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THE ROLE OF FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL AND
PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN
THE PINETOWN EDUCATION DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL.

“It is my deepest conviction that the children should be seen and heard as our most treasured
assets. They are not ours to be used or abused but to be loved and nurtured and encouraged
to engage in life to the full extent of their being. Together as a nation, we have the obligation
to put sunshine into the hearts of our little ones. They are our precious possessions. They
deserve what happiness life can offer.”

(Nelson Mandela)

Khumsiladevi Naidoo
2018
THE ROLE OF FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN THE PINETOWN EDUCATION DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL.

by

KHUMSILADEVI NAIDOO

201339920

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR IN EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

in the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

of the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Supervised by

Professor J. Pillay

October 2018
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

MY LATE FATHER: KRISHNA
A strong and fearless soul who lived his life supporting, encouraging, educating and securing the future of not only his own children, but also the future of many other children and families that he came into contact with. Thank you for instilling the confidence in me that I am capable of doing anything if I put my mind to it.

MY MOTHER: NELLY
The most patient person I know, and whose words of encouragement and whose push for tenacity during the last four years still ring in my ears. I am eternally grateful to her for the hours, months and years she has spent taking care of me and my family whilst I pursued my doctoral studies. This gave me the space to spend the hours needed to research, contemplate, and do the writing that was needed to complete this dissertation. Thank you for the unconditional love and support.

MY SON: NISHAL
Your presence in my world has made me stronger, better and fulfilled much more than I could have ever imagined. In the last few years, you played the role of chair-leader, encouraging me to “complete the project”. Your understanding and acceptance of my response every time you asked me, “Mama, do you want to play with me?” helped to lessen my guilt of being unavailable when you needed me. Love you eternally.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This doctoral study has been one of the most trying academic pursuits I have had thus far. It was undertaken at a point in my life when I was faced with a myriad of life events and responsibilities which, during previous academic pursuits, I did not have. Reflecting on the events during the last four years, I am convinced that it would have not been possible for me to have completed this study without the inspiration, support and assistance of critical people in my life. In this regard, I would like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the following people: -

- My husband Dhevan, who generously assisted with all the logistical, printing and technological aspects that are related to such studies. I am grateful to him for graciously taking on the responsibility to care for our son during this period of study. Thank you for all that you have done to make this journey less stressful.

- I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Jace Pillay, for his good natured support, research expertise and wisdom. This did not only help me keep perspective so that I could complete my work, but it also helped better my work.

- Thank you to all those who participated in this study. Your co-operation and willingness to share your lived experiences freely with me, did not only make this study possible, it also enriched it.

- I must also acknowledge all family members, colleagues and friends who have assisted me whenever I called for their support or assistance. I would like to specifically express my gratitude and deep appreciation to my nephews Niren, Deshin, Sashin and Roald who willingly provided courier services whenever I called on them to do so.

- Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the divine spirit that appeared to work in mysterious ways, especially in the last year, in creating the opportunity, space and time for me to complete this dissertation.
ABSTRACT

Studies have been conducted on the role of public schools in providing psycho-social support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) with respect to the range and nature of interventions provided for them to promote their psycho-social well-being. However, relatively few studies have been documented on the role of Full-Service Schools (FSS), which is a care and support resource introduced by the South African Education Ministry within the public schooling system in an effort to mainstream psycho-social and educational support for orphan and vulnerable children. This qualitative multiple case study contributes to the understanding of the role of Full-Service Schools in promoting psycho-social and educational well-being of orphans and vulnerable children. Three Full-Service Schools within the Pinetown Education District participated in this study. In total, the participants from the three schools comprised of 13 School Based Support Team members, 11 School Governing Body Members, 12 representatives from the school’s network of support providers, 30 orphan and vulnerable children, 2 School Counsellors, 3 Learner Support Educators, 4 Learner Support Assistants, 2 District FSS Programme Co-ordinators, and 1 Provincial FSS Programme Co-ordinator.

The Atlas-ti software programme was used to conduct content analysis of the data collected. Data from each school was analysed with respect to identifying in-vivo quotes related to the school’s roles and responsibilities to provide educational and psycho-social support for orphans and vulnerable children. Thereafter, the identified in-vivo quotes from all three schools were integrated using the Atlas-ti software along the six objectives of the study. These were to explore: the influence of the Full-Service School selection criteria on its OVC support roles and responsibilities; how budgets were managed for care and support programme provision for OVCs; the provision of the range of support programmes and services for OVCs; how the training and development programme for Full-Service Schools influenced it’s support role; the role of support structures and specialist personnel in promoting care and support at Full-Service Schools; and the collaboration between the FSS and its network of support providers to strengthen its role as a care and support resource for OVCs.

Findings of this study indicated that there were enabling factors at the FSSs to promote their role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Firstly, at all three schools there was a culture of care and support for orphans and vulnerable children. Secondly, all participants were confident about the FSS programme objectives and were positive about its
role to be a care and support resource for OVCs. Thirdly, FSSs received additional care and support provisioning from the KZN Department of Education, to facilitate their role as a support resource for OVCs. However, all three schools reported numerous challenges to implementing psycho-social and educational support interventions for orphans and vulnerable children that threatened the sustainability, quality and range of the support interventions provided. These included factors such as challenges with selection criteria of FSSs, issues with care and support budget allocations, implementation concerns related to the FSS support model, inadequacies in the training and development programme, the functionality of support structures, shortage and role confusion of support staff and inadequate collaborations. Based on the findings, suggestions were made as to what the KwaZulu Department of Education could do (if necessary) to further strengthen, refine and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District of KwaZulu Natal.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABBREVIATION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANA</td>
<td>Annual National Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>Action for the Rights of Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBE</td>
<td>Department of Basic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBST</td>
<td>District Based Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOH</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Department of Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>Educator Assistance Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWP6</td>
<td>Education White Paper 6, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSS</td>
<td>Full Service School</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IE</td>
<td>Inclusive Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILST</td>
<td>Institution Level Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQMS</td>
<td>Integrated Quality Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Individual Support Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KZN</td>
<td>KwaZulu Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KZNDOE</td>
<td>KwaZulu Natal Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIET</td>
<td>Media in Education Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVCs</td>
<td>Orphan and Vulnerable Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>Psycho-social Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPFAR</td>
<td>United States President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPSSI</td>
<td>Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAIDE</td>
<td>South African Institute for Distance Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBST</td>
<td>School Based Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEM</td>
<td>Senior Education Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>School Governing Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>School Management Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNES</td>
<td>Special Needs Education Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSE</td>
<td>Whole School Evaluation</td>
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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Overview of Chapter

An overview of the study is provided in this chapter. This overview covers the background to the study, the motivation for it, the aims and objectives, the research design, the method of the inquiry and the theoretical framework that informs the study. It also covers the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness and ethical considerations. It ends with an outline of the chapters that follow.

1.2. Background to the Study

Millions of children around the world have become increasingly more vulnerable due to a range of health, social, economic and political factors. Defining vulnerability in absolute terms is difficult as it varies in nature and degree depending on countries and specific contexts. The variance occurs around factors such as age, definition of orphanhood, the range of living conditions contributing to the vulnerability and the intensity of the challenge faced. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), in its report on the State of the World’s Children (2016), indicates that there were approximately 2.2 billion children in the world in 2015. Of this number, approximately 150 million children have lost one or both parents, 5.9 million children died before reaching age 5 due to illness that could be treated, 124 million children and adolescents fail to enter or complete their schooling due to factors such as poverty, gender, ethnicity, disability or geographical location, and 46% of the 900 million people that were estimated to be living in poverty, (on less than US$ 1.90 per day), were children (UNICEF, 2016). A further 250 million children were living in countries affected by conflict, and half of the 19.5 million refugees in 2015 were children (SOS Children’s Village, 2016).

Given the state of the world’s children and the impact of the AIDS pandemic on family life and communities, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and its global partners advocated for a broader description to the traditional definition of orphans as being children that are parentless, to include ‘single orphan’, referring to a child who has lost one parent and a ‘double orphan’, a
child who has lost both parents (UNICEF, 2017) and a social orphan, a child who has one or both parents alive but who are unable to perform their parental duties due to illness, significant poverty or other factors such as drug addiction. (Dillon, 2008).

Orphans and vulnerable Children (OVC), for the purpose of this study, refers to children (persons below 18 years) whose survival, care, protection and development is threatened by the experience of: (i) the loss of one or both parents; or (ii) the inability of parents to perform their parental duties because of illness; or (iii) severe poverty (PEPFAR, 2006).

It is estimated that sub-Saharan Africa has the highest percentage (49%) of the world’s children living in extreme poverty (UNICEF & World Bank, 2016). The United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in its report Reducing Global Poverty through universal Primary and Secondary Education (2017), states that 33 million of the world’s 61 million children that are out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa. Over eighty percent of the children orphaned by HIV and AIDS (over 12 million) live in sub-Saharan Africa (PEPFAR, 2017). In 2015, eighty percent of child deaths in the world occurred in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. “Across much of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, children with mothers who received no education are almost three times as likely to die before the age of 5 as children of mothers with secondary education” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 16).

These global figures of the state of children indicate that millions of children are denied their right to grow up in a world that is healthy, safe, secure and nurturing, thus compromising the chance of them ever reaching their full potential as adults and being able to contribute meaningfully to their societies. Furthermore, failure to develop skills that are necessary to compete in the mainstream of life as adults will reduce the likelihood of a person being unable to break the vicious cycles of not fulfilling their own potential or being able to provide an enabling environment for their children to have a chance to fulfil their potential (UNICEF, 2016).

According to Statistics South Africa (2017), there are 56.52 million people in South
Africa and approximately 29.6% of the country’s population is younger than 15 years. The province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), which was the location for this study has a population of 11.1 million people and is the second largest province in the country. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the country’s children younger than 15 years resided in KZN (Statistics South Africa, 2017).

Whilst within South Africa there were improvements over the years in the outreach of health, education and social welfare services for children, 63% of children in the country still live in poverty and children made up the largest share (51%) of persons in the country that were living below the poverty line (Delany, Jehoma & Lake, 2016). Approximately 15.3% of the country’s children live in households that have reported hunger, and 22% percent of this number reside in KZN. (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Statistics South Africa in its 2016 Vulnerable Groups Indicator Report stated that in KZN children made up 38% of the provincial population. 37, 2% of households with children in the province were in receipt of a child support grant and 24.5% of the province’s children were living in households without an employed adult (Lehohla, 2017).

Infant mortality rate in the country is estimated to be at 32.8 per 1000 live births. At country level, 12.6% of the total population is HIV positive (Statistics South Africa, 2017). “16% of children are orphans who have lost either their mother, father or both parents; 21% of children do not live with either of their biological parents; and 0.3 % of children live in child headed households” (Delany, Jehoma & Lake, 2016: p.105). In KZN, 3.7 % of children lost their mothers, 12.5 % lost their fathers and 3.1% lost both their biological parents. The Province has the highest incidence of HIV and AIDS in the country and it has the largest percentage of orphans in the country which is approximately 22%. Consequently, the Provincial Government is faced with the massive challenge of caring for a generation of children who will be raised without parents.

In 2015, nationally 15.5% and in KZN 14.5 % of children aged 15 years had not completed grade seven. 24.4% of 17 year olds nationally and 24.5 % of 17 year olds within KZN had not completed grade 9 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). The lives of
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

children in the country are further challenged by the inherited legacy of violence and extreme inequality (Health Life Sciences Partnership (HLSP), 2011).

These statistics of the state of children nationally and internationally indicate that millions of children are disadvantaged and vulnerable merely because of the circumstances into which they are born. A child facing hunger may never reach his/her physical and cognitive potential (UNICEF, 2016). Deprived of education, a child may never gain skills that would improve the prospects for his/her future livelihood. Facing poor health, neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation can affect a child’s psychological (thoughts, emotions and behaviour), social (relationships, traditions, religion and wider socio-political experience) and physical (bodily growth and movement) well-being (how you feel about yourself and life) adversely (Action for the Rights of Children, 2009).

Psycho-social support refers to “a continuum of love, care and protection that enhances the cognitive, emotional and spiritual well-being of a person and strengthens their social and cultural connectedness” (REPSSI, 2013: p. 5). Risk factors in respect to a child’s psychosocial well-being include chronic negative living conditions such as extreme poverty, absence of or unstable relationships with guardians/caregivers, unsafe environments and lack of opportunities to learn and socialise (USAID, 2011). The impact of these risk factors on a child's growth and development is discussed in detail in chapter two. Educational Support refers to the provision of a range of teaching methods, educational services, or educational resources aimed at either accelerating learning, to help learners catch up with learning targets to progress in line with their cohort, or to support learning in general. (The Great School Partners, 2013). Factors that could place the educational wellbeing of a child facing vulnerabilities at risk include living in extreme poverty resulting in the inability to afford the basic costs related to school attendance e.g. uniform, fees and transport costs, hunger, illness, disability, discrimination, living in unsafe conditions and increased household responsibilities (Cohen and Epstein, 2005). The impact of these risk factors on a child’s growth and development is discussed in detail in chapter two.
UNICEF, in its Report on the State of the World’s Children (2016), argues that if the current trend of prevalence of vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the world continues, then by 2030, an estimated 70 million children could die before reaching 5 years. In sub-Saharan Africa, children will be 10 times more likely to die before reaching 5 years than children in high-income countries. Of the world’s children living in poverty, nine out of 10 will live in sub-Saharan Africa and more than half of the estimated 60 million primary school aged children that will be out of school, will be from sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF, 2016). In order to reduce and/or prevent further risk or damage to the growth and development of children facing such challenges we will need to ensure access to health, psychological, social, therapeutic and educational support for the said children.

