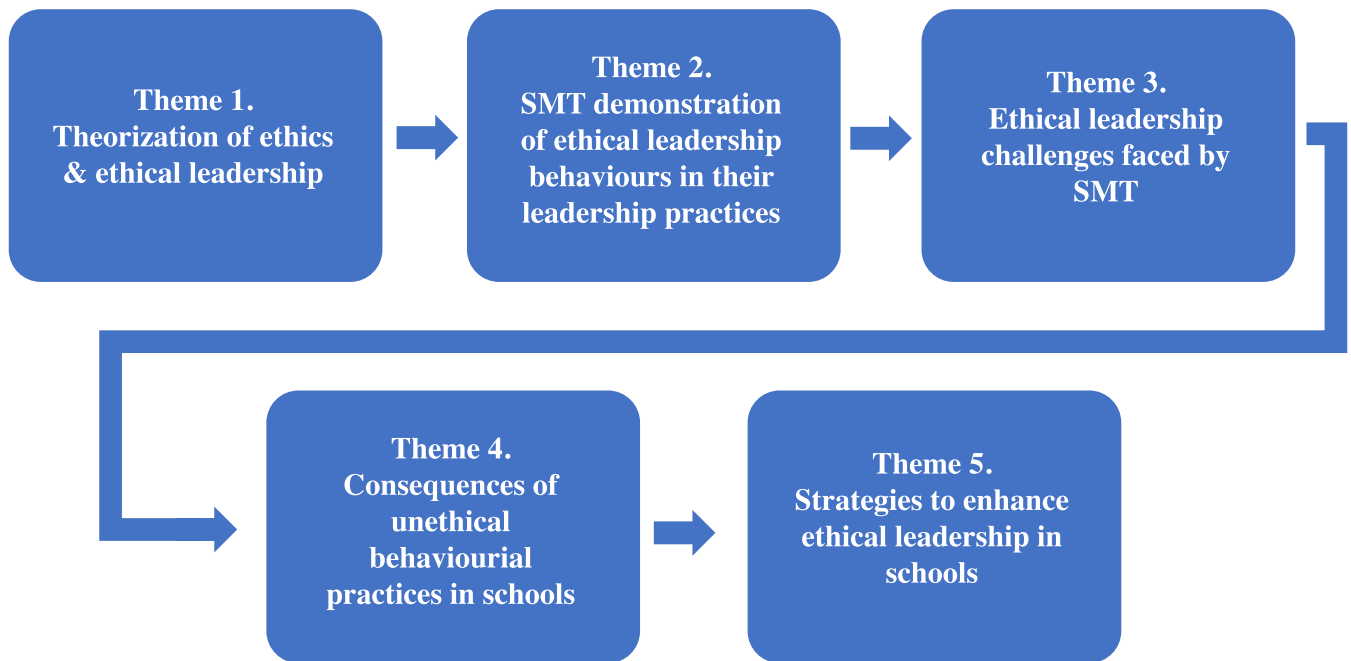
4.5.1 Participants' Theorisation of Ethics and Ethical Leadership

Data generated from the semi-structured interviews indicated that most of the participants involved in the study had a comprehensive understanding of the terms "ethics" and "ethical leadership". The participants mentioned ethics as a set of morals, values and principles that influence an individual's thoughts and actions. The participants eloquently articulated that ethical leadership is a form of leadership that is underpinned by the same foundation of ethical standards and ideals. Different participants mentioned their personal perceptions of the term in some form or another, with some being more explicit while others were not as succinct. The perceptions on ethical leadership by circuit managers responsible for the two schools was similar; they unanimously concurred in their perception that ethical leadership incorporates principles such as transparency, honesty, accountability and they

further articulated their perception on ethical leadership as a form of leadership that is directed by such ethical beliefs.

In responding to this matter, C2 noted that:

> *"Ethics is what is morally acceptable or in most instances a set of general principles that we set ourselves..."*

C1 further suggested that:

> *"When I look now at ethical leadership, to me it looks like a type of leadership that should be transparent, participatory and visionary. Ethical leadership involves not only the demonstration of ethical behaviour by leaders but the promotion of this behaviour by leaders as well in their schools."*

Further, C2 captured the understanding by referring to the term as constituting:

> *"A set of principles involving moral accountability which is used to determine right from wrong. Ethical school leadership is also to provide holistic education in a disciplined environment where integrity and high moral principles are upheld"*

L1 and L2 officials from the DBE based at the two districts of Tshwane, responsible for Labour Relations and dispute resolution were also unanimous in their understanding of ethical leadership and the principles pertaining to moral behaviours expected of those that were in leadership in the school and agreed that such conduct should be beyond reproach. They further mentioned that this expected moral conduct extended to everyone in the school setting.

L1 explicitly articulated what constitutes ethical leadership as:

> *"Morally accepted principles and behaviours that are expected of our officials in schools without fail and for me, this is non-negotiable."*

L2, in his response, noted that:

> *"My understanding of what constitutes ethics is a conduct that will determine your behaviour... Ethical leadership entail that you carry these same value systems into how you lead your school, treat and interact with your members of staff."*

As suggested earlier, the participants also involved principals, heads of department at school level and the teachers. The principals, heads of department and teachers from both Schools A and B shared similar opinions of ethical leadership as the other participants. They too believed that ethics and ethical leadership involves morals and values, which should steer ethical school leadership along the same moral standards as expected from SMT.

P1, P2, DP1, DP2, HI and H2 who are based at the two schools, shared similar sentiments in that ethical leadership is constituted of high standards of moral conduct that is expected from leaders in the school setting, and such conduct should be set at a high bar. P1 explained her understanding of the term as follows:

> "*My understanding is that ethical leadership is borne out of morally accepted conduct that is becoming of a leader in the school without compromise.*"

P2 further expressed his understanding of ethics and ethical leadership as:

> "*Behaviour that does not and should not compromise the integrity of both the school and the official himself or herself, be it a teacher, my deputy or anyone in the school.*"

DP1 pronounced his personal meaning of ethical leadership in this way:

> "*This is a set of criteria that refers to the involvement of moral accountability to whatever we say or do in the school, and of course, this has a lot to do with how we carry ourselves in the presence of others.*"

DP2 similarly suggested that:

> "*I view this as moral accountability to the actions we take in light of the people we lead, and our behaviour should not be questionable, and one should not be found wanting, when it comes their conduct in the school.*"

H1 articulated her understanding more succinctly by indicating that:

> "*For me, ethical leadership is about honest leadership and you being responsible and being an example and also being accountable for your actions especially in a school situation.*"

H2 described ethical leadership as follows:

> "*My individual perceptions on the description of ethical leadership is a code of conduct that will determine your behaviour, so it's important to treat people with honesty, integrity and*

professionalism for you to be taken seriously, it mostly boils down to your general conduct in the school environment. It also goes beyond the school setting in my view."

T1's articulation was not as succinct. Her point of view was that:

"Well, ethics, I believe is how one is expected to run the school in terms of values and with morals... Ethical leadership in my view is basically understanding everybody's point of view. Informing everyone in the school of what is going on and taking everyone into consideration."

T2 posited her view as follows:

"In my understanding and for me when we talk about ethics and ethical leadership is that it is very important to set a very high standard of examples of honesty, ethics, morals and values to these teachers and learners, so that there is no conflict and favouritism in the school."

In analysing the views from all 12 participants regarding the above theme, it appears that all the participants had a good grasp and understanding of perceptions on the description of ethical leadership. The participants were able to share their experiences of what is expected of good ethics and acceptable ethical leadership. Participants in general agreed on their real and perceived understanding of good morals, values and principles that individual leaders should possess.

They also understood that these principles governed the conduct of individuals and enabled them to determine right from wrong. The participants further argued that the values of good ethical leadership had the propensity to enhance good governance in schools.

The participants also had an in-depth understanding of ethical leadership. Participants interpreted ethical leadership as a type of leadership that is based on the socially acceptable ideals. They also acknowledged that ethical leadership involved not only the demonstration of ethical behaviour by leaders but the promotion of this behaviour by leaders as well in their schools. The participants understanding of ethical leadership in their responses was reinforced by Perry, de Graaf, Zeger, van der Wal and van Montfort (2014) who posited that ethical leadership is underpinned by principles that promote honesty, morality and trust. Findings emerging from the responses in this theme were further supported by Joyce (2014) who concurred with Perry et al. (2014) and the participants that ethics is a key component of good governance and has significant potential to affect public trust. Furthermore, the actions of principals as schools' leaders are important in promoting good conduct and fostering an ethical culture.

This was further supported by literature from Manyaka and Sebola (2013) who defined ethics as involving a framework of socially acceptable norms, morals and values which control an individual's actions. These authors extend this definition to public servants and leaders having an ethical framework made up of a moral code, which directs their professional and personal conduct. The participants also labelled the term ethics as a set of moral principles and values that determine an individual's behaviour. The definitions of ethics from the literature are therefore supported by the views of participants. The researcher believes that the participants had a clear understanding of what ethics and ethical leadership are.

In summarising the descriptions from the participants' standpoint, ethical leadership encompasses accountability, transparency, fairness, justice, integrity, honesty, authenticity, compassion, courage and mutual respect. The next theme addresses the SMTs' reflections on ethical leadership in their practices.

4.5.2 SMTs' Demonstration of Ethical Leadership Behaviuors in their Leadership Practices

The data suggested that different types of unethical behaviours of SMT during their leadership in the two schools was of concern. Most of the participant's responses included the problem that unethical behaviours of SMT members occurred regularly or were increasing. C1 and C2 in their accounts indicated negative experiences and feelings in respect of the above theme.

C1 expressed his view this way:

> "*Some members of the SMT especially principals, are sometimes found wanting in the manner in which they reflect the correct posture, when it comes to ethical leadership… I expect them to show the correct moral leadership without fail, and in my interaction with them, and from the reports I get, some are very disappointing, viewing at their different practices when it comes to ethical leadership.*"

In his further pronouncement of the matter, the same circuit manager said that:

> "*I get a lot of dissatisfaction from colleagues regarding poor leadership practices of bad behaviour, inconsistent application of the rules, interpersonal conflict and selective staff treatment from the schools in question, I always try my best to resolve them.*"

C2 was scathing in her articulation that:

> "*These colleagues who are tasked to lead the schools can do better when it comes to ethical leadership…I sometimes get reports of abuse of power by SMT from some teachers and some from trade union.*"

The circuit manager further argued that:

> "*Sometimes I think, we can all do better to sensitise them about ethical leadership practices, but SMTs should always hold the end of the stick in that they should shoulder the responsibility regarding their poor leadership practices.*"

The education specialists responsible for the two schools in the study were in unison on their expression of the situation that members of the SMT faces in their respective schools.

L1 said:

> "*From the number of cases that I have to attend in a month, I can safely say that ethical leadership in the schools is a real challenge and most SMTs are not playing their part, but of course, we are also part of the equation to make it possible through our support structures*"

The same sentiment was shared by L2. He maintained that:

> "*There seems to be a general sense that ethical leadership is always put at the back seat.*"

After probing, he expressed that:

> "*Most of the SMTs think less of this challenge, and it consumes a lot of my time in trying to resolve disputes arising from ethical leadership practices, that they know very well, that, they should not be engaging in.*"

Principals and their deputies seemed to agree when it came to whether the SMTs reflected ethical leadership practices. A united front seemed to emerge from their views, expressions and attitudes regarding this theme, with just a few different points of views.