The current state of children in the world begs of all governments and societies to take action to change the outcomes for children facing such life deprivations so that we secure a better future not only for the affected children, but also for all of us. “If given a fair chance at health, education and protection from harm, children, can as adults, compete on a more level playing field with children from wealthier backgrounds” (UNICEF, 2016: p. vii). Our failure to act now by intensifying our collective efforts and increasing our pace of action to ensure that we reach out to the children and families that are at risk, will only result in deepening their deprivation and potential. Consequently, there will be a perpetuation of intergenerational cycles of disadvantage that will ultimately threaten the future growth, shared prosperity, security and health of communities (UNICEF, 2016).

The United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ensures that the “new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include commitments to tackle inequalities that limit opportunities for the world’s most vulnerable children” (SOS, 2015: p.5). Key to the successful achievement of these goals are political commitment, investment in providing resources and collective will (partnerships) to reach out to the children “who are being left behind” (UNICEF, 2016: p.4). The world’s governments, including South Africa, had committed to achieving the universal pledge that underpinned the objective of the SDG goals- “that no one will be left behind….and we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 4).
Given factors such as the past political policy of population segregation, unequal access to education, the prevalence of HIV and AIDS and the levels of poverty within the country, the Department of Education introduced a number of strategies in public schools to mitigate the negative impact of risks faced by OVCs on school attendance, retention and scholastic achievement. Among the support programmes for OVCs at public schools included the School Nutrition programme, Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL), Integrated School Health Programme, Sign Posts for Safe Schools, National Policy on HIV and AIDS for learners and Educators in Public Schools and Inclusive Education. Of note regarding these support programmes was that they had different modes of delivery. The school health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS activities and signposts for safe schools, for example, were implemented as extra curricula activities often targeting specific schools or locations. Consequently, there was the risk that some OVCs were not accessing these supports at school and were at risk of creating education marginalisation, poor performance or school drop-outs.

To ensure that OVCs were not left behind in their educational development, the Education Ministry released the Education White Paper 6 (2001) which advocated for the inclusion of support programmes, services and resources across the education system to address the support needs of all learners that experience barriers (systemic, pedagogic, societal and intrinsic) to learning and development. The full-service school programme is one of the strategies outlined in the Education White Paper 6, (2001), that indicates the model to deliver care and support programmes and services within the mainstream school sector as a mainstream activity.

Full-Service Schools (FSS) are mainstream schools that are strengthened with support interventions (programmes and services) and specialised support resources (material and human) to address a broad range of developmental barriers (learning, health, behavioural and psycho-social). They are established to serve as one of the critical “safety nets” within the education system for vulnerable learners in relation to barriers to learning and development (KZN Department of Education, 2011). It is envisaged in the continuum of support advocated in education White Paper 6, (2001), that “learners who require low-intensive support will receive this in ordinary schools and those requiring moderate support will receive this in full-service schools. Learners
who require high-intensive educational support will continue to receive such support in special schools” (Education White Paper 6, 2001, p.15). Furthermore, FSSs are expected to “have the capacity to respond to diversity by providing appropriate education for individual needs of learners, irrespective of disability or differences in learning style or pace, or social difficulties experienced “ (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 7).

By releasing the Education White Paper 6 in 2001, the Department of Education took a deliberate step to ensure every child’s right was protected, especially those that are vulnerable or experiencing barriers to learning and development, to access education and support. Implicit in this policy was the notion that planning, budgeting, resourcing and programming for care and support for teaching and learning could not be left to chance, but had to be with the basis of curriculum needs.

Given the number of children living in poverty, the prevalence of OVCs and the impact of HIV and AIDS on the lives of the people of the province, the provincial Department of Education recognised that planning for care and support was not a choice but an imperative for the province. The provincial Education Department embraced the mandate given in the Education White Paper 6, 2001, and saw the FSS programme as the avenue through which the provision of care and support for the most vulnerable children could be implemented. Given the large track of rural areas in the Province, the reality in most communities was that the school is the only beacon of hope for the most vulnerable children in the province to lead a better life. The FSS programme was intended to promote care and support interventions as an integral part of the programme at schools (KZN Department of Education, 2009).

KZNDOE’s commitment to mainstream care and support programmes and services using FSSs as a resource within a hub of schools was indicated by the launch of the Department’s strategy in 2009 to develop schools as Inclusive Centres of Learning, Care and Support.

The implementation of the KZNDOE FSS programme as a support resource within the mainstream school sector began in 2008 with the piloting of an essential package of support provision for KZNDOE FSSs to enable it to be responsive to the psychosocial
and educational support needs of OVCs. The findings of the pilot indicated five critical elements that were essential for establishing FSSs in the province as a support resource, responsive to the psycho-social and educational support needs of OVCs. (SAIDE, 2008). These included:

- planning for implementation
- advocacy, covering consultations with key stakeholders, awareness programmes and inter-sectoral collaborations
- resourcing for care and support: provision of material and human resources to facilitate the delivery of care and support programmes and services, and human resource support and development programmes
- infrastructure- inclusive of physical infrastructure, policies, support programmes, services and budgets, and
- Monitoring and evaluation (SAIDE, 2008).

Based on these findings the KZNDOE, in its Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN (2011), used the above five focus areas to guide the framework for the scale up of the FSS programme in the province (KZN Department of Education, 2011).

1.3. Motivation for the Study

Given the time children spend at school, teachers would seem to be ideally placed to identify and support OVCs. Furthermore, the structure and provisioning at schools positions it to be a safety net for OVCs, as it lends itself to not only be a structured and emotionally supportive environment for children, it also provides adult supervision, skills development for better future livelihoods, providing an opportunity to learn social skills and develop social networks. In reports based on the work with OVCs in sub-Saharan Africa, several agencies need to be mentioned.

These are the United States President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief- PEPFAR (2012); the Regional Psychological Support Initiative–REPSSI (2009) and United States Agency for International Development – (USAID, 2008) indicate evidence to support the view that access to a range of effective and appropriate support interventions that address two critical areas viz. basic needs (safety, shelter, nutrition,
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

health, education) and psycho-social support (safety and trust, identity and belonging, feeling loved, socially connected, self-worth) have the potential to have positive outcomes for the life-long development and future livelihoods of OVCs. Consequently, given the potentially positive spin-off for OVCs to attend school, every effort should be made to ensure they remain at school and are supported to achieve to their full potential.

Critical factors affecting a school’s ability to effectively address the psycho-social and educational support (provision of remedial and therapy services, homework supervision, access to social services, career and life coaching) needs of learners vulnerable to learning breakdown, school drop-out or underachievement need to be identified. These are the limited budgetary, human resource and infrastructure norms and standards that are essential to offer educational and psycho-social support programmes and services. To address this gap, the Education Ministry introduced the Education White Paper 6 (2001) aimed at infusing care and support programmes and services for all learners experiencing barriers, including OVCs within the schooling system. This policy advocates a model for the delivery of care and support programmes and services as a standard provision within the education system. The care and support model addresses the learning and developmental support needs of learners that arise from systemic, societal, pedagogic and intrinsic factors. The concept of a Full-Service School (FSS) is advocated in this White Paper as an additional support resource established to serve as one of the critical safety nets within the educational system for vulnerable learners in relation to barriers to learning and development.

Even though FSS programmes are in place in provinces across the country, there are limited studies on two areas. Firstly, the role played by and the ability of FSSs to deliver on the care and support mandate in relation to addressing the support needs of learners, including OVCs experiencing psycho-social barriers to learning and secondly, how successful they have been in achieving this goal.

Since 2009, the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education, had been incrementally up-scaling the FSS programme. In the eight years of scaling up the programme, the
Provincial Department has not engaged in any formal or scientific studies in reviewing the effectiveness of the KZNDOE model of FSS as a support resource. Consequently, structured reflection activities such as research studies like this one, is aimed at addressing this gap. It contributes to the development and refinement of the processes of implementation. This would ultimately have benefits for all learners, including OVCs that experience psycho-social and educational barriers. Based on the above discussion, the following research questions guided the investigations of the study.

1.4. Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to explore what role the FSS, as a support resource within the education system, plays in promoting educational and psycho-social support for OVCs. The primary research question was: What role do Full Service Schools in the Pinetown Educational District of Kwazulu-Natal play in promoting educational and psycho-social well-being for OVCs? Based on the findings of the primary research question, the secondary question was this: what could the KZNDOE do further, if necessary, to strengthen, refine and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District of KwaZulu Natal?

1.5. Aims and objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was firstly, to explore what role Full Service Schools in the Pinetown Educational District of KwaZulu Natal play in promoting educational and psycho-social support of OVCs. Secondly, based on the findings, to make suggestions as to what KZNDOE could do further, if necessary, to strengthen, refine, and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District in KZN.

In order to fulfil the aims of the study the following objectives were explored:

- the Full-Service School selection criteria on its OVC support roles and responsibilities;
how budgets were managed to promote care and support programme for OVCs;
• the provision of the range of support programmes and services for OVCs;
• how the training and development programme for Full-Service Schools influenced it’s support role;
• the role of support structures and specialist personnel in promoting care and support at Full-Service Schools; and
• the collaboration between the FSS and its network of support providers to strengthen its role as a care and support resource for OVCs.

1.6. Research Method and Design

A qualitative multiple case study design was chosen for this study since it supports explorative research where the researcher is the main data collection instrument (Yin, 1994). Creswell (2013) refers to the case study method as the exploration of “a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.” (Gustafsson, 2017, p.2). The ‘bounded system’ or case, in this study was the FSS. Since the research question was explored at the three FSSs or ‘bounded systems’, the research design was therefore a multiple case study. Data on the research question was explored and collected independently at each school setting. The data collected were analysed not only in terms of each setting (FSS) but was also analysed across settings, to get a greater understanding of differences and similarities between the cases in relation to the research question thus facilitating a wider exploration of the research question. (Yin, 2003). Furthermore, qualitative case study research design offers the researcher the opportunity to gather data within the natural setting of the FSS. This enables richer accounts of the participants lived experience in each context related to the research question (Creswell, 2007). This is further expanded on in chapter 3.

The research was grounded in the social constructivist paradigm, since knowledge and reality was subjectively constructed within the engagement between the researcher and the participants during the interviews. This paradigm acknowledges that the data collected was impacted on by the reality of the participant’s lived experience which
occurs in a social context and, as such, one cannot separate the objective and subjective reality from data collected (Ponterotto, 2005). This is expanded further in chapter 3.

1.7. Sampling

Participants in the study were purposively selected to include the various critical role-players in the implementation of the Full-Service School Programme. The critical role-players in the Full-Service School Programme identified for this study included representation of both educator and support staff at the FSS, learners(OVCs); the School Governing Body (SGB), district officials and the school’s network of support providers (other Government Departments, business, sponsors, non-governmental organisations-NGO, volunteers). This sampling method allowed for maximising the variation in the sample thus providing greater insight and obtaining rich data related to the topic of study.

The study focused on the three operational Full –Service Schools in the Pinetown District. In identifying the schools, the resourcing provisions that were associated with the FSS establishment as per the KZN DoE guideline documents for FSSs, were the criteria that was used to determine whether the school is operational. The provisions that formed the criteria for the selection of the schools were:

- the school had a Support Centre;
- the school had access to specialist support staff namely, a school counsellor and learning support educator;
- the school was in receipt of a budget for care and support initiatives, and the school had
- a school based support team (SBST).

The schools were selected from the Hammersdale, KwaMashu and Phoenix circuits within the district. The selection of participants was determined by the subgroup they belonged to and their willingness to volunteer as participants.

The identified subgroups in the study included the School Based Support Team / Intuitional Level Support Team (SBST/ILST), which is a school level support
management structure mandated in Education White Paper 6, (2001). Its role is to ensure early identification, assessment and support for learners experiencing barriers to learning; Other sub groups included: Learners (OVCs); School Governing Body (SGB); Departmental Officials-the District and Provincial Co-ordinators for the Full-service School Programme; School Counsellors; Learning Support Educators; Learner Support Assistants from the FSS and the School’s Network of Service Providers viz. other Government Departments, business, sponsors, non-governmental organisations (NGO), volunteers. Further details about the participants are contained in Chapter 3.

1.8. Data Collection

Data were collected by means of individual interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis.

1.8.1. Individual Interviews

Individual interviews: semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with the District (2 officials) and Provincial Co-ordinators of the Full-service School Programme (1 official). The Provincial Co-ordinator for the FSS programme was the official occupying the director post for Inclusive Education at the Provincial office. The official within the Special Needs Education Services (SNES) section at district office level that had the responsibility to co-ordinate the FSS programme in the District was identified as the District Co-ordinator.

1.8.2. Focus Groups

Focus group interviews were held with the following groups:

(i) OVCs: A total of 30 OVCs were interviewed. Ten learners per school who were identified by the school as either living in extreme poverty or had lost one or both their biological parents or who were living with parents that were ill or the learner himself or herself was experiencing some form of disability, were targeted. The learners were selected from grade 7. It was felt that since learners in this grade were likely to be at the school prior and during the implementation of the FSS programme, they would be better able to engage with the research questions.
(ii) **SBST/ILSTs**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a member of the school SBST. A minimum of 4 members namely, the Chair of the committee plus three representatives, were targeted to be interviewed. A total of 13 participants were interviewed.

(iii) **SGB representatives**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a member of the School Governing Body. A minimum of three (3) representatives per school were targeted. This included the Chairperson or his/her representative and two other members who volunteered to be participants. A total of 11 participants were interviewed.

(iv) The **schools network of support providers**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a member of either a non-governmental organisation, volunteers, sponsors or an official from other government departments who worked with the school in addressing the care and support needs of OVCs. A minimum of three stakeholders per school was targeted to be interviewed. A total of 12 participants were interviewed.

(v) **School Counsellors**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a currently serving Education Department official appointed in the post of School Counsellor at a FSS. The school counsellors serving the three FSSs were targeted to be interviewed. A total of 2 counsellors were interviewed as the third counsellor had passed away in a motor vehicle accident and the post was not filled due to cost cutting measures.

(vi) **Learning Support Educators**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a currently serving Education Department official appointed in the post of Learning Support Educator (LSE) at a FSS. A minimum of 3 LSAs working with FSSs were targeted to be interviewed. A total of 3 LSEs were interviewed.

(vii) **Learner Support Assistants**: the criteria for selection were that the participant had to be a currently serving Education Department official appointed in the post of Learner Support Assistant (LSA) at a FSS. A minimum of four (4) LSAs working at FSSs were targeted to be interviewed. A total of four (4) LSAs were interviewed.

The interviews were guided by a researcher developed questionnaire which is discussed in detail in chapter 3. Both individual and focus group interviews were conducted until the point of data saturation. Interviews were tape recorded with the
permission of the participant and transcribed. A total of 78 participants were part of this study. Apart from the criteria outlined above, there was no discrimination in the selection of participants based on sex, age, race or ethnicity, or any other factors apart from belonging to the subgroup relevant to this study. The aim of using focus groups to organise participants for the interviews and data collection was to obtain information on the research question from the perspective of the lived experiences of the various subgroups involved in the implementation of the FSS programme.

1.8.3. Document Analysis

The three policy documents that were used to get an overview of what the policy imperatives were for the delivery of care and support programmes and services at FSSs for OVCs were as follows: the Department of Basic Education Guidelines for Full – Service/Inclusive Schools (2010), the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education documents, Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN (2011) and Establishing Schools as Inclusive Centres of Learning, Care and Support (KZNDOE, 2009). The relevant education departments generated policy guidelines that provided the framework for the FSS programme in the province. Consequently, they were identified as relevant and to be included as data sources in the document analysis. Other documents that were analysed included minutes of the bi-annual meetings of the Provincial Co-ordinating Committee for Inclusive Education (PCCIE), minutes of monthly meetings between Provincial and District Co-ordinators, adverts of specialist care and support posts, and notices from the Provincial Office to District Office to guide and support areas of implementation. Details in respect to the title date and focus area of the specific provincial operational documents that formed part of the document analysis are discussed in detail in chapter 3.

1.9. Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed in a qualitative manner using content analysis. Data were analysed using the Atlas-ti software. The first step in the analysis involved highlighting actual relevant participant statements, and information contained in the interview transcripts and documents in the document analysis in relation to the research question. The researcher then linked the highlighted participant statements or
in-vivo quotes in each of the subgroup interview transcripts and from the document analysis to the six objectives of the study outlined earlier. The highlighted quotes under the six (6) objectives in both the interview transcripts and the documents used in the document analysis was then integrated along the six objectives using the Atlas-ti software programme to identify emerging themes and sub-themes in relation to the research question. The findings were then interpreted and compared with relevant literature. The focus of the interpretation of the results was to identify the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support programmes for OVCs. The process of data analysis is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

1.10. Trustworthiness

In order to ensure confidence of the findings, Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) notion of trustworthiness was used. Four strategies were used to ensure confidence in the findings. Firstly, three methods of data collection were used in the study to increase the creditability of the study. This included individual interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis. Interviews were recorded and the researcher allowed for participants to verify interpretations made through “member checking”. Secondly, the researcher attempted to ensure the transferability of the study by making a complete set of data analysis documents and final results available. Thirdly, to ensure dependability of the findings, the researcher made available a detailed description of the methodology. Fourthly to address issues of conformability, the researcher made every effort to promote an atmosphere of trust between participants and researcher by being transparent in relation to the context, scope and activities involved in the study design. To guard against the risk of bias, data collection and interpretation allowance was made for frequent debriefing sessions with supervisor. This was how we avoided prolonged participation with participants, and thus of running the risk of going “native” (Patton, 1990) i.e. over identifying or empathizing with participants. The researcher declared upfront any values and beliefs that would be relevant to the study that could impact negatively on data collection, interpretation and the general integrity of the study. An example of such a strong belief are the strong views that may be related to what should be the school’s care and support role or the value that the researcher places on the contribution of children in society. These four strategies
which are aimed at promoting trustworthiness are discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

1.11. Theoretical Framework of the Study: Bio-ecological Systems Theory

The theoretical framework on which this study is framed is the bio-ecological systems theory. According to the bio-ecological systems theory, as expounded by Bronfenbrenner (1994), there are interconnected spheres of support that surround a child. In other words, if there are gaps in support in any of these spheres or subsystems in which the child functions, it could have implications for the child’s functioning in other sub-systems. For example, OVCs who lack parental support, which is a gap in the family subsystem, could as a result also present challenges in another subsystem in which she/he functions, for example, at school. According to the theory, gaps in a subsystem can be addressed with interventions at different levels ranging from family and community responses, legislation and policies, government and civil society to specialized psycho-social services. The FSS is one programme that comes in to fill in the gaps in support found at the OVC’s family and community level. They were established to serve as one of the critical “safety nets” within the education system for vulnerable learners in relation to barriers to learning and development. Hence, the bio-ecological model was found to be suitable for this study as it would provide greater insight into the role that FSS played in intervening at the different levels to address the educational and psycho-social support needs of OVCs.

The bio-ecological systems theory is discussed in greater detail in chapter 2.

1.12. Definition of key terms

1.12.1. Orphan

Historically, an orphan is described as a child who has lost both his/her parents. In the mid 1990’s, UNICEF and its global partners advocated for the broadening of this definition to include a ‘single orphan’, a child who has lost one parent and a ‘double orphan’, a child who has lost both parents (UNICEF, 2014) and a social orphan, a child who has one or both parents alive but who are unable to perform their parental duties due to illness, significant poverty or other factors. This broadening of the definition of orphans was advocated due to the increasing number of deaths of parents worldwide
as a result of the AIDS pandemic. This broad definition has significant implications for the focus and scope of policies and programming for care and support needs for children. It questions the focus and the scope of policies and support programmes - should the policies and programmes focus on the individual child or on supporting families and communities that care for orphans? For the purpose of this study an orphan was regarded as a child (under the age of 18 years) who - (i) experienced the loss of one or both parents; or (ii) whose parents are unable to perform their parental duties because of illness.

1.12.2. Vulnerable Children

There are challenges to obtaining a universal definition of vulnerability since the indicators of vulnerability are related to multiple contexts, namely: the individual, family, organisational and community settings. Further, there is the related subjectivity to determining who is vulnerable.

This study was framed along the definition that vulnerable children are children “who are deprived or likely to be deprived or harmed as a result of their physical condition or social, cultural, political circumstances and environment, and require external support because their immediate care and support system can no longer cope” (Martin, 2010: p. 3). For the purpose of this study, a vulnerable child was a child whose survival, care, protection and development is threatened due to family or poverty related risks.

1.12.3. Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVCs):

OVCs for the purpose of this study refers to children (persons below 18 years) whose survival, care, protection and development is threatened by the experience of: (i) the loss of one or both parents; or (ii) the inability of parents to perform their parental duties because of illness; or (iii) severe poverty (PEPFAR, 2006: p. 8).

1.12.4. Psycho-social Well-being:

Psycho-social well-being is multifaceted and includes two dimensions. These are: psychological aspects which can be described as our thoughts, emotions and behaviour, and our wider social experience e.g. our relationships, economic status, traditions, and culture (Action for the Rights of Children, 2009). The interrelatedness
of these two dimensions reflects the psycho-social well-being of an individual (ARC, 2009). In other words, it refers to the child’s skills and abilities to manage relationships, show understanding of his/her environment, engage with his/her environment, make good choices and have hope for the future.

1.12.5. Educational Well-being

Well-being in an educational setting refers to “sustainable emotional state characterised by (predominately) positive mood and attitude, positive relationships with other students and teachers, resilience, self-optimisation and a high level of satisfaction with their learning experiences at school.” (Noble & McGrath, 2015: p. 6). In other words, the ethos and focus of the school and classroom should be such that all children feel welcomed, happy and safe, have opportunities to develop meaningful relationships, actively participate in the learning process, and are supported to become the best they can be.

1.12.6. Full-Service School

A full-service school is a mainstream school that provides quality education to all learners. It is a school that has “the capacity to respond to diversity by providing appropriate education for individual needs of learners, irrespective of disability or differences in learning styles or pace, or social difficulties experienced” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p.7).

1.12.7. Inclusion

“Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education” (UNESCO, 2005: p.13).
1.13. Organisation of the Thesis

1.13.1. Chapter 1: Rationale and Overview of the Study

This chapter places the study in context and provides a motivation for the research together with the aims, theoretical framework, methodology, definition of critical terms that frame the research, and the organization of the study.

1.14. Ethical Considerations

All relevant ethical measures were observed to ensure the protection of all participants as well as to respect KZNDOE policies, practices and procedures related to conducting research studies at schools within the Province. Firstly, the approval for the implementation of the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg (See Appendix A, p. 268).

Secondly, the approval to conduct research at the respective schools was obtained from the KZNDOE (See Appendix B, p269). A meeting was held with the Coordinators for Psycho-social Support Services based in the Pinetown Education District to outline the scope of the study and to facilitate assistance to gain entry to the schools. Principals and SGBs of the respective schools were informed of the details of the study (See Appendix C, p.270-272).

There was no discrimination in the selection of participants based on sex, race, ethnicity, or any other factors apart from belonging to the subgroup relevant to this study. Participants were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and their right to withdraw from the study at any point with no repercussions. Written consent for participation and permission to record proceedings were obtained from all participants. For participants under the age of 18 years, where available, caregivers were consulted with the help of the social worker and the school principal. After such consultations, written consent for the learner to participate in the study was given by the social worker. Once such consent was obtained, the individual was requested to sign assent to participate in the study. (See Appendix D, p.274). The social worker was present during the interviews with learners. She also served as a language interpreter.
for learners and, in some instances, also with parents (SGB members) who wished to respond in isiZulu. Learners were also made aware that should they feel any discomfort during the interview, the social worker was available to provide support. The scope and purpose of the study was thoroughly discussed with all participants prior to the interview.

Access to the results of the study was granted to participants who requested them via the school management. The researcher made every effort to report data, results, methods and procedures and the final information honestly and not to fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data.

Every effort was made to protect all participants’ confidentiality and privacy by:

(i) not identifying participants by name in the final report or at feedback sessions with the Department of Education and

(ii) ensuring all recorded data (voice and written) that could identify participants would be kept under lock and key with access limited to only the researcher and her supervisor. Participants were also made aware that if the information they provided is requested by legal authorities, the researcher may be compelled to comply, however the researcher would notify them of such instances via the school management.


This chapter covers an intensive literature review on the critical elements and existing research related to psycho-social and educational well-being of OVCs, the theoretical model that underpins this study, the OVC care and support policies of the Department of Education and the Care and Support focus of the Full-Service School Programme.

1.14.2. Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology, research approach, paradigm, design, sample selection, data collection methods, process of data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and theoretical framework, are discussed.
1.14.3. Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings
This chapter covers the analysis of the data in relation to the research aims and objectives mentioned earlier. In this chapter, the stages of the data analysis are described ending with the identification of themes that emerged from the data collected.

1.14.4. Chapter 5: Discussion and Research Findings
This chapter deals with the discussion of the findings in chapter 4 as they relate to the role of FSSs in the Pinetown District in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The discussion is linked with the literature review and the theoretical framework of the study.

1.14.5. Chapter 6: Recommendations for enhancing the support role of FSSs
In this chapter, the researcher presents recommendations for interventions based on the findings discussed in chapter 5, that the KZNDOE could adopt to further strengthen, refine, and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District in KZN.

1.14.6. Chapter 7: Contributions, Limitations and Suggestions for future research
This chapter contains the limitations, concluding remarks on the study and suggestions for future research. The contribution of this research for the benefits of OVCs, the FSS programme design, implementation and policy and the bio ecological systems theory that framed the study.