P1 was resolute in what she expressed that:

> "*I don't remember being found wanting, when it comes to the way I relate to my colleagues and the entire staff as far as ethical leadership is concerned.*"

After pausing, the principal further commented:

"*I always treat my staff equal and address their concerns without casting any aspersions on them, whether they are right or wrong.*"

In further probing on the theme, P1 further cemented the narrative that:

"*The district has never investigated any acts or conduct of bad leadership behaviour practices in our school.*"

DP1 was similarly resolute. His views were expressed as follows:

"*From where I am sitting, everything is running very well in our school, if there were issues of bad or incorrect ethical leadership behaviours, I am certain that I would gladly have shared them with you.*"

The same deputy principal continued to say:

"*We have always reflected good and acceptable ethical leadership behaviour expected of us as leaders in the school.*"

P2 commented that:

"*We have always erred on the side of caution when dealing with ethical leadership as our staff perceive this topic very differently, but generally our practices have been above board.*"

The principal further said:

"*The way I have dealt with complaints and allegations of favouritism, ill-discipline and other bad practices, by and against our staff, consistency has been key for me, I have never been biased towards or against anyone.*"

DP2 was very vocal about this, stating that:

"*There are some rotten apples when it comes to ethical conduct in the school, but generally, we are able to handle those issues as a team.*"

After probing the deputy principal further, he expressed a slightly different viewpoint in this regard by remarking that:

"I should also state that, we are all humans and all of us are prone to err from time to time, when it comes to unacceptable behaviour, but we should learn from that, accept our mistakes and move on."

The Departmental heads tasked to oversee managerial and leadership functions and activities in the two schools expressed very similar viewpoints in relation to the theme. Their expressions seem more forward thinking and focused more on the reality of the ethical leadership situations that the schools faced.

H1, in her articulation, was very upfront and expressed that:

"Without a doubt, we have a very big challenge of ethical leadership in our school, where leadership is sometimes absent…Yes I know that I am part of the leadership of the school and fully aware that we can do better in the way we resolve ethical leadership challenges."

When probed further, H1 said:

"There are occasions, we were not consistent in the way we resolved very similar conflicts and challenges and that is a serious shortcoming on our part as leadership of the school."

H2 lamented the fact that:

"When it comes to the way we reflect ethical leadership behaviour in this school, some of us are found wanting, because at times we are blinded by favouritism, buddy friendships, and so on…We have dropped the ball in this regard, in that our ethical leadership practices across the school divide has not been up to standard in the way we have behaved and conduced ourselves."

After probing, H2 concluded by saying:

"All granted, there is always room for improvement in the manner we treat others in an ethically acceptable manner."

T1 and T2 respectively were also included in the study to achieve a balanced view in respect of their views and experiences on how SMTs reflected ethical leadership behaviour in their leadership practices within their school settings. The participants seemed honest and eager to express their feelings on how they were treated, listened to, supported and viewed when addressing their complaints and challenges.

T1 indicated that:

"This issue of ethical leadership in our school, there is more to it than meets the eye."

On further probing and follow-up, she said:

"Our management does not reflect anything close to ethics and good conduct, in the way they are leading us, there is a lot of favouritism and buddy-buddy relations here because there is a consistent pattern of the application of different rules for different people in this school, even if the issues are similar."

T2 was also similarly scathing in her expressions and suggested that:

"Teachers are not treated the same here when it comes to allocation of work, expected discipline and the way our SMT relate to us."

She further suggested to the fact that:

"Our management team does not care about issues of ethical leadership in this school, all they are worried about, is their own promotions and those of their friends and they treat us very differently, and the more you are vocal on their bad ethical leadership practices, the more you are sidelined."

In the researchers' analysis regarding the above theme, it appears that there was no consensus on the way the SMTs reflected ethical leadership behaviour in their leadership practices within their school environments. The responses of the different participants indicated that unethical behaviours of the SMT were prevalent in schools. The divergent responses further laid bare the different understandings of the participants of how ethical leadership was demonstrated in the school settings. Data that emerged in the interviews revealed actions that did not display ethical and moral conduct. Participants reflected on inappropriate behaviours of inconsistent application of the rules, interpersonal conflict and selective staff treatment that have the propensity to hinder ethical practices in schools.

Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) supported this observation by commenting on instances of rule-bending and unprofessional conduct that are reported and related to school norms permeated by lack of leadership. They further postulated that unprofessional conduct by educators fabricating learner marks, chronic absenteeism, inability to make sound pedagogic decisions because of vested stakes, and the inability to communicate effectively with subordinates, lack of interpersonal relations, use of abusive language and inconsistent enforcement of discipline in the school were the results of lack of ethical leadership expected from the SMTs. Calik et al. (2012) argued that school leadership that consistently places emphasis on exemplary behaviour namely authenticity, responsibility, openness,

honesty and integrity, sound ethical practices and commitment to acting in an exemplary manner, create the environment for good ethical practices in the school. This assertion aligns with responses of the participants regarding acceptable behaviour of the SMTs towards subordinates and how they relate to them. The researcher is of the view that principals tended to portray themselves in a positive light, which is why it was critical to have the views of other participants on ethical leadership practices of SMT members led by principals.

4.5.3 Ethical Leadership Challenges Faced by SMTs

The collation of data regarding this theme exhibited commonality among the participants during the interviews, with some few minor exceptions. During the interviews and data analysis, it became apparent that there existed a huge ethical school leadership challenge faced by those tasked to provide leadership in the schools.

The views, experiences and sentiments expressed were strikingly similar and weighed heavily on the SMTs. The participants unanimously expressed the view that if unethical school leadership challenges were not properly managed, they could negatively influence the school and adversely affect its performance on all fronts, such as learner results, teacher motivation and staff morale. Ethical leadership challenges of abuse of drugs and alcohol by the teachers and some members of the SMT, absenteeism, disrespect for subordinates' rights, peer influence among teachers to defy lawful instructions, sexual relations across the spectrum and the mismanagement of funds and resources emerged significantly from data in the above theme.

Circuit managers are placed strategically at the centre of enforcing good and acceptable moral conduct expected of the management teams of the schools they are responsible for in their districts.

On responding to the challenges SMT face, C1 in his introductory remarks suggested that:

> "*This remains a huge task we are seized with on a daily basis, and we continue to endeavour that this become a reality.*"

C1 on the same matter further lamented that:

> "*My schools continue to face a huge task when it comes to challenges of mismanagement of funds and resources, general absenteeism, general insubordination and lack of the moral conduct we expect from our leadership in the schools.*"

Engaging further with the issue, the district official (C1) stated:

"*We are hard at work to address these ethical challenges in our schools, the heightened levels of ethical behaviour must become our mantra.*"

C2 expressed unreservedly that:

"*Substance abuse especially alcohol by those that are supposed to be in the lead, continues to hinder our progress in relation to how our school leaders must handle themselves…We continue to receive uncomfortable growing reports of mismanagement of funds and resources, inappropriate sexual reports across the spectrum among others, where teachers and learners are alleged to be involved in sexual relations, and the management of the school is failing to be on top of the situation.*"

The district official added after probing that:

"*Issues of bad peer influence, seems to be very prevalent as well, where the SMT seems to singing from the same verse in that they are not able to confront one another on the ethical leadership issues raised against them.*"

The education specialists (L1) and (L2) responsible for Labour Relations on behalf of schools in the study raised similar challenges based on the dispute resolution cases they had to deal with frequently. During the interviews, data analysis revealed startling information, indicating challenges of ethical leadership when it comes to mismanagement of funds and resources, sexual harassment, gross misconduct, gross absenteeism and a host of other ethical leadership challenges faced by SMTs. However, a general sense of the challenges further emerged from them in expressing how they were working hard to mitigate the challenges that existed.

The education specialist, L1 said:

"*We are now sitting with huge disciplinary cases of mismanagement of funds and resources that must now be resolved, with some cases simply starting as a small unethical conduct that could have been quickly resolved by the principal as a leader, but some have now grown much bigger than the school now.*"

On further probing, L1 expressed that:

"*One issue started when reports were made to the SMT about an educator suspected to be having a sexual relationship with a learner in his class and because of the slackness in which*

they dealt with the initial allegation, now the learner is pregnant, and the educator, subsequently dismissed. However, we are not losing hope, with the interventions we continue to make, [for example] a case regarding mismanagement of funds and resources is now sitting with our auditors for finalisation."

L2 voiced similar manifestations from his list of challenges faced by the school management by alluding that:

"*I have observed a pattern of huge bad peer influence exhibited by those that are meant to lead in the school. They seem to collectively influence each other in suppressing the rights of their subordinates to be heard*".

When pressed for further response, L2 said:

"*I have documented reports of grievances formally lodged, where different applicants, expressed very similar acts of lack of ethical leadership on the part of the SMT regarding mismanagement of funds and resources, these applicants felt that their complaints were not adequately addressed and in other instances totally ignored by the school leadership in defence of other SMT members they were complaining about.*"

All the interviewed participants that formed SMTs, i.e. the principals (P1, P2) deputy principals (DP1, DP2) and the heads of department (H1, H2) expressed similar sentiments regarding ethical leadership challenges they were confronted with. The participants expressed their concerns about their subordinates' conduct, such as gross absenteeism, substance and alcohol abuse, intimate indiscretions with learners and among themselves as well as peer influence, where they often wittingly and unwittingly participated together in these acts of unethical behaviour.

The principal in school A, P1 commented that:

"*As a leader in this school, I am regularly faced with colleagues that continue to act in a manner very unbecoming of a leader, and they set a very bad leadership example to the upcoming teachers.*"

After probing on her response, she further suggested that:

"*Some of the colleagues that I lead with, are the ones who continue to demonstrate bad influence in the manner they behave in the school. They have the tendency to form little groupings in an attempt to influence one another to rebel against lawful instructions. These*

behaviours pose a very serious ethical and moral leadership challenge in the school, and for the past two years, these errant behaviours have affected the performance and moral fibre of the entire school."

P2 of School B shared very similar experiences on the attitudes of the colleagues in his school. The participant articulated that:

"The issue of unethical leadership in my school from the people I expect a lot from really gets to me. These challenges have been here for some time and the district officials are fully aware of them. We are now seized with a very serious matter of a senior management team member facing serious disciplinary charges of sexual impropriety with a learner. Do you call that being ethical and exemplary?"

DP1 suggested that:

"One thing that I think is a huge challenge in our leadership, is lying about others without consequence and the issue of suppressing the rights of others is of grave concern to me, my view is that it is unethical to go around rumour-mongering in the school as this causes divisions and poses a very big challenge, colleagues must be sensitised about such behaviour."

DP2 went on to enunciate that:

"Absenteeism is a serious challenge that affects the morale of everyone in the school as it now obliges others to continuously have to cover for those people, and colleagues who do that, think this is not an ethical dilemma that the school leadership has to grapple with."

H1 in school A commented that:

"We are faced with ethical leadership challenges of colleagues coming to work reeking of alcohol and totally misbehaving in front of their colleagues, with others forever absent without leave for extended periods of time, they are forever absent to provide leadership when it is needed, it's a real shame, but we hope the district will deal with them, we can only report them, and what can we do?" [Shrugging her shoulders].

H2 expressed very similar frustrations when probed on the same theme:

> "*Ethical leadership is a real challenge that confronts us in great proportions and the colleagues continue to take this matter very lightly, there is a serious moral decay going on here.*"

When further pressed for a response, H2 said:

> "*Rights of others are not respected here, and I feel, this conduct of bad behaviour and ill-discipline by others on top is unethical, when you complain in the open, you are purged.*"

Teachers in Schools A and B shared similar feelings about ethical leadership challenges faced by the SMTs in their respective schools. They were both very aware of the role SMT was tasked with in their settings and both indicated that the blame lay with those that were in leadership.