1.15. Conclusion
This chapter has contextualized the study undertaken. It has also provided the motivation, purpose of the study, the theoretical framework used, the methodology and the structure and layout of the thesis report. The following chapter contains the review of the relevant literature and the available National Department of Education’s support policies and programmes related to the essential support systems that need be put in place for OVCs to promote their psycho-social and educational well-being.
Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of orphan and vulnerable children (OVC), the prevalence of OVC, the psycho-social and educational risks faced by OVC that affect optimal growth and development, the theoretical framework that underpins this study, the full-service school (FSS) as a care and support resource for OVCs, the implementation strategy adopted and the progress made by the KZNDOE to establish FSSs in the province.

2.2. Defining Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVCs)

There is no universal definition of the concept of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). Contextual factors across countries largely contribute to the variance in the definition. The variance occurs around factors such as age, the range of conditions contributing to the vulnerability and the intensity of the challenge faced.

A “child”, as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, refers to “every human being below the age of eighteen years” (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Section 28 [3]: p. 14). This age guideline however, can differ in different contexts. For example, there can be age differences related to issues of child protection, age of consent and age of criminal responsibility. In Sri Lanka, for example, girls can be married at the age of 12 years with parental consent and in Ethiopia a minor can make a will alone at the age of 15 years (Smart, 2003). It is against this background that Pillay, (2016: p. 1) argues that “one should be cautious about the use of a quantitative number in differentiating a child from an adult”.

In South Africa, according to the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the country, a child is defined as “a person under the age of 18 years. Whilst the Constitution is clear of the age of a child, the laws of the land have varying age limits in terms of provisions pertaining to children. In South African law, if a child commits a crime at the age of +14 years he/she can be prosecuted and detained in prison (Child Justice Act 75 of
A child at 15 years can be employed to perform work for pay. (Department of Labour: Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997: Section 43). The age at which a child in South Africa is considered by law to be capable and mature enough to consent to sex is 16 years (Criminal Law: Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act 32 of 2007, Sections 15 and 16). These variances in the age limits in the different laws of the country have implications for the scope of government’s plans with respect to child protection, care and support provisions. For the purpose of this study, a child is considered as a person below 18 years.

The definition of orphans has also evolved over the years to go beyond the traditional definition of the absence of both parents, to include the notion of single orphans, double orphans and social orphans. In a joint report by UNICEF, UNAIDS and USAID (2004), an orphan is defined as “a child 0-17 whose mother (maternal orphan) or father (paternal orphan) or both (double orphan) are dead” (World Bank, 2005: p.7). The notion of social orphans has also been introduced in the recent years. This refers to children of whom one or both parents, may still be alive but who have been unable to perform parental duties for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons may be, for example, they are “drug addicts who are separated from their children with little chance of reunion, parents who are sick or abusive or who, for other reasons, have abandoned or largely neglected their children” (World Bank, 2005: p.7). This broad view of the definition of orphans has implications for governments’ planning, programming and budgeting for issues related to child care, support and safety. Further, it brings into question as to where the focus should lie when it comes to planning to support interventions. Should the focus be the individual child, family or the community?

Vulnerable children are those children “who are deprived or likely to be deprived or harmed as a result of their physical condition or social, cultural, political circumstances and environment, and require external support because their immediate care and support system can no longer cope” (Martin, 2010: p.3). The identification of vulnerability of children is generally influenced by “what is seen in a situation and what is easily measurable” (Skinner et al, 2004: p.17). This method of identification
can result in care and support providers easily running the risk of missing hidden problems such as emotional issues (Skinner et al: 2004).

In identifying the vulnerability of children there are also a range of indicators to consider but not all of these may be given the same emphasis as an indicator of vulnerability in different contexts. A study in four countries in Africa done by Smart (2003) on the indicators of children that were defined as vulnerable (reflected in table 2.1. below,) support this view.

Table 2-1 Criteria used by different countries in Africa to identify Children as vulnerable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Children that are defined as vulnerable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Botswana – policy definition** | Street children  
Child labourers  
Children who are sexually exploited  
Children who are neglected  
Children with handicaps  
Children in remote areas from indigenous minorities |
| **Rwanda – policy definition** | Children under 18 years exposed to conditions that do not permit fulfilment of fundamental rights for their harmonious development, including:  
Children living in households headed by children  
Children in foster care  
Street children  
Children living in centres  
Children in conflict with the law  
Children with disabilities  
Children affected by armed conflict  
Children who are sexually exploited and/or abused  
Working children  
Children affected/infectected by HIV/AIDS  
Infants with their mothers in prison  
Children in very poor households  
Refugee and displaced children  
Children of single mothers  
Children who are married before the age of majority |
| **South Africa – local/community definition** | Child who:  
Is orphaned, neglected, destitute, or abandoned  
Has a terminally ill parent or guardian  
Is born of a teenage or single mother  
Is living with a parent or an adult who lacks income generating opportunities |
Is abused or ill-treated by a step-parent or relatives
Is disabled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zambia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Zambia, Community Committees identify OVC to quality for the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme in terms of the following criteria:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double/single orphans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From female/aged/disabled-headed households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s are sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family has insufficient food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing below average standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above indicates that it is difficult to define vulnerability in absolute terms since it varies in type and in degree across different countries and contexts. However, the common indicator among identified vulnerable children is that they lack a reliable social support network to assist them with life challenges they experience daily.

For the purpose of this study, vulnerable children were identified to be children whose survival, care, protection and development is threatened by the experience of the loss of one or both parents; or the inability of parents to perform their parental duties because of illness; or severe poverty. (PEPFAR, 2006).

2.3. Contextualising the Prevalence of Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVCs)

2.3.1. Globally

The United Nation’s International Children’s Emergency Fund’s (UNICEF) report on The State of the World’s Children (2016), indicated that the prevalence of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) has been on the rise globally in recent decades largely due to a range of health, social, economic and political factors. Of the estimated 2, 2 billion children that were in the world in 2015, 570 million children were living in poverty (less than US$ 1.90 per day), and approximately 150 million children lost one or both parents (UNICEF, 2016). Children with no parents comprise 17% of the total number (26 million) whilst the vast majority of orphans (83%) are classified as “single orphans,” those children who have lost at least one parent (Darago, 2016).
In 2015, 5.9 million children died before reaching age 5 due to illness that could have been treated, 124 million children and adolescents failed to enter or complete their schooling due to factors such as poverty, gender, ethnicity, disability or geographical location (UNICEF, 2016). Furthermore, 535 million children “live in countries affected by conflict or disaster, often without access to medical care, quality education, proper nutrition and protection” (UNICEF, 2016). Half of the 19.5 million refugees in 2015 were children (SOS Children’s Village, 2016).

It is estimated that over eighty percent of children orphaned by HIV and AIDS (over 12 million) live in sub-Saharan Africa (PEPFAR, 2017). It is also estimated that the highest percentage (49%) of the world’s children living in extreme poverty reside in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF and World Bank, 2016). “More than 93 million children of primary and secondary age are out of school across the region, and at least 15 million of them will never set foot in a classroom” (Montoya & Benavot, 2016: para. 4). In 2015, eighty percent of child deaths in the world occurred in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. “Across much of South Asia and sub–Saharan Africa, children with mothers who received no education are almost three times as likely to die before the age of 5 as children of mothers with secondary education” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 16).

These statistics on the state of the world’s children indicate that the well-being of children and of the future human assets of countries across the world are at great risk. If the current trend of prevalence of vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the world continues, then by 2030, “almost 70 million children may die before reaching their fifth birthday. Children in sub-Saharan Africa will be 10 times more likely to die before their fifth birthdays than children in high-income countries. Nine out of 10 children living in extreme poverty will live in sub-Saharan Africa, 60 million primary school aged children will be out of school…more than half will be from sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF, 2016: p. vii). Furthermore, “children who do not have the opportunity to develop the skills they will need to compete as adults can neither break these vicious cycles in their own lives nor give their children a chance to fulfil their potential” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 2).
2.3.2. South Africa

In July 2017, it was estimated that there were 56.52 million people in South Africa and approximately 29.6% (16,729,920) of the country’s population was younger than 15 years. (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Whilst, within South Africa, there were improvements over the years in the outreach of health, education and social welfare services for children, in 2015, over 13 million children were still living in poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2017).

According to Statistics South Africa (2017), 12.6% (7,121,520) of the total South African population was HIV positive. Sixteen percent of children were orphans who lost either their mother, father or both parents; 21% (3.7 million) of children do not live with either of their biological parents; and 0.3% (54,000) of children lived in child headed households. (Delany, Jehoma & Lake, 2016). 13.5% (8,622,000) of households, inclusive of children, reported hunger in 2016 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). In 2017, the infant mortality rate in the country was estimated to be at 32.8 per 1000 live births (Statistics South Africa, 2017). In 2016, 14.7% (138,000) of the country’s children aged 15 years (942,000) had not completed grade seven, 21.2% (215,000) percent of 17 year olds nationally (1,015,000) had not completed grade 9 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). The lives of children in the country were further challenged by the inherited legacy of violence and extreme inequality (Office of the Premier, 2012).

2.3.3. KwaZulu Natal

The province of KwaZulu- Natal (KZN) which was the location for this study was estimated to have a population of 11.1 million people in July 2017 (Lehohla, 2017). It is the second largest province in the country. Twenty-one percent (3,513,283) of the country’s children younger than 15 years resided in KZN (Lehohla, 2017). In Statistics South Africa Poverty Trends Report 2006-2015, it is the third poorest province in South Africa (Lehohla, 2017). Statistics South Africa, in its Vulnerable Groups Indicator Report: 2015 (Lehohla, 2017), indicated that in 2015, children made up 38% (4,218,000) of KZN’s population. In January 2017, 3,876,934 citizens of the province were recipients of social grants. (SASSA, 2017). Furthermore, 26.7%
(1,490,000) of the province’s children were living in households without an employed adult (Lehohla, 2017).

In 2016, 13.3% (24,000) of the province’s children aged 15 years had not completed grade seven, 22.4% (47,000) of 17 year olds within KZN had not completed grade 9 (Lehohla, 2017). The Province has the highest incidence of HIV and AIDS in the country and it had the largest percentage of the orphans in the country namely, approximately 13.9% (565,000). (Jamieson, Berry & Lake, 2017). In 2015, 3.7% (404,040) of the province’s children lost their mothers, 12.5% (1,365,000) lost their fathers and 3.1% (338,520) lost both their biological parents (Lehohla, 2017). Consequently, the Provincial Government was faced with the massive challenge of caring for a generation of children who would be raised without parents.

Both the national and international statistics of the state of the children in the world indicated that millions of children are disadvantaged and vulnerable merely as a result of the circumstances into which they are born (UNICEF, 2016). A child facing hunger may never reach his/her physical and cognitive potential (UNICEF, 2016). Deprived of education, a child may never gain skills that would improve the prospects for his/her future livelihood. Facing poor health, neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation can affect a child’s psychological (thoughts, emotions and behaviour), social (relationships, traditions, religion and wider socio-political experience) and physical (bodily growth and movement) well-being (how you feel about yourself and life) adversely (Action for the Rights of Children, 2009).

2.4. Psycho-Social and Educational Risks facing OVCs

According to Shonkoff, (2010), biological and behavioural research shows that critical factors in optimal childhood development are as follows: the presence of stable and caring adults, safe environments, education, access to adequate nutrition and medical care. It is acknowledged that children are generally resilient and can cope with many of life’s challenges. However, one cannot predict the impact of traumas and prolonged exposure to adverse childhood experiences such as extreme poverty, chronic illness, conflict, neglect and abuse on a child’s development and psycho-social well-being,
and the child’s ability to deal with such adversity (OVC Support, 2016). Consequently, whilst educational and psycho-social support will benefit all children, some children and their families may need additional support to cope with extreme trauma, adversity or absence of caregiver support (OVC Support, 2016).

Psycho-social support (PSS) refers to “a continuum of love, care and protection that enhances the cognitive, emotional and spiritual well-being of a person and strengthens their social and cultural connectedness” (REPSSI, 2013: p. 5). PSS support involves meeting a child’s basic needs such as safety, shelter, nutrition, health and education, which are the foundation blocks for promoting their well-being (South African Department of Health, 2015). Educational Support refers to the provision of a range of teaching methods, educational services, or educational resources aimed at either accelerating learning, to help learners catch up with learning targets to progress in line with their cohort, or to support learning in general (The Great School Partners, 2013). Provision of such supports promotes an ethos in the classroom, and school where all children feel welcome, happy, safe, actively participate in the learning process, have opportunities to develop meaningful relationships, and are supported to reach their full potential (Noble & McGrath, 2016). Educational and PSS in schools involves “both the day-to-day support needed by all learners for them to grow and develop healthily, as well as a more focussed and purposeful type of support needed by those learners who are more vulnerable than others” (REPSSI, 2013: p. 5).

2.4.1. Psycho-Social Risks

Living in extreme poverty places a child at risk of facing chronically negative conditions, such as unstable relationships with guardians/ caregivers, unsafe environments and lack of opportunities to learn and socialise (USAID, 2011). There is research evidence in studies conducted by researchers such as Richter (2004), Moore, Redd, Burkhauser, Mbwana, & Collins (2009) and the Educational Testing Service (2013) that indicate children growing up in extreme poverty experience multiple negative impacts on their growth and development. Generally, monetary thresholds are used to determine poverty levels. Using the monetary threshold of households to determine which child is at risk can however result in missing out on identifying children who are facing challenges. For a child, poverty means to what
extent is the available household money affecting his/her ability to attend school, to be is well nourished, to have access to basic health care services and safe water and sanitation necessary for their physical, emotional, psychological and mental development (UNICEF, 2016).

The negative impact of the unavailability of basic resources such as water, sanitation, nutrition, basic health care services and shelter to children can be malnutrition, ill health and low levels of education (UNICEF, 2016). In other words, exposure to chronic poverty has the potential to reduce a child’s opportunity to acquire the skills, capacities, and confidence they need to reach their full potential and thus increasing the likelihood of them growing into becoming poor adults (UNICEF, 2016). This ultimately is “fuelling intergenerational cycles of disadvantage that threatens the strength and stability of societies everywhere” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 89).

Parents living in extreme poverty are susceptible to experiencing chronic stress, depression, marital discord, and are likely to provide low levels of nurturance and harsh discipline which in turn contributes to poor psycho-social outcomes for their children. A child’s socio-emotional difficulties however may not always be related to the parent-child relationship. Children living in poverty experience its effects in their various life contexts – at home, school, neighbourhood and their wider community. Living with a parent who is chronically ill, or experiencing the death of a parent due to chronic illness, could result in depression or high levels of anxiety for such children, arising from the uncertainty about the future. (Cluver et al, 2012). The situation of OVCs facing such life experiences are further compounded by the risk of stigmatisation. The experience of being stigmatised could impact on their ability to seek or obtain support from peers, the school, and the community thus adding to the level of their vulnerability. (Cluver et al, 2012).

Due to lack of finances, children may also engage in child labour, just to survive, which increases their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Children who are forced to work are not only deprived of their childhood but are likely to face maltreatment, physical and psychological abuse by supervisors, co-workers and outsiders (UNICEF, 2006). Experience of abuse and violence can have a life-
long impact on a child’s “physical and mental health, their education and their overall quality of life” (Child Fund Alliance, 2014: p. 1).

Living in or exposed to abusive or violent situations over a protracted period places a child at risk of experiencing “emotional stress that can harm the development of their brains and impair cognitive and sensory growth. Behaviour changes can include excessive irritability, sleep problems, emotional distress, fear of being alone, immature behaviour, and problems with toilet training and language development” (UNICEF’s Report, 2006: p. 7). The Unicef Report, (2006) indicates that children exposed to domestic violence are not only distressed but also are more likely to become victims of abuse, are at greater risk of experiencing substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, delinquent behaviour, trouble with school work, show signs of bullying, aggressive behaviour and are at risk of becoming school drop-outs.

The impact of exposure to violent and abusive experiences could result in not only the child perpetuating such abusive and violent behaviours, but also in the child ending up being in conflict with the law or the child fleeing home and living on the streets (UNICEF, 2005). Furthermore, violence on children are often intergenerational, with those who have faced violence as a child being more likely to become a violent adult (Child Fund Alliance, 2014). The negative impact of such abusive experiences does not only have implications for the victim’s psychological, social and educational outcomes, but also this cycle would likely have long-term negative impact on a family’s social and economic status.

Neglect and survival needs can contribute to a girl’s vulnerability to violence and sexual exploitation (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Children, especially girls, who found themselves in a social and financially insecure position, are likely to undertake risky work such as being a sex worker in order to earn an income just to survive (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Being in such a dependent position, a girl is likely to be powerless to negotiate with a rich “sugar daddy”. This refers to an older male who lures younger girls by buying them gifts or paying for their expenses in exchange for sex (UNICEF, 2010). Such dependant girls are likely to risk falling pregnant because they do not take protective measures such as use of condoms or other forms of protected sex. This in turn places the girl at high risk of being a teen mother and also
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

of contracting life threatening diseases like HIV and AIDS. The costs of such risks for children may be “related to both short- and long-term medical treatment, psychological impacts, secondary effects including loss of productivity and income throughout their lives, and death” (Child Fund Alliance, 2014: p. 2).

“Child marriages exemplify how the world’s poorest girls bear the heaviest burden of disadvantage, especially those living in rural areas of sub-Saharan-Africa and South Asia, where the practice is most common” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 37). Not only have the rights of girls in such situations been violated, the girls have been robbed of their childhoods, their education is cut short, they lose the chance of obtaining skills and knowledge to secure a good job, they are often socially isolated, more vulnerable to domestic violence and bear children before their bodies are fully mature (UNICEF, 2016). “When girls are married as children, they cannot help but pass on poverty, low education, and poor health – into which they themselves have been trapped – to the next generation” (UNICEF, 2016: p. 39). It would take strong political leadership and government, parent, community and private sector partnership, to promote a protective environment for children against such violations (UNICEF, 2006).

Growing up without nurturing parental figures, parental care and support can also deprive children of opportunities to develop critical life skills. Parents are the most significant other in a child’s world. They generally provide the stable home, which a child needs to grow and mature. They take care of the child’s basic needs, they are the child’s primary protectors and they also serve as role models (USAID, 2011). Children who have watched their parents die may show symptoms of post-traumatic stress (e.g. guilt, depression, withdrawal, anxiety, sleep, eating and learning challenges) and their psychological distress could be compounded by having to deal with secondary factors of stigma and rejection associated with death due to HIV/AIDS (Deters, 2008).

Exposure to such traumatic circumstances places children in need of psycho-social support, which entails caring for their emotional needs. (This entails helping children to deal with difficult feelings and bad experiences aimed at making the child feel worthy, accepted, loved, and socially connected, safe and protected). The child also
has social needs (helping the child to access basic material needs required to thrive and develop e.g. food, shelter, clothing, health, education) needs (IASC, 2010). Since children respond to trauma and loss differently, caregivers and schools often fail to recognise the symptoms of psychological distress. In the face of such experiences, social networks (e.g. teachers, neighbours, family, friends etc.) are crucial to mitigate the effects of the stress, and to protect and support mental health and psychosocial well-being” of OVCs (IASC, 2010: p. 1). At school, changes in the child’s behaviour or performance can sometimes be ignored or even punished.

As a result of the impact of the AIDS pandemic, the traditional kinship system of the extended family network in communities have come under stress. Consequently, the situation of vulnerable children is further complicated by the fact that they are cared for by vulnerable families and live in equally vulnerable communities (Tshoose, 2010). In poorer community environments, there is a higher chance of there being inappropriate role models, limited positive social opportunities, inadequate adult supervision or limited positive peer influences (Eamon, 2001). Consequently, orphans and other vulnerable children who are not cared for by the extended family could end up in vulnerable situations such as child-headed households, living on the street, in institutions and orphanages (Foster, 2000).

External support systems to the family therefore become critical to support and protect OVCs from developing further emotional or behavioural disorders. Essential to the impact of external supports is the need to co-ordinate services to ensure that gaps in provision are addressed (IASC, 2007). Efforts in this regard should focus on strengthening any local or individual resources that exist and should promote participation by affected groups /children in decisions about support programmes to ensure relevance, ownership and sustainability of such support. In this regard, the assistance of neighbours, teachers, churches, local government, civil society organisations, community-based organisations, peers and other concerned citizens may be among the most powerful resources to support psycho-socially distressed children to cope with their difficult situation. From research conducted in seven (7) provinces in South Africa, SAIDE (2012), observed that support initiatives need to be mainstreamed and embraced by the whole school community for it to be sustainable.
Assessing the adequacy of peer interactions, the OVCs perception of the school environment, their nutrition and health status, exposure to violence, available government and community supports can provide direction for facilitating appropriate interventions for OVCs at the individual, family and/or community level (Eamon, 2001). If support interventions remain ad-hoc or stand-alone activities without links to family, community interactions and other relevant programmatic areas, it would be limited in its impact to promote psycho-social well-being for individuals or the community at large (Action for the Rights of Children, 2009).

2.4.2. Educational Risks

Having the basic scholastic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic provides a child with the fundamentals necessary for life-long learning (USAID & CRS, 2008). Whilst there are various international pieces of legislation, for example: (United Nations, 1948; OHCHR, 1989; Organization of African Unity, 2000; and The Constitution of the Republic of South African, 1996) to ensure education as a fundamental right, OVCs across the world face many barriers to educational access, retention and performance. Children experiencing conditions such as poverty, orphan hood, disability, hunger, homelessness and illness are vulnerable to receiving inadequate education, which ultimately, is likely to contribute to poor social, educational, emotional and economic outcomes for such children. Factors related to educational access, retention and achievement that could place the educational well-being of a child facing such vulnerabilities at risk include: the inability to afford a school uniform, school fees and transport costs, poor school attendance, experience of hunger, illness, disability, discrimination, living in unsafe conditions and increased household responsibilities (Human Rights Watch, 2005).

Factors at the school and challenges experienced by vulnerable learners can result in “school push– out” or drop-out for vulnerable groups of children. One of the vulnerable groups of children are children with disabilities, and they are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in exercising their right to accessing basic education. The barriers they face to accessing education range from factors such as negative attitudes of education staff/ authorities, challenges to physical access (transport to school, disability friendly toilets, ramps), challenges to communication (provision of
specialised teaching and learning materials, sign language), and the inflexible delivery of the curriculum (teaching and assessment methods do not accommodate the diverse learning support needs of learners with disabilities) (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

Situational analysis on Children with Disabilities in South Africa led by the National Government Departments of Social Development (DSD) and Women, Children and People with disabilities (DWCPD), supported by UNICEF (2012), indicated that orphan children are more likely to experience disabilities than non-orphan children. There was limited evidence of access to early childhood development centres (ECD) for pre-school children with disabilities, and children with disabilities were more likely not to attend school than their non-disabled peers. Among the children with disabilities that do attend school, their drop-out rates are higher than their nondisabled peers (DSD, DWCPD and UNICEF, 2012). Furthermore, the situational analysis indicated that on entering school, the identification of a child with disabilities occurs late or not at all. Educators are ill equipped to assess and determine a child’s educational barrier and the type of support required (DSD, DWCPD and UNICEF, 2012). Facing such discriminations to access appropriate quality education and support, children with disabilities are vulnerable and found to be lagging in their development or to be shut out from school and learning opportunities. From a study on the accommodation of disability in schools in Nepal, conducted by the Human Rights Watch (2011), it was advocated that such discriminations can be addressed by the strengthening and regulating of school monitoring by education officers at district level to ensure that non-discrimination and inclusive practices are implemented at educational sites.

The cost of education remains a major barrier to school access for children living in poverty, with ill parents, or without parents/guardians or who are neglected; they are likely to experience difficulties in paying schools fees and are prone to educational marginalisation and exclusion (Human Rights Watch, 2005). In a household where there is a lack of financial means, or where parents are unable to fulfil their parental responsibilities due to illness, the household priority often becomes an issue of survival. In such difficult circumstances, children may have to abandon their education to look for work, to look after siblings or ill parents and to take on more responsibilities
at home as they are excluded by the school due to long absenteeism (UNICEF, 2016). In such poor households where funds are lacking, often it is the girl child’s education that is sacrificed when parents need to make choices about which child they can afford to send to school. This occurs largely because of the cultural and social expectations of a girl’s role as a wife and mother (Hervish and Clifton, 2012). This ultimately limits the opportunities for the girl child to develop her academic skills, life skills and knowledge. These factors have implications for her future social, emotional and economic outcomes (Nguyen and Wodon, World Bank, 2014).

In South Africa, the education policy does allow for schools to levy fees, but it also makes provision for the waiving of fees for children whose parents are unable to pay. In practice, however, waiving of fees for OVCs does not always happen and even those children that were identified to be eligible for social security from government, still paid school fees (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Whilst many developing countries are heeding the call from OVC advocates to abolish school fees for OVCs, the threat of other significant school costs, such as school transport and school uniform that are associated with school attendance still remain (Human Rights Watch, 2005).

A school uniform is one of the major initial costs related to school attendance. In February 2006, the South African Education Ministry issued a notice to all provinces on how the issue of school uniforms should be handled in schools. In essence, the notice left it to the school to decide on whether they chose to adopt using uniforms, and the school governing body was granted the responsibility to determine the uniform policy ensuring that not obtaining a uniform should not deter attendance or participation at school (United Nations, 1948). With no or limited financial resources for OVCs, both options could be a barrier to school attendance.

Children who experience chronic hunger are at risk of stunted physical growth, being underweight, having low immunity to common childhood illnesses, experiencing learning difficulties, show poor concentration, exhibit low levels of energy and motivation (UNICEF, 2016). The long-term negative consequences of all this is that they miss the chance to become engaged and productive citizens, and communities lose out on the talents of such disadvantaged children who might one day become scientists, artists and innovators.
KwaZulu-Natal has the highest number of the 11 million learners in the country that walk to school. Daily, over 2 million of the province’s learners face dangerous terrains and situations on their way to school (Joseph & Carpenter, 2017). On 23 October 2015, the National (South African) Scholar Transport Policy was published, which advocated that learners should not walk long and dangerous distances to and from school. The terrain in KZN is largely rural. With poverty, poor infrastructure and inadequate child friendly transport systems in most parts of the province, many learners contend with dangerous roads that threaten their health, safety, dignity and education which can have long-term detrimental impacts on their educational development, psychological well-being and on their future social and economic opportunities.