T1 stated that:

> "*Management team in my school is tasked with a huge challenge of managing divisions caused by themselves because of favouritism in the manner they treat staff, and this is because I think, when there is conflict, they tend to take sides.*"

On further examining the response, she said:

> "*Other colleagues are not harshly dealt with when they are forever absent without leave, the principal is very selective in her discipline and the enforcement of school rules and procedures, I think this selective treatment is unethical.*"

T2 articulated similarly that:

> "We *have a leadership that takes sides when there are issues of conflict, we are ignored when we raise issues of mismanagement of funds and resources and I think that's unfair and unethical, people in the school have isolated themselves into different groupings in our leadership, and it confuses us as to where to go for leadership and advice, and I think this is one of the huge challenges.*"

Most of the participants' responses suggested that the number of ethical leadership challenges facing SMTs was increasing. Some of the unethical behaviours that SMTs exhibited were that they did not adequate involve all stakeholders within the school. Inconsistency and unfairness in the enforcement of the rules and regulations within the school setting seemed to be an ethical leadership challenge

emerging. SMTs displaying acts of being dictatorial and abusing their position of power by ill-treating colleagues, poor management of funds and resources, absenteeism, leaving the school early, and alcohol abuse featured prominently as challenges. Data that emerged from the theme further exposed inappropriate relationships with learners. Elements of peer pressure among colleagues disregarded the rights of others to be heard by the SMT when they raised their concerns regarding ethical leadership challenges within the school setting. Webb (2005) in support of the expressions made by participants, articulated that mismanagement of resources caused lack of morale, discontent and dissatisfaction in the organisation and contributed to poor ethical leadership. This assertion was further support by Oosthuizen (2010) and Pattillo (2012) who postulated that unethical conduct of school resources manifested itself in embezzlement of funds, fraud, extortion, abuse of power, nepotism, conflicts of interest, abuse of privileged information and favouritism, among many other ills. Participants remarked on some features as having a high net effect on behaviours and attitudes that inhibited moral practice in the school setting. These assertions were featured in the SACE annual reports (2014/2015) which pointed out that most complaints on the mismanagement of resources were in Gauteng and the Western Cape, followed by other provinces. These reflections on the responses were further reinforced in the work of Zengele (2011) where the author commented on blatant disregard for ethical conduct and unlawful use of school funds and other resources as a dominant ethical leadership challenge faced by the school management that impeded the establishment of ethical conduct in the school environment. In addition, McArthur (2015) asserted that, where a culture of immoral conduct thrived, there was a clear sense of unhappiness and frustration linked to the workings of an oppressive environment operating at the school.

Comments emanating from interviews regarding inappropriate sexual relationships as expressed by participants was mentioned by Tunde, Oke, Alam (2010) who maintained that despite a heightened level of awareness, sexual exploitation was fast becoming a common culture within the academic sphere and within schools in particular. High-level officials in institutions of education also forced or coerced colleagues to be involved in these acts.

Ulvik, Smith, and Helleve (2017) addressed the frustrations raised by all participants that the ability to find optimal solutions for ethical dilemmas in the school system was critical. Participants' concerns of how their rights were respected found expression in this assertion. Therefore, it requires the SMTs to be vigilant, as they will encounter ethical dilemmas in almost every aspect of their engagement with subordinates, including on a personal, social, and professional level. Participants' negative responses regarding ethical leadership challenges of drugs and alcohol abuse, absenteeism, disrespect of subordinates' rights, peer pressure, inappropriate sexual relations across spectrum in the school and

gross mismanagement of funds and resources were profound in their responses. Eisenbeiss (2012) and Lawton and Paez (2014) confirmed that ethical leadership had the capacity to improve the ethical standards of individuals. In support of the views expressed by participants, the authors further asserted that schools can provide a social platform to enable school leadership teams and teachers to demonstrate and promote appropriate ethical standards through their actions and relationships using two-way communication, support and decision-making.

4.5.4 The Consequences of Unethical Behavioural Practices in Schools

The SACE Code of Professional Ethics, The SASA (84 of 1996), the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) and all other policies and procedures governing teacher conduct have provisions which regulate the conduct of all educators including members of the SMTs. The findings of the interviews indicated that the district officials and the entire SMT were more knowledgeable about these codes of ethics because it is assumed that they were inducted on these codes when occupying these various positions of leadership. Data that emerged from the participants' responses suggested a level of awareness on these codes and the consequences associated with unethical behaviour.

The participants mentioned gross ill-discipline, high disciplinary turnover, increased discomfort in the school, poor academic performance and other outputs, high levels of anxiety and mistrust, low staff morale and accountability as consequences of unethical behavioural practices in the school setting. The participants agreed about the importance of mitigating the consequences of unethical conduct for the school to succeed.

The circuit managers C1 and C2 together with the education specialists L1 and L2 responsible for Labour Relations and dispute resolution in the district expressed similar sentiments regarding the cost of unethical leadership in the schools. These participants agreed that schools reflecting levels of high unethical practices suffered from poor academic performance. There was agreement emanating from their interviews that levels of mistrust and anxiety in those schools were of concern as well as the low morale of staff as a result of lack of accountability by those tasked with the responsibility to provide leadership in the school.

The perceptions of C1 on the consequences of unethical leadership practices were as follows:

> "As a result of unethical things happening there, schools that fall under my watch have continued to show poor results, because of this, there is also lack of trust among the school leadership team, I have also noticed general ill-discipline in that school as a result of unethical leadership practices. There are many reports of infighting and lack of accountability and that

has caused anxiety amongst staff, the situation has caused a great deal of discomfort at the schools and we were thinking of swapping them to other settings within the sector if the situation does not improve."

The views of C2 concurred with what his peer suggested as his comments were as follows:

"The consequences of unethical behavioural practices in our schools are greatly eroding trust within SMTs, these schools are performing very poor and the current state of affairs regarding low staff morale is unacceptable, we really need to tighten our consequence management efforts in the state."

It can be argued that the assertions of both the circuit managers are important since they provide leadership to schools and are also accountable to the schools under their purview. Similarly, Labour Relations officials deal with matters of misconduct and any leadership practice that do not promote ethical behaviour misses the mark. Given these assertions and in agreement with the circuit managers, L1 and L2 provided their views which were captured as follows:

L1 stated:

"Cases currently on my desk regarding gross ill-discipline, poor academic performance and other outputs contributes to high disciplinary case turnover and continue to cause increased discomfort in the school, to mitigate these costs of unethical behaviours, we really need to increase our efforts to train SMT."

L2 commented that:

"We are seized with a high number of disputed resolution interventions we have to institute. As a result of these consequences of unethical behaviours that we see from our SMTs, due to lack of accountability, factions have been created as a result of high levels of mistrust and everyone is now unnecessarily very anxious and their school responsibilities are now having to suffer; that is why conflict is so high."

Data that emerged from SMTs expressed serious consequences of unethical behavioural practices. Participants in the interviews expressed that ill-discipline increased anxiety and caused mistrust among members of the leadership and the referred misconduct cases have triggered low staff morale. The participants described their efforts to mitigate these consequences as they had the tendency to affect general school performance and other academic outputs.

Principals also were provided with opportunities to give their views on this matter. They corroborated the opinions of their colleagues. Below are the perceptions of P1 and P2.

> *"There is a lot of unacceptable conduct in the school as a direct result of unethical conduct from the colleagues, and this caused a lot of anxiety, distrust, low staff morale and my colleagues are beginning to lose a sense of belonging in my view."* (P1)

> *"The performance of the school is not something to be proud of as a result of unethical conduct from some of my colleagues and the consequences of unethical behaviours like late-coming, absenteeism, fraud and dishonesty in general have cost the school dearly, These acts of ill-discipline really has to stop at some point."* (P2)

Adding his voice to the issues related to the damage unethical leadership practices do to schools, DP1 suggested that:

> *"Our staff morale is at its lowest due to acts of unethical behaviour, where colleagues come late, lack of respects for rules and procedures, there is anxiety and a general atmosphere of mistrust in the school, these issues as a result, has had a negative effect on school performance."*

Supporting DP1, DP2 mentioned that:

> *"My take is that huge patches of ill-discipline, increased levels of discomfort in the school caused by unacceptable levels of anxiety and mistrust, lack of accountability are some of the consequences of unethical behaviour that we are experiencing our school and the low staff morale we see in the school, is as a direct result of these behaviours."*

The perceptions of the participants indicate what unethical leadership could do to schools. In addition to the views of the principals and deputy principals, H1, H2, T1 and T2 added their voices.

H1, who is the Departmental head in School A, lamented a number of unethical conducts. To this end he expressed his views thus:

> *"Lack of accountability, failure to discipline staff, selective reprimanding of colleagues in management and favouritism are costing us remarkably."*

H2 emphasised three critical consequences in this way:

> *"Consequences for unethical behavioural practices in my school are ill-discipline that we see rearing its ugly head that had led to a lot of disciplinary cases in the school, poor academic results, and low staff morale and accountability in the school."*

Teachers involved in the study reflected very similar views and experiences. Data emerging from the interviews regarding the theme expressed selective discipline, mistrust of other colleagues when they distributed work and other responsibilities, failure to account by SMT and a high number of disciplinary cases as consequences for unethical behavioural practices in the school.

T1, a junior teacher in School A suggested that:

> *"Management team in this school does not want to account for poor leadership, which is why I have to start with accountability as a serious flaw that I have experienced. I also see high levels of ill-discipline, mistrust among staff and management as some of the consequences for unethical behavioural practices in the school."*

T2 stated:

> *"My view is that lack of discipline enforcement and accountability are huge contributory consequences for unethical behavioural practices in the school. We don't have enough examples of good behaviour in this school."*

The responses of the participants regarding this theme seemed to indicate serious concerns about unethical behavioural practices in the schools. The participants expressed similar remarks when responding that gross ill-discipline that permeated the school was a factor that contributed to unethical behavioural practices. Some participants cited late-coming, absenteeism, favouritism and general lack of respect for rules and procedures as serious costs to the school morale. Responses of the participants further reflected a high number of disciplinary cases referred to the district and the bargaining council for adjudication and some for mere resolution. The level of discomfort in the school emanating from the inability to engage with and among senior school leadership emerged repeatedly in the interviews. Poor academic performance was reported as one of the consequences of unethical conduct exhibited by SMTs. The responses of the participants highlighted unacceptable levels of anxiety and mistrust in the school, where SMT members were afraid to confide in each other on issues of mutual interest. Colleagues were apprehensive to engage leadership about their concerns because of low staff morale and lack of trust.

Accountability by those that have the inherent responsibility to lead, guide and support others in the school seemed at least from the interviews to be very low and a real concern. From the views of participants in the study, members of SMTs do not display acceptable levels of responsibility among themselves or in respect of their subordinates. In addition, data from the interviews with the participants exposed unethical practices of gross ill-discipline associated with ethical leadership that included absenteeism, reduced employee well-being, performance and decreased accountability from SMTs. The participants in the study repeatedly expressed their views on high levels of anxiety and increased discomfort in the school caused by mistrust among them. These views were corroborated by Eisenbeiss (2012) and Lawton and Paez (2014) who suggested that there was a positive connection between ethical leadership and affective trust in school leadership. These authors explained that if a leader within an organisation correctly implemented ethical leadership then one of the consequences would be a greater measure of emotional trust of followers in that leader. The views of participants were further supported by Shapiro and Gross (2013) who posited that ethical leadership is linked to consequences like trust, integrity and accountability which are related to behaviours and attitudes of followers. Bruce (2014) confirmed the findings regarding the increase in the number of disciplinary cases in schools. It can be further argued that the views of participants corroborated the report of Corruption Watch (2013b) that the education sector has not been isolated from the increase in unethical conduct with various unethical behaviours of different stakeholders in the school community being recently exposed through the media.

4.5.5 Strategies to Enhance Ethical Leadership in Secondary Schools

Data that emerged from the semi-structured interviews indicated that the majority of the participants involved in the study confirmed a wide-ranging acceptance of the term ethical leadership and its implications. The participants expressed divergent views and approaches that they believed could improve and maintain good ethical leadership practices in the school setting. Senior district officials C1, C2, L1, and L2 agreed on strategies that could help mitigate unethical school leadership practices.

Some of the district officials' views and remarks were based on what emerged from minutes of the meetings, documentation they analysed and reports compiled during their school visits and interactions with various SMTs in the process of dealing with ethical leadership practices in schools.

Suggested strategies to deal with ethical leadership practices included coaching and mentoring training for SMTs, sensitivity awareness training, preventative discipline strategies and the introduction of communities of practice, where SMTs across the district frequently meet to share best practices.

On strategies that can be employed to enhance ethical leadership practices, C1 remarked that:

> "We *have had countless meetings where common strategies were agreed upon, like training workshops on ethics, training on our disciplinary codes of practice and other rules and procedures that we think our colleagues need to be continuously refreshed on, these strategic interventions will go a long way to deal with ethical challenges faced in our schools*"

In supporting the circuit manager and suggesting additional interventions, L1 commented:

> "*After many meetings and other forms of interactions we believe strengthening accountability, ethical decision-making, and preventative corrective measures as strategies to enhance ethical leadership in our schools, I think we are on the right track if everyone comes to the party, some of these strategies have been recommended in some of the verdicts awarded at the disciplinary hearings*"

In the same vein, the views of C2 were articulated as follows:

> "*Workshops on ethical leadership, effective consultation in decision-making, preventative disciplinary methods and accountability by SMT are some of the strategies we continue to engage our colleagues, we are looking at creating a community of practice for our school leadership teams, where they will share and engage on best practices*"

Commenting on how ethical leadership practices can be improved in schools, L2 stated:

> "*In the process of dispute resolution in our district, we sometimes recommend strategies like workshops on ethics, Sensitivity and awareness training regarding ethical conduct we have further recommend guidance, mentoring and support for SMTs that are struggling by requesting other schools and teams to assist them to enhance their ethical leadership practices*"

Members of the SMTs from the two schools shared similar opinions and remarks. Common data emerged from the interviews, wherein P1, P2, DP1, DP2, H1, H2 agreed on strategies to enhance ethical leadership in their secondary schools. Workshops on ethics, sensitivity and awareness training, ethical leadership training, the responsibility to consult colleagues and staff adequately and effective measures to prevent ill-discipline and unethical behaviour were stressed by the participants. The following verbatim expressions are representative of the assertions of different participants.

P1 commented:

> "*To increase ethical leadership within my team, I have already engaged the district to arrange training on ethics and leadership induction workshops for new SMT members. I am also in discussions with the education specialist responsible for labour relation in my school to assist with training on preventatives measures to curb unwanted behaviour in the school.*"

DP1 mentioned:

> "*To address ethical leadership challenges in our school, we are looking at arranging workshops under the guidance of the district to augment our understanding on the matter. We are also in the process of heightening our level of accountability when it comes to ethical leadership in the school.*"

H1 suggested that:

> "*As the Departmental heads in the school, I think strategies that will help us to improve ethical leadership are open communication, transparency, and accountability. I also think that some of us need training workshops on ethics, as it can be a serious problem when it is ignored.*"

P2 said:

> "*My school is looking at introducing ethics awareness training to the entire staff including my management team. We are also looking at appointing mentors to members of the leadership team. In addition, after consultation with the school governing body, we were able to source funding for arranging a variety of interactive workshops on ethics and ethical leadership as a strategy to enrich our capacity.*"

DP2 stated that:

> "*Ethical leadership in our environment is very crucial, that is why as a strategy we have resolved that all of us should go for training, start to communicate openly, and begin to be accountable for our actions and be exemplary, the district officials are also assisting us in this regard.*"

H2 indicated that:

> *"The colleagues that I serve with on the management team have unanimously agreed that we should jerk up our efforts on ethical leadership and implement strategies like, ethics training workshops, conflict resolution training workshops to boost our current awareness on this subject."*

Even though the teachers were not members of the SMT, they felt that it was critical that interventions be put in place to help improve ethical behaviour of SMT members. Data emerged from the teachers in the study regarding strategies to enhance ethical leadership in their schools, demonstrated very similar expressions. They also suggested accountability, training workshops and coaching as strategies.

T1 remarked:

> *"Accountability comes tops of my mind; I also think that continued training on ethical leadership for our leadership team is essential."*

T2 articulated:

> "SMT *in my school must go for ethical leadership training, otherwise things will not change."*

The findings suggest that critical strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools are urgently needed for SMT members to achieve the desired levels of acceptable conduct. Findings that emerged further indicated common areas of consensus amongst most participants on their expressions. There was consensus that guidance, mentoring and support is required as an urgent intervention for SMTs to succeed. There was unanimity on the introduction of workshops on ethics and sensitivity and awareness training as strategies necessary for the enhancement of ethical leadership. Effective and consultative decision-making processes were advocated as critical for success. The participants concurred that preventative disciplinary methods should be effectively employed to sustain aspirations of achieving ethical school leadership. Accountability featured repeatedly in the statements of participants as a key factor in enhancing ethical leadership.

District officials and some members of the SMTs similarly expressed the need to collaborate with other colleagues in the sector by introducing communities of practice (COP) as a strategy for sharing best practices, collective engagement as well as mentoring guidance and support across the educational setting.

Comments from participants in this theme regarding the strategies required to improve ethical leadership was supported by literature from Calik et al. (2012) who established in a study about the

relationships between school management's instructional leadership behaviours and self-efficacy that effective guidance, mentoring and accountability had the ability to enhance ethical leadership of SMT and collective teacher effectiveness. The authors further established that ethical leadership that embodied consultative decision-making in the school setting had a significant direct and positive impact on collective leadership efficiency.

Given the essential role of education and the pivotal role that the SMTs play in harnessing ethical leadership, self-efficacy of the subordinates is important to enhance moral practices in the school environment. Focused workshop trainings on ethical leadership sensitivity and awareness preparation as strategies to increase SMTs' ethical consciousness found resonance among almost all the participants. Walker and Slear (2011) suggested that much of the learning surrounding behaviours and attitudes enhancing ethical practices in schools should focus on SMTs' ethical behaviour. This assertion was supported by the articulations of principals, their deputies and the district officials in their interviews. Participants felt strongly about the creation of an instructional model of a community of practice comprised of SMTs aimed at impacting the relationships among members across the school settings. This strategy was supported by Yoon, Lee and Jung (2020) and further commented on by Negiş (2020) in their assertion that COPs contribute to professional learning. The authors further posited that this strategy had the potential to capture and share existing knowledge to help members improve their practice by providing a forum to identify solutions to common problems and a process to collect and evaluate best practices.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher presented and analysed the findings of the study. The findings suggested that unethical behaviours of SMTs are increasing at an alarming rate. The findings further suggested that the causes of these unethical conducts were wide-ranging and were a result of a variety of factors. Themes discussed in this chapter and data emerging from interviews indicated that the behaviour of some members of SMTs is devoid of the principles of ethics and ethical leadership which promote ethical behaviours such honesty, dignity, altruism, and fairness.

 The perceptions of a variety of participants lead the researcher to the conclusion that to a significant extent, the management values of ethical leadership have been eroded in schools. This is the result of the unethical behaviour of SMT members. The following chapter presents a summary of the research, conclusions as well as recommendations emerging out of the findings. The chapter is concluded by making some practical recommendations based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, data from the study was presented, analysed and discussed. The focus of this chapter is to present the summary of the study, subsequent conclusions and possible recommendations. The summary of the study provides an outline of the focus areas in each section from Chapters 1 to 4. The conclusions of the study emerged after interpreting, analysing and evaluating the data. These conclusions are linked to the main research question namely: What are the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng province? The conclusions are also underpinned by both the sub-questions and the objectives of the study. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings of the study. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further investigation.

5.2 RESEARCH SUMMARY

The focus of this study was to explore the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province.

Chapter 1 introduced the study by outlining the background and purpose of the study. The researcher stated that the reason for undertaking this study was to investigate the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in secondary schools in the Gauteng district. The study further provided the background and the problem statement of the study, a brief overview of the conceptualisation of ethical leadership, the objectives, significance and the conceptual analysis of the study among others.

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature relevant to the study. The literature reviewed included the legislative framework supporting ethical leadership in South Africa, a detailed conceptualisation of ethical leadership and its different approaches, implications of ethical leadership in educational settings and critical attributes of ethical school leadership for consideration in secondary schools. This chapter also focused attention on international and local trends in ethical leadership practices and behavioural practices juxtaposed with ethical leadership expectations. Chapter 2 also described in detail the four principles of ethics relevant to this study as part of the conceptual framework of ethical leadership.

Chapter 3 described the research methodology and design of the study. This study was located within the interpretivist research paradigm and adopted a qualitative research approach. The purposive sampling method was used in the study. Data generation method consisted primarily of semi-structured interviews. Data was analysed through the thematic data analysis method.

This chapter also discussed ethical issues and of trustworthiness of the study. This research was a case study of two purposely selected secondary schools in Gauteng DBE, Tshwane district.

Chapter 4 presented, analysed and discussed the research findings. This was structured according to themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY FINDINGS ACCORDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The findings of this study emanate from the in-depth semi- structured interviews that the researcher did with various purposively selected participants as indicated in the previous chapter four. These research results were influenced by the research questions and the objectives which focused on the study. It is critical for the researcher at this stage to restate the research questions of the study to ascertain whether the study achieved its purpose, namely:

- What are the participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership?
- What Ethical Practices do SMTs Demonstrate in Selected Secondary Schools?
- What are the ethical leadership challenges SMTs face in secondary schools in Gauteng?
- What are the consequences for unethical behavioural practices?
- Which strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

In this section, the researcher provides a synopsis of the findings which resulted in five themes grounded on the study research questions. These are followed by conclusions based on these findings. The five themes which emerged from the findings were:

- Participants' theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership.
- SMTs' demonstration of ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices.
- Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMTs.
- The consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.
- Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools.

5.3.1 What Are the Participants' Theorisation of Ethics and Ethical Leadership?

The findings suggest that all the participants had a clear theoretical understanding of the terms "ethics" and "ethical leadership". Participants shared similar sentiments that the term "ethics" involves an underlying set of beliefs, morals, ideals and principles that govern an individual's behaviour in different circumstances. The findings were that the different participants' understanding of the concept of "good" ethics were also similar.

Personal characteristics such as accountability, honesty, integrity, and impartiality were recurring themes to describe the concept of "good" ethics. The findings also demonstrated that all the participants shared a good understanding of the term ethical leadership. All the participants were able to conceptualise that ethical leadership involves the demonstration of good ethical conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships. The principals, their deputies, Departmental heads and teachers from both Schools A and B shared similar opinions and their perspectives on what constitute ethics and ethical leadership were similar to the responses of the district officials. All participants believed that ethics and ethical leadership involves morals and values which steer the ethical school leadership expected from any official in the educational setting.

5.3.2 What Ethical Practices do SMTs Demonstrate in Selected Secondary Schools?

It can be concluded that different types of unethical behaviours of the SMTs during their leadership in the two schools were of concern. The participants in articulating their points of view agreed on issues that related to the behaviour of the SMTs and whether they demonstrated the expected leadership ethics.

Participants' responses were that unethical behaviours of SMT occurred regularly and were increasing. The findings further suggest a high prevalence of unethical behaviours of the SMT in schools. The findings revealed unanimity on the theme, where the principals, their deputies and the heads of department adopted a defensive posture on whether they demonstrated principled leadership attitudes and values in their leadership practices.

In the end, all participants despite their varied responses, agreed that SMTs did not demonstrate levels of ethical leadership practices expected of them in a school setting. The findings revealed unethical leadership behaviours because of general lack of exemplary moral behaviour and conduct, poor interpersonal relations amongst staff, inconsistent application of discipline and the use of abusive language.