In its report viz. Letting them fail: Government Neglect and The Right to Education for Children Affected by AIDS (2005), the Human Right Watch strongly advocated that governments should commit to ensure that no child is denied access to education because of their inability to afford school fees or any related costs to their schooling (Human Rights Watch, 2005). They maintain that this could be achieved if governments eliminated or reduced the costs of school attendance by abolishing school fees, providing free uniforms or relaxing the policy of uniforms, free textbooks, provision of transport and free meals.

Dieltiens and Gibert (2008) argue that whilst poverty can be a contributing factor, it is not always a reason in itself, for school drop-out. They found that experience of extreme poverty can draw children to stay in school as the school offers more in terms of child care, nutrition and the possibility of a better future. From their work with schools in South Africa, they argue that greater threats to school drop-out for learners beyond the compulsory age of schooling, were the poor quality of education they received, boredom, lack of motivation to continue due to high unemployment among their peers and “economic opportunities outside school in the form of crime” (Dieltiens and Gibert, 2008: p. 48). Learners are made to feel that there is no value to continue with their education. Consequently, these two researchers maintain that just focussing on addressing the access costs (fees, uniform, transport) of schooling to reduce school
drop-out, concentration should be for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the processes by which learners and parents becomes isolated, secondly, resources must be made available to schools provide better support for OVCs and thirdly to foster a rights based culture at schools for the delivery of care and support to OVCs (Dieltiens and Gibert, 2008).

The discrimination or teasing experienced by those children affected and/or infected with chronic illnesses such as HIV and AIDS at school poses a threat to positive educational outcomes for such children. In a study, Human Rights Watch found that the frequent response from schools to the hardships experienced by vulnerable groups was the provision of occasional counselling services and free meals (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Principals interviewed in this study “acknowledged that these measures were not enough, and that the AIDS affected children continued to drop out in large numbers. “They disappear...They become truant because there’s no one looking after them” (Human Rights Watch, 2005: p.26).

Attending and achieving at school is further compounded by the fact that the structure, demands and delivery of the curriculum also places pressure on vulnerable groups with respect to performance. Inadequate school provision for learners requiring curriculum support increases the risk of poor performance and school dropout for OVCs (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Furthermore, a practice within the education system that poses as a threat to the educational well-being of OVCs, is the pressure on schools to perform in the matric exams. The sanctions that are placed on schools can result in pushing out learners who are not coping at the pace of their peers or who experience learning barriers (Dieltiens & Gibert, 2008). This has an impact on the learner completing his/her schooling and limits the future educational and economic opportunities that are available to such learners.

“Education increases children’s survival and development prospects, contributing to increased employment opportunities, improved family health and nutrition lower maternal and child mortality, and lower rates of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases” (Human Rights Watch, 2005: p. 4). Given the hardships that OVCs face, it is not surprising that, if unsupported, they may drop out of school or
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

...exhibit irregular school attendance, challenging behaviours and lack of motivation to do and complete academic tasks, and they may fall behind, which in turn can result in poor performance or failure. “The challenge for schools is to break this cycle” (SAIDE, 2009: p. 122). Given the time children spend at school, teachers would seem to be ideally placed to identify and support OVCs who are experiencing psycho-social and educational challenges. Schools appear to be ill prepared to support and accommodate the needs of such vulnerable groups adequately (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Research has indicated that the workload associated with curriculum delivery, places challenges on teachers to make time to address care and support needs of OVCs (World Bank, 2005).

Whilst the important role that schools have in caring and supporting OVCs is acknowledged, Hoadley (2007) cautions that in assuming the care and support role, every effort should be made to protect the core function of schools that is teaching and learning. He argues that there are other agencies and government departments that can offer psycho-social and material support for OVCs, but none of them offer access to learning that a school offers. Therefore, when it comes to assuming the caring and supportive role, we need recognize that “teachers are struggling to fulfil their core function of teaching and learning effectively” and we need to be realistic around… what educators are trained to do, where their expertise lies and where it should be strengthened” (Hoadley, 2007: p. 256). This was further supported by the study of Morrow (2005), where he argues that the roles of teachers as reflected in the Norms and Standards policy (Employment of Education Act No. 76 of 1998) that “inflates the work of teachers beyond the capacity of all but the exceptionally talented and obsessively committed” (Hoadley, 2007: p. 256).

Furthermore, there is research evidence that indicates “that teachers often report feeling distressed, disappointed, offended, undervalued, disoriented, sad, depressed, or –most frequently - unsupported or ill-trained, when working with students with various difficulties, but especially from students with challenging or disruptive behaviour” (Kourkoutas, and Giovazolias, 2015). Consequently, this research advocates a strong alliance between teachers, counsellors and educational staff to ensure teachers are guided and supported to respond appropriately and effectively to...
the needs of vulnerable learners. Whilst support for teachers is acknowledged, there is research evidence that indicates that teachers report experiences of lack of sustainable emotional support and professional guidance from educational support staff. (Kourkoutas, and Giovazolias, 2015).

The mixture of psychological and social challenges that are likely to be faced by OVCs makes their developmental and educational needs exceptional and the general “one size fits all” model of general education programmes is often limited in responding to meeting their special needs. The UNICEF’s (2016), report on the State of the World’s Children and The United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, highlighted the importance to move away from targeted approaches to address challenges faced by OVCs. Instead they advocated for the implementation of support interventions that promoted system-wide response.

Various models have been advocated on what role the school can play in addressing the difficulties faced by orphan and vulnerable children. Studies have shown that an Integrative Whole School approach consisting of “in-school psycho-social and counselling programs, together with the stable involvement of parents and teachers that target the most vulnerable and at-risk students can be very effective and less costly than more complex mental health services within or outside school” (Kourkoutas, and Giovazolias, 2015). This system-based and contextual approach includes families and school systems and the promotion of school-community cooperation when providing support for targeted vulnerable or at-risk learners (Kourkoutas, and Giovazolias, 2015). It encourages educational staff (psychologists, counsellors) to work with teachers, parents and educational systems to create an enabling environment to achieve joint solutions specific to the situation (Kourkoutas, and Giovazolias, 2015).

UNICEF’s model of Child Friendly Schools advocates for schools that are inclusive in their approach, to promote equity, equality and healthy living, and to create a place where children feel safe and protected and to have strong community linkages and partnerships that promote integrated service delivery of support for orphans and other vulnerable learners. The Child Friendly School model is concerned with the child as a whole. It focuses not only on what happens with the child in respect to his scholastic
performance whilst at school, it is also concerned with what happens to the child before and after he/she comes to school (UNICEF, 2008).

The South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE, 2012), from their studies in South African schools focussing on creating a Caring School, concluded that of critical importance for the success of any initiative to provide support for vulnerable children is to build leadership and management capacity at schools. They argue that principals who were dynamic and had good management skills were better able to recognise opportunities and negotiate with external partners to deliver on the care and support for OVCs. This approach of mainstreaming support will not only minimise duplication of resources and programmes but will also minimise gaps in response.

UNESCO, in its Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access and Education for All (2005), argues that critical in this respect is for education authorities to ensure that-not only existing policies promote inclusion, but also gaps in policy provision are addressed, and extra resources are channelled through the school to address the needs of disadvantaged learners to overcome the negative impact of their difficulties. In order to promote their school presence and scholastic achievement, there must be a plan to build school capacity e.g. how to modify subject content and teaching methods. To address a wide range of learner needs, there must be a plan to promote stakeholder involvement, especially strengthening the relationship between school and home to assist disadvantaged parents help their children to learn. Monitoring systems must be in place to track the movement of the schooling system towards inclusion (UNESCO, 2005). Consequently, the school is increasingly being viewed as a centre of community life and a potential site to ensure access to support services for vulnerable children.

According to Action for the Rights of Children, (2009), to build effective child protection systems and to ensure that interventions for children do not compromise their rights or safety, organisations must adopt a rights based approach and incorporate support provisions into the organisations planning, budgeting, programming and human resource capacity building activities. Many actions should form part efforts to mainstream care and support initiatives. These include actions such as planning for children’s well-being via legislation, programmes and focussed interventions,
committing resources to promote children’s well-being, ensuring children’s participation in issues that affect them, supporting children to set goals and reach their potential, supporting children to have positive and nurturing relationships, providing skills development, listening and responding to children’s feelings, needs and problems, and providing safe spaces for children to play and be heard.

The Schools as Centres of Care and Support model was developed in collaboration between the South African Education Ministry, UNICEF and Media in Education Trust (MIET). This model of support advocates the expansion of the roles and functions of the principal, teachers, learners and parents to embrace care and support. It promotes the delivery of support programmes and services at school for vulnerable learners in partnership with community service providers. Each school is expected to have its core care team comprising of parents and teachers who volunteer to engage in care and support activities (Bialobrzeska, Randell, Hellmann & Winkler, 2009). “The schools in the cluster collaborate and share resources including the services of a cluster child-care coordinator” (Bialobrzeska, et. al, 2009). The cluster child-care coordinator who receives a stipend, has “the role to co-ordinate and support the school-based care team in their work of identifying and supporting orphans and vulnerable children” (Bialobrzeska, et.al, 2009). The Schools as Centres of Care and Support model focusses on six areas of support to ensure the support orphan and other vulnerable children are met. These include: food security, psychosocial support, health and sanitation, gender and HIV, safety and protection and the promoting school as community partnership in the delivery of support and services for orphan and vulnerable children.

Acknowledging the main elements advocated in the various models of school based support for orphan and vulnerable children, one possible solution put forward in the schooling system by the Education Ministry in South Africa, to provide a safety net for the vulnerable children that are being left behind due to the impact of the myriad of barriers to development and access to basic services(education, health, social security) that are essential for their lifelong development and well-being, is the Full-Service School.
2.5. Full-Service Schools

The Full Service School was advocated for in the South African Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Basic Education, 2001), as one of the critical “safety nets” within the educational system for vulnerable learners in relation to barriers to learning and development. The principles guiding this broad vision of Education White Paper 6 were ‘human rights and social justice for all learners; participation and social integration; equal access to a single, inclusive education system, access to the curriculum, equity and redress; community responsiveness and cost effectiveness’ (Department of Basic Education, 2001: p. 5).

The Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) was designed to benefit all learners. Its particular focus, however, was on learners experiencing barriers, in their varied societal, pedagogical, intrinsic and systemic forms, to learning and development. It aimed to ensure non-discrimination and the fundamental right of all citizens, especially those experiencing barriers to learning and development, to access basic education, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South African (Section 29[1], 1996).

Education White Paper 6, introduced a range of key levers for change to ensure the establishment of a single inclusive system of education. It advocated for the provision of a continuum of support ranging from low, moderate to high levels of support interventions across the education system. Education White Paper 6 advocated that the key determinants of the level of support was the nature and frequency of the support provision as outlined in the support framework in table 2.2.
Support provisions had to be made available at school and at district and provincial offices. The policy advocated for support provisions such as a support structure namely, the Institution Level Support Team (ILST) or School Based Support Team (SBST) at all schools, the establishment of Special Schools as Resource Centres, and the designation of selected mainstream schools as Full-Service Schools. At education offices, it advocated for the establishment of a District Based Support Team (DBST) at the district office and ‘the establishment of management information systems, and the development of competencies necessary for addressing severe learning difficulties within all branches and sections of the national and provincial departments of education’ (Education White Paper 6, 2001: p. 28). These efforts by the Education Ministry aimed at ensuring: (i) access to education, (ii) school retention and (iii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Levels of support provision to address barriers to learning</th>
<th>Type of educational institution where additional support will be available on a full time or part time basis</th>
<th>Degree and nature of intervention by the District-based Support Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>Low levels of support</td>
<td>Ordinary and full-service schools</td>
<td>General and focused on building capacity of all educators and ILSTs, short-term or once-off consultative support around individual cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moderate levels of support</td>
<td>Ordinary and Full-service schools</td>
<td>More specific and providing short to medium term consultative support around individual cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>High intensive and very high intensive support</td>
<td>Full-service and Special Schools</td>
<td>Intensive, frequent and specific and providing consultative support around individual cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
participation in the learning process for all children, including OVCs. (Education White Paper 6, 2001).

The DBST (District Based Support Team) and the ILST/SBST (Institutional level or School based support team) as support structures were the delivery arms of the care and support processing strategy namely the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Strategy (SIAS). The role of these support structures was to ensure a fair and just system of accessing additional support services and programmes for all learners. The diagram below illustrates the key levers of change within the care and support model advocated in Education White Paper 6, 2001.

The key levers of change as illustrated above include organising all schools along the three levels of support, instituting a uniform processing strategy to determine which learner is eligible for additional support and to what support namely the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) strategy, and establishing support structures at school and district office level to be the delivery arms of the care and support mandate.

“One of the key strategies in the development of a single, inclusive system of education in which all learners will have access to support, has been the designation and phased conversion of a number of primary ordinary schools in each district/circuit/cluster to full-service schools” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p. 1). A full-service school (FSS) is an ordinary mainstream school that ‘will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all our learners’ (KZN Department of Education, 2001: p. 22). They are mainstream schools that are strengthened with support interventions (programmes and services) and
specialised support resources (material and human) to address a broad range of
developmental barriers (learning, health, behavioural and psycho-social) (KZNDOE, 2011).