5.3.3 What are the Ethical Leadership Challenges SMTs face in Secondary Schools in Gauteng?

The findings reflected similarities on the ethical leadership challenges articulated by the participants. The participants consistently voiced these ethical leadership challenges and unanimously commented that if these challenges were not properly managed, they would affect the moral fibre of the school. The conclusions further revealed that some of these ethical leadership challenges have a high net effect on behaviours, values and attitudes that constrained ethical leadership practices in the school setting.

The problems included the abuse of drugs and alcohol by the teachers and members of the SMTs, continuous chronic absenteeism, disregard of colleagues' rights and peer influence among teachers to defy lawful instructions. Findings further reflected ethical leadership challenges of inappropriate sexual relations and the mismanagement of financial and other resources.

5.3.4 What are the Consequences of Unethical Behavioural Practices?

Consequences of unethical behavioural practices included poor academic performance and other academic outputs, high levels of anxiety and mistrust, low staff morale and the general lack of accountability from leaders.

5.3.5 Which Strategies Could Be Developed to Enhance Ethical Leadership in Secondary Schools?

The participants were unanimous in the strategies proposed that could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools. Participants recommended several strategies. Firstly, workshops on ethics to boost ethical leadership were suggested. In addition, they also recommended preventative disciplinary methods as a deterrence for bad conduct. Further, the findings revealed that accountability for bad behaviours must be strengthened as a strategy that could be developed to improve ethical leadership.

Guidance, mentoring and support, workshops on ethics focusing on sensitivity and awareness training were suggested as intervention strategies to enhance ethical leadership. The findings also suggested the introduction of communities of practice (COP), where colleagues could share best ethical practices as a strategy to boost ethical leadership in their respective schools.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are informed by the findings of the study discussed in Chapter 4. Through these recommendations, the researcher is of the firm belief that if considered by the DBE authorities, they could contribute towards enhancing ethical leadership practices in secondary schools in particular, but the schooling sector in general. The intention of these recommendations is to contribute towards school policies regarding ethical conduct of SMTs. Further, these suggestions are intended to further research debates around ethical school leadership practices. The researcher notes that these recommendations were made by the participants when responding to the research question on proposed strategies to deal unethical leadership practices in schools.

The researcher views this as a critical step because the recommendations are fit-for-purpose because affected parties participated in the crafting of these suggestions with the intention of enhancing ethical school leadership practices.

5.4.1 Recommendation 1

It is recommended that to strengthen discipline, SMTs form a separate ethics committee to adjudicate on ethical leadership practices chaired by a participant other than a member of the management team. The committee could be comprised of retired principals who are members in good standing within various ethical leadership professional bodies and the district officials including the circuit manager. The inclusion of ethically proven retired principals is to ensure that there is confidence in the committee and it would thus be taken seriously. The core function of the ethics committee should be the preventative management of unethical leadership practices within the school. It is the researcher's objective opinion that if the SMT is presented with this approach to ethical leadership discipline, they could be deterred from behaving unethically and more readily comply with the ethical requirements and exhibit acceptable ethical leadership practices.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2

It is recommended that senior management teams of schools adopt a proactive approach and consistently workshop teachers and themselves on the SACE Code of Professional Ethics, the SASA (84 of 1996) and the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998). The content of these workshops should include the required ethical leadership standards, different types of offences, and disciplinary procedures outlined in official school documents. Any other relevant documentation or legislative framework specific to ethical leadership could also form part of the content of the workshops. In the researchers' opinion, at least one training workshop on the above codes and any other relevant schools' ethics codes should be conducted at the beginning of each school term. It is recommended that such workshops be implemented for the ethical development of SMTs, and teachers, and should include a focus on stress management to alleviate anxiety and discomfort in the school. It is further recommended that at least one staff meeting chaired by the designated district official at the beginning of the school year and one towards the end of the academic year should be set aside solely to sensitise and educate SMTs on the acceptable ethical standards and the consequences of not complying with them. The researcher is of the firm view that the more SMTs are sensitised and made conscious of the ethical leadership requirements needed from them, the more they will be reluctant to disregard them.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3

A third recommendation is that the district and the SMTs need to organise a community of practice dedicated to networking sessions and workshops between themselves in order to facilitate the sharing of useful ethical leadership trends, information and best practices.

SMTs from different circuits in one or more districts should meet regularly to discuss the application of relevant ethical leadership best practices. These best practices should amongst others include application of different schools' financial policies and various school rules and regulations. During these communities of practice (COP) interactions, SMT could share views and experiences on the Public Finance Management Act (1 of 1999), the South African Council for Educators (SACE) Act (31 of 2000), the SASA (84 of 1996) and the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) amongst other relevant legislations.

The study further recommends that The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (South African Government, 2002), and other pertinent legislation and literature regarding ethical leadership in education be shared within the COP. The sessions should also allow for the discussion of the latest developments in education and schools by possibly asking relevant officials from the DBE both provincial and national and university academics in education to present short webinars or seminars. These networking sessions should also give SMTs the platform to share their experiences of best practices, challenges and effective strategies to enhance ethical leadership practices within their respective schools. In the researcher's opinion, these networking sessions should take place at least four times in the academic year. The responsibility for organising these COP workshops or webinars could be shared between the SMTs in the districts. The organising teams could set up these meetings outside of the peak schooling periods in the districts. The researcher is of the view that COPs in the school education environment where SMTs have a platform to share best practices have the propensity to decrease unethical behavioural practices and set them on a different ethical leadership trajectory.

5.4.4 Recommendation 4

It is recommended that the DBE through the Department of Higher Education and Training recommend that ethics and ethical leadership is included in the curriculum for teacher education and training at tertiary level. This inclusion in the curriculum will prepare future school leadership on matters related to ethical behaviour and the researcher believes that this would help to limit the number of unethical school leadership practices. This rationale arises from the belief that if initial teacher training included ethical practices in their curricula, student teachers would be prepared ahead of time and when they

are appointed in leadership positions, they would have the knowledge and competencies to succeed in such positions and not be found wanting on ethical leadership and behaviour. It is further recommended that the DBE through the district offices and then the schools, should prescribe attendance at workshops on ethics and ethical leadership for new teachers and SMTs as part of their induction, in-service training and professional development. This should be to continuously access and monitor their level of ethical consciousness and recommend further interventions should a need arise.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A larger study to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools is recommended to obtain the views of more SMTs in order to make available more information and greater awareness into moral practices and ethical leadership within schools. It is critical that further research be conducted on the same research focus area but should include more than one data collection instrument. This is because the current study only used semi-structured interviews. In addition, it is suggested that future studies consider making use of mixed method research to involve a larger number of participants using questionnaires.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this study was to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. Scholars in the reviewed literature argued that ethical leadership plays a major role in creating good and effective working relationship within the SMT. These relations are underpinned by acceptable moral and ethical behaviours in terms of how they relate to one another in pursuance of a good ethical culture within the school. The study further identified four ethical leadership paradigms of ethics of care, ethics of justice, ethics of critique and ethics of the profession. The findings revealed that there is still a lot of work to be done by SMTs in pursuit of a moral and ethical culture. The study raises key critical recommendations aimed at changing and encouraging good moral ethical leadership behaviours expected of SMTs.

The contribution the study is that a culture of heightened ethical leadership morality, responsibility, accountability, consciousness, liability and a general sense of acceptance is needed for schools to succeed. Ethical leadership is a key to improving teaching and learning and enhancing learners' performance outcomes.

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APPENDIX A: UNISA ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2020/08/12

Ref: **2020/08/12/7706189/01/AM**
Name: Mr FA Mlambo
Student No.:7706189

Dear Mr FA Mlambo

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2020/08/12 to 2023/08/12

Researcher(s): Name: Mr FA Mlambo
E-mail address: Mlambof61@gmail.com
Telephone: +27 12 429 6839

Supervisor(s): Name: Dr S S Khumalo
E-mail address: Ekhumass@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 082 9393983

Title of research:

EXPLORING THE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

Qualification: MEd Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/08/12 to 2023/08/12.

The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/08/12 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.

2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2023/08/12**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2020/08/12/7706189/01/AM** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

APPENDIX B: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

UNISA | college of education

F A Mlambo

P O Box 29657

Sunnyside

0002

The Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

Gauteng Department of Education

0002

17 Simons street

Johannesburg

2001

Gauteng,

South Africa

RE: request for permission to conduct research at two (2) schools in the Tshwane district.

Dear Sir/ Madam

I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO, am conducting a study as part of my research under the supervision of Dr S S Khumalo, a senior Lecturer in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards as a master's degree at the University of South Africa. We are seeking your permission to carry out a study entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**" in your two (2) schools in the Tshwane education district. The aim of the study is to explore the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study.

The study will entail carrying out semi-structured interviews which will be done on the dates and times agreed upon with participants. The significant and primary contribution the study seeks to make is that of exploring the existence or non-existence of a culture of school ethical leadership integrity, morals, responsibility, accountability, consciousness, liability and a heightened sense of reception that for schools to succeed, whether ethical school leadership is a vital benchmark and how ethical school leadership should be harnessed and promoted. The researcher hopes that this study provides insight that will increase the effectiveness in the realisation of good ethical school leadership. The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education

Potential risks are that the process of virtual semi-structured interviews may cause inconvenience to the participants. In addition, participation of all district officials, SMTs and teachers in this study is voluntary. Thus, the researcher will write letters requesting consents for all participants who will be involved in the study, explaining the purpose of the research, and their rights during the whole research process. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback procedure will entail sharing the findings with the Ministry of Basic Education and other stakeholders in education following all required protocols.

Yours Sincerely

_____

Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Researcher's name

UNISA Student 7706189

APPENDIX C: GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH APPROVAL

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	08 September 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2020 – 30 September 2020 2019/604
Name of Researcher:	Mlambo FA
Address of Researcher:	1544 Mount Anderson Street
	Kirkney Village
	Sunnyside
Telephone Number:	0829393983/0124812813
Email address:	mlambfa@unisa.ac.za
Research Topic:	Exploring the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province
Type of qualification	Master's in Education
Number and type of schools:	2 Secondary School
District/s/HO	Tshwane North, Tshwane West

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.

09/09/2020

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:

1. 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.

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
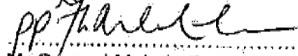7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

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. Because of COVID 19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.
4. The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email or telephonically with the Principal.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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

pp

Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 09/09/2020

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

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH APPROVAL FROM TSHWANE WEST

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enq: PS Mmatli
Tel: 012 725 1355
Ref no: 8/4/4/1/2

To: The Circuit Manager
Tshwane West

From: PC Galego (Ms)

Date: 11th September 2020

Subject: Approval in Request to Conduct Research –
Mr Mlambo FA

This letter serves to indicate that approval have been granted to Mr Mlambo FA to conduct research at District Office in respect of the study indicated below.

Research Topic: "Exploring the Ethical Leadership Practices of School Management Teams in Selected Secondary Schools in Gauteng Province".

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, researcher can **ONLY** collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for virtual meeting with the official. Request for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Research and Knowledge Management Directorate. The Researcher is advised to make arrangements with the District via Fax, email or telephonically with the District Director.

Looking forward to your fruitful engagement with the official concerned.

PC Galego (Ms)
District Director
Tshwane West

"Take Charge"
Office of the Director – Tshwane West District
(Mabopane, Winterveldt, Ga-Rankuwa, Soshanguve, Kameeldrift, Rosslyn, Akasia, Pretoria North, Mountain View, Roseville, Capital Park, Hercules, Pretoria West, Lotus Garden)
Private Bag X38, ROSSLYN 0200. Tel (012)725 1300 Fax. (012) 725 1346
Paula.Galego@gauteng.gov.za: Web. www.education.gpg.gov.za

Enq: PS Mmatli
Tel: 012 725 1355
Ref no: 8/4/4/1/2

To: **The Deputy Chief Education Specialist**
           Dispute Management Unit
           Tshwane West

From: **PC Galego (Ms)**

Date: **11th September 2020**

Subject: **Approval in Request to Conduct Research –**
          Mr Mlambo FA

This letter serves to indicate that approval have been granted to Mr Mlambo FA to conduct research at District Office in respect of the study indicated below.

Research Topic: **"Exploring the Ethical Leadership Practices**
                       of School Management Teams in Selected
                       Secondary Schools in Gauteng Province".

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, researcher can **ONLY** collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for virtual meeting with the official. Request for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Research and Knowledge Management Directorate. The Researcher is advised to make arrangements with the District via Fax, email or telephonically with the District Director.

Looking forward to your fruitful engagement with the official concerned.

PC Galego (Ms)
District Director
Tshwane West

"Take Charge"
Office of the Director – Tshwane West District
(Mabopane, Winterveldt, Ga-Rankuwa, Soshanguve, Kameeldrift, Rosslyn, Akasia, Pretoria North, Mountain View, Roseville, Capital Park, Hercules, Pretoria West, Lotus Garden)
Private Bag X38, ROSSLYN 0200. Tel (012)725 1300 Fax. (012) 725 1346
Paula.Galego@gauteng.gov.za; Web. www.education.gpg.gov.za

111

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

To: **The Principal**
           Ruabohlale Secondary School

From: **PC Galego (Ms)**

Date: **11th September 2020**

Subject: **Approval in Request to Conduct Research –**
           Mr Mlambo FA

This letter serves to indicate that approval have been granted to Mr Mlambo FA to conduct research at your school in respect of the study indicated below.

Research Topic: **"Exploring the Ethical Leadership Practices of School Management Teams in Selected Secondary Schools in Gauteng Province".**

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, researcher can **ONLY** collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for virtual meeting with principal. Request for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Research and Knowledge Management Directorate. The Researcher is advised to make arrangements with the school via Fax, email or telephonically with the Principal.

A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB). Teaching and learning should not be compromised.

PC Galego (Ms)
District Director
Tshwane West

"Take Charge"
Office of the Director – Tshwane West District
(Mabopane, Winterveldt, Ga-Rankuwa, Soshanguve, Kameeldrift, Rosslyn, Akasia, Pretoria North, Mountain View, Roseville, Capital Park, Hercules, Pretoria West, Lotus Garden)
Private Bag X38, ROSSLYN 0200. Tel (012)725 1300 Fax. (012) 725 1346
Paula.Galego@gauteng.gov.za: Web. www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX E: RESEARCH APPROVAL FROM TSHWANE EAST

GAUTENG PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Sub-Directorate: ISSP
Office Number: 126B
Tel: 012 543 4315/16
Email: Pranay.Devchand@gauteng.gov.za/
Ann.Jooste@gauteng.gov.za
Ref: 31/08/18

TO	:	**MR F A MLAMBO**
FROM	:	**MS THEA COETSER** **DISTRICT DIRECTOR: TSHWANE NORTH**
DATE	:	**15 SEPTEMBER 2020**
SUBJECT	:	**PERMISSION GRANTED TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Dear Mr Mlambo

It is our pleasure to inform you that The District Office grants you permission to conduct research at Lethabong Secondary School on the topic *"Exploring the ethical leadership practices of school management teams in selected schools in the Gauteng Province"*.

You may only conduct the research via e-communication, Zoom/Google/MS Teams or any other, due to Covid 19 regulations.

You may only conduct the research after contact time to protect teaching and learning activities.

The principal must be consulted regarding an appropriate time to conduct the research.

You are personally responsible for providing and utilizing your own resources.

Participants names must not appear in the research report and all appropriate ethical measures must be implemented to protect them.

Tshwane North District expects you to submit, upon completion, a summary of your research as stipulated in **Clause No. 14 of the GDE letter of approval you received. This should be sent to the enquiries above.**

The District appreciates your contribution towards the enhancement of education in the province and anticipate your success with your research project.

Regards

MS THEA COETSER
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: TSHWANE NORTH
16/09/2020

MS THEA COETSER
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: TSHWANE NORTH
Tel: (012) 543 4302, Cell: 083 346 6963, Fax: 086 633 4568 | Email: Thea.Coetser@gauteng.gov.za
Wonderboom Junction Mall, 1st   Floor, Corner Lavender & Lavender West Road,
Wonderboom, 0066, Private Bag X945, Pretoria, 0001
www.education.gpg.gov.za | Call Centre: 0800 005 175

UNISA | college of education

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION LETTER TO CIRCUIT MANAGERS

RE: request for permission to conduct research at your school.

	F A Mlambo
The Circuit Manager	P O Box 29657
	Sunnyside
Gauteng Department of Education	0002

P.0.Box 7710

Johannesburg

2000

Gauteng,

South Africa

Dear Sir/ Madam

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**" at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your seniority as circuit manager with valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish.

Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide will be considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office. The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com. I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours Sincerely

_____

Freddy Abilio Mlambo _____

Researcher's name Researcher's signature: Date

UNISA Student 7706189

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION LETTER TO EDUCATION SPECIALIST (LABOUR RELATIONS)

RE: request for permission to conduct research at your school.

	F A Mlambo
The Education Specialist (Labour Relations)	P O Box 29657
	Sunnyside
Gauteng Department of Education	0002

P.0.Box 7710

Johannesburg

2000

Gauteng,

South Africa

Dear Sir/ Madam

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**"at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your seniority as Education Specialist (Labour Relations) with valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide will be considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report.

However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office.

The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com. I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours Sincerely

_____

Freddy Abilio Mlambo

_____

Researcher's name

Researcher's signature: Date

UNISA Student 7706189

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS

RE: request for permission to conduct research at your school.

The Principal   F A Mlambo

P O ox 29657

Sunnyside

0002

Dear Sir/ Madam

Request for participation to conduct research at your school

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**"at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your seniority as principal with valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide will be considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be

omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office.

The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com.

I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours Sincerely

Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Researcher's name

 Researcher's signature: Date

UNISA Student

7706189

APPENDIX I: PERMISSION LETTER TO DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

RE: request for permission to conduct research at your school.

The Deputy Principal   F A Mlambo

                                                             P O Box 29657

                                                             Sunnyside

                                                             0002

Dear Sir/ Madam

Request for participation to conduct research

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**"at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your seniority as deputy principal with valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide will be considered completely confidential.

Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office. The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com.

I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours Sincerely

_____

Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Researcher's name

Researcher's signature: Date

UNISA Student 7706189

UNISA | college of education

APPENDIX J: PERMISSION LETTER TO DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

RE: <u>request for permission to conduct research at your school</u>.

The Departmental head   F A Mlambo

                                                                                   P.O. Box 29657

                                                                                   Sunnyside

                                                                                    0002

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a research study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**"at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because as Departmental heads in your school and for your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office.

The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com. I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours sincerely

Freddy Abilio Mlambo _____

Researcher's name

Researcher's signature: Date:

UNISA | college of education

APPENDIX K: PERMISSION LETTER TO TEACHERS

RE: <u>request for permission to conduct research at your school</u>.

The Teacher

> F A Mlambo
> P.O. Box 29657
> Sunnyside
>
> 0002

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO conducting a study as part of my research as a masters student entitled "**Exploring the ethical leadership practices of SMTs in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province**"at the University of South Africa. The Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA, has given permission for the study. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should you agree to take part. The importance of ethical school leadership in education is substantial and well documented. In this interview, I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the critical importance of ethical school leadership.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a virtual interview of approximately thirty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed virtual platform at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis.

Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 5 years in my locked office. The benefits of this study are to provide valuable information to the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as other stakeholders in education. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact FREEDY ABILIO MLAMBO on +27 82 939 3983 or email mlambof61@gmail.com.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +27 82 939 3983 or by email at mlambof61@gmail.com. I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours sincerely

Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Researcher's name

Researcher's signature: Date:

APPENDIX L: INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPANTS

Informed Consent

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study in Education. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio-recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

I, the participants in this study, have been informed on the subsequent critical subjects:

- I shall be given a copy of this informed consent from to keep.
- Participation in this exercise is voluntary.
- I am free to decline to participate in this research project, or I can withdraw my participation at any time without any prejudice.
- The information collected from this research will be stored as confidential as credible. Participants' real names will not be used in the outcome and all documents, transcripts and data will be kept in secure cabinet in the researcher's place, and no individual except the researcher will have access to them. Participants' names will not be used and any identifying personal information will be circumvented.
- Participant's signature below means that an individual agrees to participate in this research exercise.

Participants' Name (Print Name): _____

Participant Signature: _____   Date: _____

Researcher Name: Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Researchers signature: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX M1: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO CIRCUIT MANAGERS

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

Q 1. What is you level of education and experience?

Diploma, Degree and above	

Q 2. How many schools are you responsible for? (Schools falling within your jurisdiction)

Below 20	
21 to 30	
31 to 40	
41 and above	

Q 3: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q 4: For how long have you been a circuit manager in your district?

Q 5: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as a district manager?

Q 6: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as a circuit manager to your satisfaction?

    If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

    If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q 7: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school leadership practices?

Q 8: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

    If yes or no, why?

Q 9: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

If yes, describe good ethical leadership examples?

If no, describe bad ethical leadership examples?

Q 10: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical school leadership challenges facing secondary schools.

If there are, what are some of the challenges?

If there are not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q 11: In your view, do SMT demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices?

Q 12: In your opinion, what are the ethical leadership factors that affect your working relationship with SMT or with secondary schools in general?

Q 13 What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a circuit in your interaction with schools?

Q 14. In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

APPENDIX M2: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO EDUCATION SPECIALIST (LABOUR RELATIONS)

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

Q1: What is you level of education and experience?

Diploma, Degree and above	

Q2: How many schools are you responsible for? (Schools falling within your jurisdiction)

Below 20	
21 to 30	
31 to 40	
41 and above	

Q3: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q4; For how long have you been an education specialist (Labour Relations) in your district?

Q5: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as an education specialist (Labour Relations)?

Q6: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as an education specialist (Labour Relations) to your satisfaction?

    If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

    If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q7: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school leadership practices?

Q8: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

    If yes or no, why?

Q9: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

    If yes, describe good ethical leadership examples?

    If no, describe bad ethical leadership examples?

Q10: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical school leadership challenges facing secondary schools.

    If there are, what are some of the challenges?

    If there are not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q11: In your view, do SMT demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices?

Q12: In your opinion, what are the ethical leadership factors that affect your working relationship with SMT or with secondary schools in general?

Q13: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as an education specialist (Labour Relations) in your interaction with schools?

Q14: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

APPENDIX M3: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO PRINCIPALS

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

1. What is you level of education and experience?

Diploma	
Diploma, Degree and above	

2. How many teachers are you responsible for?

21 to 40	
41 and above	

3. How many learners are in your school?

Below 300	
301 to 350	
351 and above	

Q 4: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q 5: For how long have you been a principal in your school?

Q 6: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as principal?

Q 7: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as principal to your satisfaction?

    If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q 8: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school leadership practices?

Q 9: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

If yes or no, why?

Q10: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in the school? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

If yes, describe good ethical leadership examples?

If no, describe bad ethical leadership examples?

Q 11: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical school leadership challenges facing your school?

If there are, what are some of the challenges?

If there are not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q 12: In your view, do you as deputy principal demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in your leadership practices? If yes, what are those practices?

If not, why not?

Q 13: In your opinion, what are the ethical leadership factors that affect your working relationship with staff or within the school in general?

Q14: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have experienced as deputy principal in your interaction with staff in general? If nothing appears to be present, why?