‘An essential feature of support within a full-service school is one of being site-based
and offered by a structure constituting the School Management Team, principal and
educators’ (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p.21). Critical to the delivery of site
based support is inter-sectoral collaboration. FSSs are expected to share their
additional support resources and expertise with surrounding schools. As part of the
moderate provision, it should have staff provisioning and funding measures that
ensures that full-service school have additional support to reduce class sizes, to be able
to provide additional support programmes and also to fulfil its resource centre function
(DBE, 2010).

2.6. The KZNDOE Strategy to Establish Full-Service Schools

The Provincially based implementation of the White Paper 6 began in 2006 with a
field testing of the provincial strategy to establish schools as inclusive centres of
learning, care and support. This field test focussed on identifying the essential package
of support for FSSs. Given the large rural terrain of the Province, the impact of the
HIV pandemic and the levels of poverty on the lives of children within the Province,
the KZNDOE sought to develop an essential package of care and support programmes
and services for FSSs that was cost effective and replicable. The aim of the essential
package was to “shift schools from being only centres of learning to centres of care
and support where effective teaching and learning can take place” (South African
Institute for Distant Learning-SAIDE, 2008: p. 7). This pilot was to determine the
Provincial model of FSSs and provide guidance as to what would be the essential
elements needed to scale up the programme so that it was responsive to the psycho-
social and educational support needs of OVCs. Diagram 2.2. below indicates the
KZNDOE Strategy.
As noted in diagram 2.2., the province adopted a hub system of provision of support delivery. The FSS is the focal point of delivery of psycho-social and educational support services and programmes for a hub of surrounding mainstream schools. The diagram above indicates the resourcing elements of what constituted an essential package of low moderate and high levels of additional psycho-social and educational support provision. Low level of specialised support provision was provided at ordinary mainstream schools. It involved, in the main, the introduction of a support structure the Institution Level Support Team/ School Based Support Team (ILST/SBST). The function of the ILST/SBST was to in “the direct support with respect to aspects related to the pedagogic, curriculum and assessment, with a strong emphasis on
integrated service delivery approach to addressing psycho-social, health and learning support needs of learners’ (KZNDOE, 2009: p. 10).

Access to moderate level of support provisions were to be provided for via Full-Service Schools. The package of moderate level of support provision included specialised portable equipment, specialist professionals, a support centre from which a range of additional educational, psycho-social and health support services would be delivered for OVCs. (KZNDOE, 2009).

As indicated in diagram 2.2, high level of support provision included all specialist facilities and specialist staff at specialised educational sites, namely Special Schools; Special Schools as Resource Centres, Education Centres, Early Childhood Development Centres, Adult Basic Education and Further Education and Training facilities (KZNDOE, 2009). These specialist sites were viewed as having the potential to respond to the diverse learning needs of the learner population.

The strategy when designed was aligned to the district, circuit and ward structures that existed in the province in order to firstly, mainstream the provision of psychosocial and educational support services and programmes for OVCs, and secondly to reduce the resource cost of introducing support programmes and services within the educational setting. This provincial strategy to implement Educational White Paper 6 (2001), was piloted in the province with special focus on the role of the FSS in supporting OVCs. Following the findings of the provincial pilot in 2008, the KZNDOE developed the specifications of the essential package of support for FSSs that defined the moderate level of provisions at FSSs in the province that would best position it to be responsive to the educational and psycho-social support needs of OVCs.

The essential support package for KZNDOE FSSs included six areas of strengthening. These were human resource provisioning, training and development, physical infrastructure, specialised Teaching and Learning Support Materials (LTSM)/Assistive Devices including support programmes, establishment of support structures, and budget allocation for additional support programmes and services. (KZNDOE,
Three new support posts were introduced for the mainstream sector via the FSS programme to introduce psycho-social and educational support posts at school level. This included a school counsellor, learning support educator and learner assistants. The Learner Support Educator (LSE) and School Counsellor were employed as itinerant workers to the FSS but served as a resource not only the FSS but to schools within the circuit. The learner support assistants (LSA) were site based at the FSS. The focus of the duties of the LSE was to develop and implement learning support programmes for learners that experienced learning breakdown. The School Counsellor had the responsibility of providing counselling services and crisis intervention for learners experiencing trauma, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The LSAs worked in collaboration with the LSEs, School Counsellors and District Office
Therapists to implement individual support plans for identified learners (KZNDoe, 2011). The images below indicate the range of support staff introduced at the FSSs.

Photo 2-1 Psycho-social and Educational support staff at KZNDoe FSSs

The Human Resource Development (HRD) programme was a multi-year programme and targeted district officials, the FSS and the group of mainstream schools around the FSS. KZNDoe developed a contextually relevant training toolkit to guide the HRD process. This resource included both a facilitator’s guide as well as the participant’s manual. The toolkit was intended to be a resource for district officials and FSSs in the programme of strengthening FSSs to be a care and support resource for OVCs. The image below reflects the provincially developed resource toolkit.
The HRD Toolkit covered a range of topics related to care and support of OVCs and formed part of the four phases of training for FSSs that was part of the essential package of support provision for KZNDOE FSSs. These included the following:

(i) Phase 1: ‘(i) Unpacking Education White Paper 6, (ii) what is a FSS? Roles and responsibilities (iii) ILST’s and other support Structures (iv) the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) strategy, (v) networking and forming partnerships and (vi) strategies to manage diversity in the classroom. Implicit in this HRD programme for FSS’s is the critical component of site based support.

(ii) Phase 2: strengthening of ILST’s, capacity in respect to implementing the SIAS, strengthening outreach care and support programmes for neighbouring schools, strengthening partnerships, site based support, record keeping, monitoring and supporting programme implementation.

(iii) Phase 3: is addressing specialized skills development to address care and support needs as it pertains to specific barriers to learning, consolidating and expanding outreach support programmes, monitoring and supporting programme implementation.
(iv) Phase 4: involves continuous professional advisory support, dissemination of relevant policies, continuous skills development on issues of barriers to learning and development, monitoring and supporting programme implementation’ (KZNDOE, 2011: p. 16-17).

In addition to the compliance with the minimum physical infrastructure norms and standards for public ordinary schools with regards to safety and access, the KZNDOE advocated that a FSS should have four essential physical infrastructure elements to support FSSs to be responsive to the support needs of OVCs. These included:

- A disability accessible toilet
- Clear signage or markings to facilitate movement of learners with barriers
- Access ramps in critical areas of the school campus
- A Support Centre (consulting room; health room; activity/therapy/training room with kitchenette; reception & storeroom; communal office space; accessible toilet)”

(KZNDOE, 2011: p. 8).

The KZNDOE model of FSS took into consideration the importance of a private space for the delivery of psycho-social and health support services that respects the rights of the learners and parents to privacy, dignity and confidentiality. It also provided the school with the infrastructure to conduct outreach psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs in surrounding schools.

Diagram 2-4 Floor Plan of KZN FSS Support Centre
The introduction of a Care and Support Centre illustrated above was included as part of the moderate level of support provision at the FSS to address the support needs of OVCs. The support centre accommodated spaces for counselling and interviews, health intervention, workshop and educational therapeutic activities, storerooms and office space.

The establishment of support structures advocated in Education White Paper 6, was one of the key elements of the essential package of support services in the KZNDOE FSS strategy. These structures had the critical role of ensuring that there was a fair and just system for OVCs to access psycho-social and educational support services and programmes available via the schooling system. In establishing the ILST and DBST, KZNDOE strategy was to align the roles and responsibilities of these structures to existing school level and district office management teams instead of creating new structures. “This approach was to minimize the myriad of committees that were expected to be established at school and district level and to ensure that the principle of inclusion is mainstreamed within the system and to be accepted as an underlying operating principle and not regarded as an ‘add on’ activity” (KZNDOE, 2011, p. 9). To this end the responsibilities of the ILST was incorporated into the duties and responsibilities of the School Management Team (SMT). The responsibilities of the DBST was aligned to the Circuit and District Management Teams. Diagram 2.5. below illustrates the structure of ILST/SBST advocated by KZNDOE.
Additional funds to the school’s norms and standards was given to FSSs as part of the essential package of moderate level of support provisions. The funds were to be used specifically to ‘address the additional support needs of learners experiencing barriers to learning and development. The province targeted six focus areas of support for which the budget could be used. This included the following:

(i) Physical adaptations to existing school structures – small scale adaptions to broaden access e.g. construction of ramps, adaptations to existing toilet facilities

(ii) Health and hygiene issues of OVCs- once-off or short-term provision to address health conditions that have implication for the spread of disease or has negative consequences for the learner’s health.
(iii) Training and Specialist Consultancy- the accessing of ‘specialist services on a consultancy basis to address educational, medical and therapeutic services for learners with barriers to learning and development requiring additional support/ investigation e.g. sourcing the services of specialists (therapists, psychologists, opticians) that are not accessible to the school due to distances from local clinics/hospitals and unavailability of such specialists at district office level’ KZN Department of Education (2011: p. 11).

(iv) Transporting – the transporting of learners to specialist facilities e.g. Special Schools as Resource Centres, Clinics, hospitals to access specialist services.

(v) Specialised LTSM- assistive devices and specialized LTSM to broaden access and increase learner participation in the learning process.

(vi) Running Cost of the Support Centre- funds were allocated for the running costs such as cleaning, water, light and consumables, of the Support Centre… (KZN Department of Education, 2011).

In line with the guidelines provided for the utilisation of the budget, the Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN (2011), provided direction with respect to the range of support programmes and services that FSSs should provide for OVCs. The guidelines for the range of programmes and services are outlined in the table below:-
Table 2-3 List of Support Programmes and Services for OVCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Support</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Scholastics skills development for slow achievers: support programmes in mathematics and various learning areas for learners in the various grades. Homework clubs and language enrichment programmes especially for second language learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-Curricula</td>
<td>Scout/girl guides, soccer club, soul buddy clubs, career information support groups, painting classes, beadwork leadership camps, dancing, hobby clubs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised LTSM</td>
<td>Learning material with enlarged print, braille computer software for learners with disabilities, pointers, specialised seating equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling Environment</td>
<td>Provision of age appropriate positive and safety messages within the school campus, clear signage of school name direction signs to specific rooms, blocks, play facilities, physical access viz ramps, pathways, support rails, adaptations to classrooms and toilet facilities to accommodate learners with physical needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic Services</td>
<td>Speech, OT and psychological therapeutic interventions for learners. Outreach programmes for their parents within the ambit of the SIAS strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>Health talks and programmes for learners on issues such as: nutrition, puberty, basic sexual reproductive health immunisation and developmental screenings for identification of medical barriers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Alleviation &amp; Other Social Services</td>
<td>Food gardens, facilitating the access of social grants, foster care places of safety rehabilitation services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The KZNDOE began the incremental up scaling of the FSS essential package in 2009. Provincially there were three phases of selection of the FSSs. Across the Province in the first phase of selection, 50 schools were identified as FSSs, in the second phase of selection 25 schools were identified as FSS and in the third phase of selection, 26 schools were identified as FSSs. The first phase of FSS development began in 2009. Fifty primary schools were targeted in this phase, while the second phase of selection of 26 schools began in 2010 and the third phase FSSs began in 2012. Due to systemic challenges related to organogram reviews and cost cutting measures, the provincial
FSS co-ordinator indicated that the development of both phase two and three as FSSs began concurrently in 2013. (Dr. S. Hadebe, personal communication, 5 August 2016). Delays in implementation were due systemic challenges related to budget and organogram reviews. The first phase of FSS development began in 2009. Fifty primary schools were targeted in this phase. The Provincial FSS Co-ordinator indicated that the ground work for the second phase of an additional 26 schools began in 2010 and the third phase FSSs began in 2012. (Dr. S. Hadebe, personal communication, 5 August 2016).

An intensive document search has indicated that globally empirical research on full-service schools, as stated by researcher Walker (2006), is scarce. The focus of the meagre available research (example -Dryfoos, 2005; Min, Anderson and Chen, 2017 and Luna, 2011) has been on benefits, attributes and community collaborations of FSSs. In the South African context, the guidelines for the establishment of FSSs were only released in 2010. Whilst research is available on the implementation of the FSS programme in the South African context, it is limited. The available research (Example-Conway, 2017, Nel et al, 2016; and Zungu, 2014), generally focus on how the FSS programme impacts on teachers, on learners with disabilities and FSS collaborations. There are limited studies on scrutinizing the ability of FSSs to deliver on OVC care and support as a whole school, mainstreamed function. Consequently, studies like this one, will contribute to develop and refine the processes of establishing the FSS programme as a whole school, mainstreamed programme.

2.7. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1994) bio-ecological systems model forms the theoretical backdrop of this study. According to this theory, there are 5 spheres of support that surround a child or a developing person. This includes the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macro-system and the chronosystem. Each setting in the child’s immediate environment is a microsystem e.g. home, peer group and school. A developing child is influenced by reciprocal interactions between micro- systems. The interactions between two or more settings/microsystems in which the developing child participates forms the mesosystem of influence. Interaction between two or more settings where the developing child is present only in one setting, is the exosystem of
influence. The macro system of influence refers to the broader cultural and socio-economic settings, and the influence and consistency of interactions over time is referred to as the chronosystem of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The diagram 2.6. below illustrate these spheres of influence.