Q 15: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in schools?

APPENDIX M4: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

Q1: What is your level of education and experience?

Diploma	
Diploma, Degree and above	

Q2: How many teachers and non-teaching staff are you responsible for?

21 to 40	
41 and above	

Q3: How many learners are in your school?

Below 300	
301 to 350	
351 and above	

Q 4: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q 5: For how long have you been a deputy principal in your school?

Q 6: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as deputy principal?

Q 7: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as deputy principal to your satisfaction?

    If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q 8: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school leadership practices?

Q 9: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

If yes or no, why?

Q10: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in the school? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

If yes, describe good ethical leadership examples?

If no, describe bad ethical leadership examples?

Q 11: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical school leadership challenges facing your school?

If there are, what are some of the challenges?

If there are not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q 12: In your view, do you as deputy principal demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in your leadership practices? If yes, what are those practices?

If not, why not?

Q 13: In your opinion, what are the ethical leadership factors that affect your working relationship with staff or within the school in general?

Q14: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have experienced as deputy principal in your interaction with staff in general? If nothing appears to be present, why?

Q 15: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in schools?

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APPENDIX M5: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

1. What is you level of education and experience?

Diploma	
Diploma, Degree and above	

2. How many teachers are you responsible for?

Below 5	
6 to 10	
11 to 15	
15 and above	

Q3: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q4: For how long have you been an HOD in your school?

Q5: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as HOD?

Q6: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as HOD to your satisfaction?

If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q7: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school leadership practices?

Q8: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

 If yes or no, why?

Q9: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in the school? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

 If yes, describe good ethical leadership examples?

 If no, describe bad ethical leadership examples?

Q10: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical school leadership challenges facing your school?

 If there are, what are some of the challenges?

 If there are not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q11: In your view, do you as HOD demonstrate ethical leadership behaviours in your leadership practices?

 If yes, what are those practices?

 If no, why not?

Q12: In your opinion, what are the ethical leadership factors that affect your working relationship with teachers reporting to you or within the school in general?

Q13. What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as HOD in your interaction with staff in general?

Q14: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools?

APPENDIX M6: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO TEACHERS

Title of the interviewee: _____

Current position of the interviewee: _____

Gender of the interviewee: _____

Q1: What is your level of education and experience?

Diploma	
Diploma, Degree and above	

Q2: How many classes are you responsible for?

Below 5	
6 to 10	

Q3: How many learners are you responsible for?

Below 100	
101 to 150	

Q4: Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Q5: For how long have you been a teacher in your school?

Q6: Can you describe your current roles and responsibilities as a teacher?

Q7: Do you implement all the roles and responsibilities as a teacher to your satisfaction?

If yes, describe how these roles and responsibilities are carried out?

If no, which roles and responsibilities don't you carry out to your satisfaction and why?

Q8: Did you receive any training or attended any workshops on ethical school practices?

Q9: Do you feel the training or workshops were good enough?

    If yes or no, why?

Q10: In your opinions, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in the school? In addition, in your experience are these elements observed?

    If yes, describe good ethical or moral examples?

    If no, describe bad ethical or moral examples?

Q11: In your opinion and coupled with experiences, are there any ethical or moral school challenges facing your school?

    If there are, what are some of the challenges?

    If not, why do you think there are no challenges?

Q12: In your view, does your SMT demonstrate ethical or moral leadership behaviours in their leadership practices? If yes, what are those practices?

    If no, why not?

Q13: In your opinion, what are the ethical or moral leadership factors that affect your working relationship with the SMT or within the school in general?

Q14: What appears to be the ethical or moral challenges that you have faced or experienced as a teacher in your interaction with colleagues in general?

Q15: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical or moral leadership in your school?

APPENDICES N1–N6: RESEARCH INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Interviewees: Twelve Participants involved in the study.
(C1,C2,L1,L2,P1.P2,DP1,DP2,H1,H2,T1,T2)

Interviewer: Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Periods of Interviews: September – November 2020.

Transcribed by: Freddy Abilio Mlambo

Edited by: Not edited

Total Audio and Video Track Time: 5:49:18

Background:

The researcher planned to use the period September to November 2020 to virtually interview twelve participants, namely two circuit managers (C1.C2), two education specialists (Labour Relations) (L1.L2), two principals (P1.P2), two deputy principals (DP1.DP2), two Departmental heads (H1.H2), and two teachers (T1.T2), based on the research questions and themes emerging from the below topic.

EXPLORING THE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SMTS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE.

The research is undertaken against the backdrop of crisis of ethical leadership in meeting challenges that schools are faced with in our current educational system. These ethical leadership practices, which manifest in various ethical scandals and fraud in schools have put ethical leadership behaviour high on the priority list of organisations, in particular schools. South Africa is one of those countries that are faced with ethical and moral decay and the cessation of trust in leadership, this actually begins at national level down to organisational level. The South African education system is faced with a myriad of ethical leadership challenges and without neglecting other challenges, this study seeks to explore ethical leadership practices of SMTs and attempt to provide strategies resolve these ethical leadership challenges.

Setting: The interviews were conducted on MS Teams, and through Cell phone from the researcher's home.

Key Codes:

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

—: speech cuts off; abrupt stop

…. speech trails off, pause

Italics: direct emphasis made by participants

APPENDIX N1: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR CIRCUIT MANAGERS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (C1)

(1) Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *When I look now at ethical leadership, to me it looks like a type of leadership that should be transparent, participatory and visionary" Ethical leadership involves not only the demonstration of ethical behaviour by leaders but the promotion of this behaviour by leaders as well in their schools.*

(2) SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *Some members of the SMT especially principals, are sometimes found wanting in the manner in which they reflect the correct posture, when it comes to ethical leadership… I expect them to show the correct moral leadership without fail, and in my interaction with them, and from the reports I get, some are very disappointing, viewing at their different practices when it comes to ethical leadership.*

P: What are some of those ethical leadership practices

A: *I get a lot of dissatisfaction from colleagues regarding poor leadership practices of bad behaviour, inconsistent application of the rules, interpersonal conflict and selective staff treatment from the schools in question, I always try my best to resolve them.*

(3) Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a circuit in your interaction with schools

A: *This remains a huge task we are seized with on a daily basis, and we continue to endeavour that this become a reality. My schools continue to face a huge task when it comes to challenges of mismanagement of funds and resources, general absenteeism, general insubordination and lack of the moral conduct we expect from our leadership in the schools.*

P: What are you doing to confront these challenges

A: *We are hard at work to address these ethical challenges in our schools, the heightened levels of ethical behaviour must become our mantra.*

(5) Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *As a result of unethical things happening there, schools that fall under my watch have continued to show poor results, because of this, there is also lack of trust among the school leadership team, I have also noticed general ill-discipline in that school as a result of unethical leadership practices. There are many reports of infighting and lack of accountability and that has caused anxiety amongst staff, the situation has caused a great deal of discomfort at the schools and we were thinking of swapping them to other settings within the sector if the situation does not improve.*

(4) Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: We *have had countless meetings where common strategies were agreed upon, like training workshops on ethics, training on our disciplinary codes of practice and other rules and procedures that we think our colleagues need to be continuously refreshed on, these strategic interventions   will go a long way to deal with ethical challenges faced in our schools.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (C2)

(1) Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *Ethics is what is morally acceptable or in most instances a set of general principles that we set ourselves... ─:*

P: Please unpack on those principles.

A: *A set of principles involving moral accountability which is used to determine right from wrong. Ethical school leadership is also to provide holistic education in a disciplined environment where integrity and high moral principles are upheld.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *These colleagues who are tasked to lead the schools can do better when it comes to ethical leadership…I sometimes get reports of abuse of power by SMT from some teachers and some from trade union.*

P: What are you then doing with these situations as a circuit

A: S*ometimes I think, we can all do better to sensitise them about ethical leadership practices, but SMT should always hold the end of the stick in that they should shoulder the responsibility regarding their poor leadership practices─:*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a circuit in your interaction with schools

A: *substance abuse especially alcohol by those that are supposed to be in the lead, continue to hinder our progress in relation to how our school leaders must handle themselves. We continue to receive uncomfortable growing reports of mismanagement of funds and resources, inappropriate sexual reports across the spectrum among others, where teachers and learners are alleged to be involved in sexual relations, and the management of the school is failing to be on top of the situation.*

P: What prevalent challenges are you mainly grappling with

A: *Issues of bad peer influence, seems to be very prevalent as well, where the SMT seems to be singing from the same verse in that they are not able to confront one another on the ethical leadership issues raised against them*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *The consequences of unethical behavioural practices in our schools are greatly eroding trust within SMTs, these schools are performing very poor and the current state of affairs regarding low staff morale is unacceptable, we really need to tighten our consequence management efforts in the state.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *Workshops on ethical leadership, effective consultation in decision-making, preventative disciplinary methods and accountability by SMT are some of the strategies we continue to engage our colleagues, we are looking at creating a community of practice for our school leadership teams, where they will share and engage on best practices.*

APPENDIX N2: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR EDUCATION SPECIALISTS (LABOUR RELATIONS)

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (L1)

(1) Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *In my view, it can be described as morally accepted principles and behaviours that are expected of our officials in schools without fail and for me, this is non-negotiable.*

(2) SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *From the number of cases that I have to attend in a month, I can safely say that ethical leadership in the schools is a real challenge and most SMT are not playing their part, but off course, we are also part of the equation to make it possible through our support structures.*

(3) Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a circuit in your interaction with schools

A: *We are now sitting with huge disciplinary cases of mismanagement of funds and resources that must now be resolved, with some cases simply starting as a small unethical conduct that could have been quickly resolved by the principal as a leader, but some have now grown much bigger than the school now.*

P: Can you please further unpack on the sentiment you just shared

A: *One issue started when reports were made to the SMT about an educator suspected to be having a sexual relationship with a learner in his class and because of the slackness in which they dealt*

with the initial allegation, now the learner is pregnant, and the educator, subsequently dismissed.. However, we are not losing hope, with the interventions we continue to make, the case regarding mismanagement of funds and resources is now siting with our auditors for finalisation.

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *Cases currently on my desk regarding gross ill-discipline, poor academic performance and other outputs contributes to high disciplinary case turnover and continue to cause increased discomfort in the school, to mitigate these costs of unethical behaviours, we really need to increase our efforts to train SMT.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *After many meetings and other forms of interactions we believe strengthening accountability, ethical decision-making, and preventative corrective measures as strategies to enhance ethical leadership in our schools, I think we are on the right track if everyone comes to the party, some of these strategies have been recommended in some of the verdicts awarded at the disciplinary hearings.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (L2)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *My understanding of what constitutes ethics is a conduct that will determine your behaviour... Ethical leadership entail that you carry these same value systems into how you lead your school, treat and interact with your members of staff.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *There seem to be a general sense that ethical leadership is always put at the back seat*

P: What makes you think that

A: *Most of the SMTs think less of this challenge, and it consumes a lot of my time in trying to resolve disputes arising from ethical leadership practices, that they know very well, that, they should not be engaging in.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a circuit in your interaction with schools

A: *I have observed a pattern of huge bad peer influence exhibited by those that are meant to lead in the school, they seem to collectively influence each other in suppressing the rights of their subordinates to be heard─:*

P: Can you please clarify your observations

A: *I have documented reports of grievances formally lodged, where different applicants, expressed very similar acts of lack of ethical leadership on the part of the SMT regarding mismanagement of funds and resources, these applicants felt that their complaints were not adequately addressed and in other instances totally ignored by the school leadership in defence of other SMT members they were complaining about.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *We are seized with a high number of disputed resolution interventions we have to institute as a result of these consequences of unethical behaviours that we see from our SMTs, due to lack of accountability, factions have been created as a result of high levels of mistrust and everyone is now unnecessarily very anxious and their school responsibilities are now having to suffer, that is why conflict is so high.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *In the process of dispute resolution in our district, we sometimes recommend strategies like workshops on ethics, Sensitivity and awareness training regarding ethical conduct we have*

further recommend Guidance, Mentoring and Support for SMTs that are struggling by requesting other schools and teams to assist them to enhance their ethical leadership practice.

APPENDIX N3: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR PRINCIPALS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (P1)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *My understanding is that ethical leadership is borne out of morally accepted conduct that is becoming of a leader in the school without compromise.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *I don't remember being found wanting, when it comes to the way I relate to my colleagues and the entire staff as far as ethical leadership is concerned.* AFTER PAUSING. *I always treat my staff equal and address their concerns without casting any aspersions on them, whether they are right or wrong.*

P: Have you ever being notified of any ethical leadership challenges by anyone.

A: *The district has never investigated any acts or conduct of bad leadership behaviour practices in our school.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a principal in your interaction within the schools

A: *As a leader in this school, I am regularly faced with colleagues, that continue to act in a manner very unbecoming of a leader, and they set a very bad leadership example to the upcoming teachers.*

P: May you please unpack on these challenges

A: *Some of the colleagues that I lead with, are the ones who continue to demonstrate bad influence in the manner they behave in the school, they have the tendency to form little groupings in an attempt to influence one another to rebel against lawful instructions, these behaviours pose a very serious ethical and moral leadership challenge in the school, and for the past two years, these errant behaviours have affected the performance and moral fibre of the entire school.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *There is a lot of unacceptable conduct in the school as a direct result of unethical conduct from the colleagues, and this caused a lot of anxiety, distrust, low staff morale and my colleagues are beginning to lose a sense of belonging in my view.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *To increase ethical leadership within my team, I have already engaged the district to arrange training on ethics and leadership induction workshops for new SMT members, I am also in discussions with the education specialist responsible for labour relation in my school to assist with training on preventatives measures to curb unwanted behaviour in the school.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (P2)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *Behaviour that does not and should not comprise the integrity of both the school and the official himself or herself, be it a teacher, my deputy or anyone in the school.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *We have always erred on the side of caution when dealing with ethical leadership as our staff perceive this topic very differently, but generally our practices have been above board.*

P: Has there been any allegation brought to your attention

A: *The way I have dealt with complaints and allegations of favouritism, ill-discipline and other bad practices, by and against our staff, consistency has been key for me, I have never been biased towards or against anyone.*

(3) Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a principal in your interaction within the schools

A: *The issue of unethical leadership in my school from the people I expect a lot from really gets to me, these challenges have been here for some time and the district officials are fully aware of them, we are now seized with a very serious matter of a senior management team member facing serious disciplinary charges of sexual impropriety with a learner. Do you call that being ethical and exemplary…? ─:*

(4) Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *The performance of the school is not something to be proud of as a result of unethical conduct from some of my colleagues and the consequences of unethical behaviours like late-coming, absenteeism, fraud and dishonesty in general have cost the school dearly, These acts of ill-discipline really has to stop at some point.*

(5) Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *My school is looking at introducing ethics awareness training to the entire staff including my management team, we are also looking at appointing mentors to members of the leadership team,*

in addition, after consultation with the school governing body, we were able to source funding for arranging a variety of interactive workshops on ethics and ethical leadership as a strategy to enrich our capacity.

APPENDIX N4: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (DP1)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *This is a set of criteria that refers to the involvement of moral accountability to whatever we say or do in the school, and ofcourse, this has a lot to do with how we carry ourselves in the presence of others.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *From where I am sitting, everything is running very well in our school, if there were issues of bad or incorrect ethical leadership behaviours, I am certain that I would gladly have shared them with you. We have always reflected good and acceptable ethical leadership behaviour expected of us as leaders in the school.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as deputy principal in your interaction the schools.

A: *One thing that I think is a huge challenge in our leadership, is lying about others without consequence and the issue of suppressing the rights of others is of grave concern to me, my view is that, it is unethical to go around rumour-mongering in the school as this causes divisions and poses a very big challenge, colleagues must be sensitised about such behaviour.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *Our staff morale is at its lowest due to acts of unethical behaviour, where colleagues come late, lack of respects for rules and procedures, there is anxiety and a general atmosphere of mistrust in the school, these issues as a result, has had a negative effect on school performance.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *To address ethical leadership challenges in our school, we are looking at arranging workshops under the guidance of the district to augment our understanding on the matter, we are also in the process of heightening our level of accountability when it comes to ethical leadership in the school.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (DP2)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *I view this as moral accountability to the actions we take in light of the people we lead, and our behaviour should not be questionable, and one should not be found wanting, when it comes their conduct in the school.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *There are some rotten apples when it comes to ethical conduct in the school, but generally, we are able to handle those issues as a team.*

P: What do you mean by rotten apples, are you referring to anyone in the school

A: *I should also state that, we are all humans and all of us are prone to err from time to time, when it comes to unacceptable behaviour, but we should learn from that, accept our mistakes and move on.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as deputy principal in your interaction within the schools

A: *Absenteeism is a serious challenge that affect the moral of everyone in the school as it now obliges others to continuously have to cover for those people, and colleagues who do that, think this is not an ethical dilemma that the school leadership has to grapple.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *My take is that huge patches of ill-discipline, increased levels of discomfort in the school caused by unacceptable levels of anxiety and mistrust, lack of accountability are some of the consequences of unethical behaviour that we are experiencing our school and the low staff morale we see in the school, is as a direct result of these behaviours.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *Ethical leadership in our environment is very crucial, that is why as a strategy we have resolved that all of us should go for training, start to communicate openly, and begin to be accountable for our actions and be exemplary, the district officials are also assisting us in this regard.*

APPENDIX N5: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR DEPARTMENTAL HEADS (HOD)

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (H1)

(1) Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *For me, ethical leadership is about honest leadership and you being responsible and being an example and also being accountable for your actions especially in a school situation.*

(2) SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *Without a doubt, we have a very big challenge of ethical leadership in our school, where leadership is sometimes absent…Yes I know that, I am part of the leadership of the school and fully aware that we can do better in the way we resolve ethical leadership challenges.*

P: Can you please what do you mean by that statement

A: *There are occasions, we were not consistent in the way we resolved very similar conflicts and challenges and that is a serious shortcoming on our part as leadership of the school.*

(3) Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a Departmental heads in your interactions within the schools.

A: *We are faced with ethical leadership challenges of colleagues coming to work reeking of alcohol and totally misbehaving in front of their colleagues, with others forever absent without leave for extended periods of time, they are forever absent to provide leadership when it is needed, it's a real shame, but we hope the district will deal with them, we can only report them, and what can we do─:* as she stressed during her gesticulation.

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(4) Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *Lack of accountability, failure to discipline staff, selective reprimanding of colleagues in management and favouritism are costing us remarkably.*

(5) Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *As the Departmental head in the school, I think strategies that will help us to improve ethical leadership are open communication, transparency, and accountability, I also think that some of us need training workshops on ethics, as it can be a serious problem when it is ignored.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (H2)

(1) Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *My individual perceptions on the description of ethical leadership is a code of conduct that will determine your behaviour, so it's important to treat people with honesty, integrity and professionalism for you to be taken seriously, it mostly boils down to your general conduct in the school environment. It also goes beyond the school setting in my view.*

(2) SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *When it comes to the way we reflect ethical leadership behaviour in this school, some of us are found wanting, because at times we are blinded by favouritism, buddy friendships, and so on…We have dropped the ball in this regard, in that our ethical leadership practices across the school divide has not been up to standard in the way we have behaved and conduced ourselves.*

P: **Is this a concession**

A: *All granted, there is always room for improvement in the manner we treat others in an ethically acceptable manner.*

(3) Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a Departmental head in your interactions within the schools

A: *Ethical leadership is a real challenge that confronts us in great proportions and the colleagues continue to take this matter very lightly, there is a serious moral decay going on here.*

P: What do you mean by moral decay

A: *Rights of others are not respected here, and I feel, this conduct of bad behaviour and ill-discipline by others on top is unethical, when you complain in the open, you are purged.*

(4) Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *Consequences for unethical behavioural practices in my school are ill-discipline that we see rearing its ugly head that had led to a lot of disciplinary cases in the school, poor academic results, and low staff morale and accountability in the school.*

(5) Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *The colleagues that I serve with on the management team have unanimously agreed that we should jerk up our efforts on ethical leadership and implement strategies like, ethics training workshops, conflict resolution training workshops to boost our current awareness on this subject.*

APPENDIX N6: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR TEACHERS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

Q stands for Question

A stands for Answer

P stands for Probing

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE (T1)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *Well, ethics, I believe is how one is expected to run the school in terms of values and with morals... Ethical leadership in my view is basically understanding everybody's point of view. Informing everyone in the school of what is going on and taking everyone into consideration.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *This issue of ethical leadership in our school, there is more to it than meets the eye.*

P: Can you please explain further, what do you mean by that.

A: *Our management does not reflect anything close to ethics and good conduct, in the way they are leading us, there is a lot of favouritism and buddy-buddy relations here because there is a consistent pattern of the application of different rules for different people in this school, even if the issues are similar.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a teacher in your interactions within the schools

A: *Management team in my school is tasked with a huge challenge of managing divisions caused by themselves because of favouritism in the manner they treat staff, and this is because I think, when there is conflict, they tend to take sides.*

P: Are you able to explain further based on your experience and observation

A: *Other colleagues are not harshly dealt with when they are forever absent without leave, the principal is very selective in her discipline and the enforcement of school rules and procedures, I think this selective treatment is unethical.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *Management team in this school does not want to account for poor leadership, which is why I have to start with accountability as a serious flaw that I have experienced, I also see high levels of ill-discipline, mistrust among staff and management as some of the consequences for unethical behavioural practices in the school.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: *Accountability comes tops of my mind, I also think that continued training on ethical leadership for our leadership team is essential.*

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER TWO (T2)

(1)   Theorisation of ethics and ethical leadership

Q: In your opinion, how do you describe what constitute ethical leadership in schools

A: *In my understanding and for me when we talk about ethics and ethical leadership is that, it is very important to set a very high standard of examples of honesty, ethics, morals and values to these teachers and learners, so that there is no conflict and favouritism in the school.*

(2)   SMT demonstration of ethical leadership practices

Q: In your view, do SMT reflect ethical leadership behaviours in their leadership practices

A: *Teachers are not treated the same here when it comes to allocation of work, expected discipline and the way our SMT relate to us.*

P: Can you please explain, what is your experience on these ethical leadership practices

A: *Our management team does not care about issues of ethical leadership in this school, all they are worried about, is their own promotions and those of their friends and they treat us very differently, and the more you are vocal on their bad ethical leadership practices, the more you are sidelined.*

(3)   Ethical leadership challenges faced by SMT

Q: What appears to be the ethical leadership challenges that you have as a teacher in your interactions within the schools

A: We *have a leadership that takes sides when there are issues of conflict, we are ignored when we raise issues of mismanagement of funds and resources and I think that's unfair and unethical, people in the school have isolated themselves into different groupings in our leadership, and it confuses us as to where to go for leadership and advice, and I think this is one of the huge challenges.*

(4)   Consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools

Q: In your view, what are the consequences of unethical behavioural practices in schools.

A: *My view is that lack of discipline enforcement and accountability are huge contributory consequences for unethical behavioural practices in the school, we don't have enough examples of good behaviour in this school.*

(5)   Strategies to enhance ethical leadership in schools

Q: In your view, what strategies could be developed to enhance ethical leadership in secondary schools

A: SMT *in my school must go for ethical leadership training, otherwise things will not change.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

APPENDIX O: CONFIRMATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDITING

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Declaration of professional edit

EXPLORING THE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

by

FREDDY ABILIO MLAMBO

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