According to this theory child developmental outcomes occur through progressively more complex reciprocal interaction of the different spheres of influence. These
interactions can occur between parent and child, and between the developing child and peers, school, learning and social activities. If these interactions are to be effective, they need to occur consistently and over a long period of time (Eamon, 2001). The effectiveness of these interactions is determined by the inherent qualities of the developing child, the environment in which the interactions occurs and the developmental outcome being examined.

According to Bronfenbrenner’s theory, frontline psycho-social and educational support should come from immediate environments viz. home and extended family. This baseline support is further strengthened by friends, schools, NGO’s, religious leaders and government service providers. In other words, psycho-social and educational support is strengthened with interventions at different levels, ranging from family and community responses, legislation and policies, government and civil society to specialized psycho-social and psycho-educational services. Where there are gaps in the support provided at a community and family level, such support may be introduced through legislation and policies and/or government and civil society interventions. Such interventions aim at addressing gaps in psycho-social support at the family and community level. The bio-ecological model emphasises the interdependence of the contributions of role players at all levels of society for the maximum benefit in the well-being of orphaned and other vulnerable children (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

The bio-ecological systems theory was selected as the theoretical model framing this study as it views the school as one of the critical spheres of support for children at risk. In keeping with this theory, the South African Education Ministry from a policy perspective identified the FSS as a ‘safety net’ within the education system for early identification and intervention in respect to gaps in care and support for vulnerable children. In fulfilling this function, the FSS has to interact at all levels of support within the child’s world e.g. family, wider community, government and civil society. Moreover, the generalizability and cross-cultural applicability of this theory makes it suitable for this research study.

Using the bio-ecological systems framework for this study will give us the opportunity to get greater insight into how the FSS interacts with the various spheres of support
namely, the home, stakeholders, government, non-governmental organisations and the wider community to deliver effectively in its role as a care and support resource for orphan and vulnerable children.

OVCs are nested in several systems (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem) and subsystems (crèches, schools, churches, health facilities, communities, etc.). Consequently, this study explores how the interactions between the inherent characteristics of the microsystem, the FSS, namely its organisation, policies, programmes, support resources, staff, network of support providers and parent body, and the inherent qualities of The experience of illness, hunger, disability, learning difficulties, violence and abuse influence the psycho-social and educational outcomes of OVCs. Assessing the adequacy of the mesosystem, which in this study is the FSS, will provide valuable information as to the issues requiring support interventions. Assessing the mesosystem or the interactions between the various microsystems (SBST, SGB, network of support providers, OVCs, programme coordinators, specialist support staff) may assist with regards to the appropriate system to intervene in. This study analysed how these systems could influence and impact on the child’s development.

Assessing the adequacy of the exco-system, the Provincial and National Departments of Education, the people and places that the child may not have direct interaction with, but whose influence can impact on the child’s development, can assist in identifying gaps in support provided through legislation, policies and/or government and civil society interventions. This assessment of the macro and exosystem will provide information on how the beliefs and broader ideologies, customs and practices could be enhanced to promote effective interactions in microsystem levels. This in turn will have benefits for the psycho-social and educational well-being of OVCs. Since life events happen throughout childhood, assessing the chronosystem involves assessing the changes that happens over time in the different systems that can influence a child’s development e.g. changes in family structure due to divorce or death, a parent losing a job, conflict etc. This would facilitate timeous and appropriate intervention.
In line with the theoretical framework that underpins this study, the findings in respect to the participant’s views, beliefs and values related to the research question and recommendations made by the researcher to refine, strengthen and design new roles or programmes that will promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs. Since this study was conducted at a point in time of the FSS implementation within the Pinetown Education District, the assessment of the different spheres of influence should not be seen as an event of a once off exercise but should be conducted through childhood.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the issue of OVCs, its prevalence internationally, in Sub-Saharan Africa, in South Africa and in KwaZulu Natal. It explored the psycho-social and educational challenges that face OVCs, the measures taken by the national and provincial departments of education to put in place protective measures for OVCs. More specifically it looked at the concept of the FullService School that was put forward by the Department of Education as a possible ‘safety net’ for OVCs to ensure psycho-social and educational support is provided for such learners to promote education access, retention and achievement. It provided an overview of the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. The next chapter covers the research methodology of the study.
Chapter 3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology of the study, the research approach, paradigm, design, sample selection, data collection methods, data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and the theoretical framework. It is my intention in this chapter to also indicate why a qualitative approach was used, and how it would assist in achieving the aims of the study.

3.2. Research Design and Methods

3.2.1. Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was adopted for this study since such an approach allows the researcher to explore and gain insight from the subjective experiences of participants on a particular phenomenon or situation (Yin, 1994). In this study it provided the researcher with the space to ask questions, follow up on issues raised and to probe responses in order to make sense of the participants’ responses in relation to the role that FSS as a support resource within the education system played in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, until data saturation occurs. Consequently, this approach allowed the researcher to collect rich narrative data using a flexible research design.

The qualitative approach was suitable for this study, as the study was descriptive in nature, and the researcher was basically interested in “understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their world and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009: p. 5). This study focused on collecting data of the actual subjective experiences of the various stakeholders (the SBST, SGB, Network of Support Providers, FSS Programme co-ordinators) as expressed in their own words and language. This described how their experiences, perceptions and attitudes were related to the role of the FSS in promoting psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. Being descriptive in nature, it also provided an opportunity to collect detail data from all the stakeholders including data from the beneficiaries, the
OVCs, about their thought, perceptions, attitudes and experience of the psycho-social and educational support they received at FSSs.

3.2.2. Research Paradigm

The research was grounded in the social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivists believe knowledge is constructed via the interactions of individuals within society (Schwandt, 2003). According to social constructivism, new understandings are created by integrating new information into an existing network of understandings within the context of social engagement of individuals. This in turn results in expansion of the network of understandings of the issue under study (Ponterotto; 2005). In other words, in relation to this study, it is in the collaborative interaction between the researcher and the participants in the interviews and not individual views or experiences on the role that FSSs played in providing psychosocial and education support for OVCs, that contributed to the construction of understandings related to the research topic. Working within this paradigm, it is acknowledged that the data collected was impacted on by the reality of the participants’ lived experience of the psycho-social and educational support provided at FSSs, which occurred in a social context (the interaction or interviews between researcher and participant). As such, one cannot separate the objective and subjective reality from the data collected.

The study explored the shared external actual activities and experiences of many individuals in various structures in the FSS that played a role in promoting psychosocial and educational support for OVCs (e.g. SBST, SGB, OVC, School’s network of support providers etc.). It focussed on the actual external happenings rather than the inner world or psychological process of the participants (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). Consequently, a generic qualitative research design was found to be suitable for the study as it did not follow an explicit set of assumptions of any one of the established qualitative methodologies (Caelli, Ray, and Mill, 2003). This allowed the researcher to gather rich data on the range of roles and responsibilities of the FSSs and to ascertain how effective they were in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Data were collected within the natural setting, that is the school site level of the FSS and the operational offices of education staff, thus enabling the collection of richer accounts of the participants lived experience, related to the research
question (Creswell, 2007). A feature of generic studies that made it suitable for this study is that epistemologically qualitative studies are grounded on a social constructivist paradigm which was the paradigm used in this study (Percy et al, 2015). A qualitative case study design also supported the use of the range of techniques and methodologies of data collection (individual and focus group interviews, document analysis) and analysis (coding, categories and thematic analysis) that were utilised in the study to facilitate understanding of the processes, perspectives and world view of the participant in relation to the research question (Merriam, 1992).

3.2.3. Research Design

A qualitative multiple case study design was adopted for this study. Creswell (2013), refers to the case study method as the exploration of “a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.” (Gustafsson, 2017: p. 2). The’ bounded system’ or case in this study was the FSS. Since the research question was explored at the three FSSs or ‘bounded system’, the research design was therefore a qualitative multiple case study. The research question was explored and data collected independently at each school setting. Data collected was analysed not only in terms of each setting (FSS) but was also analysed across settings, to gain a greater understanding of differences and similarities between the cases in relation to the research question. (Yin, 2003). Thus, the research was facilitating a wider exploration of the research question.

A strength of both qualitative and case study research approaches is that it allows for the collection of data in the context or environment where the delivery of the support happens (Yin, 1994). A further feature of a qualitative case study research approach that made it suitable for this study is that it lends itself to the use of multiple data collection methods. This study had three sources of data collection namely, individual and focus group interviews and document analysis. In this study, the researcher conducted interviews with the FSS participants namely, the School Based Support Team, School Governing Body, the FSS Network of Support Providers and OVC learners at the FSS site. This enabled the researcher to have face to face interaction at the site of implementation, not only with the actual FSS programme implementers, but
also with the OVCs who were the recipients of the psycho-social and educational support. Interviews with support staff (Learning Support Assistants, Learning Support Educators, School Counsellors, and District FSS Co-ordinator) was conducted at the Pinetown Education Office. Interviews with the Provincial Coordinator were conducted at the Provincial Education Training Centre referred to as “Dokkies.

3.2.4. Sampling

This research was set in the second largest province of South Africa, KwaZulu Natal. The province extends from Port Edward in the south to the borders of Swaziland and Mozambique to the north. The study was conducted at three KZN primary schools that were participating in the FSS programme.

3.2.4.1. Selection of Schools

The schools were located in one of the 12 Education Districts within the Province namely, the Pinetown Education District. Residential suburbs such as KwaMashu, Verulam, Phoenix, Pinetown and Hammersdale fall within the Pinetown Educational District. The Pinetown district was chosen for the following reasons—

(i) the district comprises of multi-dimensional settings ranging from well resourced urban areas to large under resourced, developing peri-urban townships and large rural areas;

(ii) the reality of unemployment, poverty and crime and the impact thereof was prevalent within the district,

(iii) the District had participated in the roll-out of the KZN FSS programme and was also part of the National Department of Basic Education’s FSS pilot programme, and

(iv) the traveling distance and route to the schools and the district office was accessible to the researcher.

In identifying the schools, resourcing provisions that were associated with the FSS establishment as per the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education’s guideline
documents for FSSs were the criteria that was used to determine whether the school could be considered as operational. These resource provisions included

(i) access to specialist staff, for example, Learning Support Educator, School Counsellor and Learning Support Assistants,

(ii) establishment of a care and support centre at the school,

(iii) the fact that the school was in receipt of a budget for care and support interventions,

(iv) the existence of a school based support team (SBST)

(v) participation in a training and development programme.

Due to the resources and financial investment required to establish a FSS, the Province had adopted an incremental scale-up strategy. There were three phases of selection as described in chapter 1. At the time of this study, the province had completed 3 selection phases.

From a personal communication (2016) with the District FSS Programme Coordinator, Mr R. Motala it was ascertained that in 2008 in the phase 1 selection, fifty (50) schools were identified to be established as FSSs. In 2010 in the phase 2 selection, twenty-six (26) schools were identified to be established as FSSs. In 2011 in the phase 3 selection, twenty-five (25) schools were identified to be established as FSSs. The establishment of the phase 1 schools (50) began in 2009 and district officials played a key role in the implementation process. At these 50 phase 1 FSSs KZNDOE had completed the five targeted care and support resource provisioning (provision of support staff, allocation of care and support budgets, establishment of SBSTs, construction of a support centre, training and development) at each school. Provisioning for care and support resources at phase two and three schools began in 2013 concurrently due to systemic challenges (cost cutting measures) to implementation. By the time of this research study, KZNDOE completed three of the four targets in most of the phase two and three schools. The target that was not addressed in phase two and three schools was the provisioning of specialist support staff namely the appointment of LSEs, School Counsellors and learner support assistants.
In order to ensure access to specialist support staff at phase two and three schools, the Pinetown District office re-organised the duties of the specialist staff and expanded their operation to include working in some phase two and three FSSs. The available support staff who had up until then operated solely in their appointed schools and the hub of schools around the FSS had to now expand their area of operation. The support staff were given the FSS they were appointed to, plus the nearest FSS to their appointed school to support. Consequently, LSEs and School Counsellors used the district office as a base of operation and not the FSS to which they were appointed. At the time of this study due to the shortage of staff and the location of FSSs within the district, the available LSEs and School Counsellors were only servicing phase one and phase three schools.

Consequently, schools in this study were chosen taking into consideration the extent to which they received provisioning (support staff, allocation of care and support budgets, establishment of SBSTs, a support centre, training and development) for the delivery of care and support activities rather than the phase of selection. Phase two schools were receiving specialist care and support services in an inconsistent and ad hoc basis. Therefore, the researcher found them to be unsuitable in terms of meeting the five selection criteria identified in this study for inclusion. Ultimately, the schools identified for this study were from the first and third phases of selection.

The identification of the schools for the study was done in collaboration with the district officials belonging to the Special Needs Education Services (SNES) section. The participating schools were selected from the Hammersdale, KwaMashu and Verulam areas within the district.

“School One” was a school which was selected as part of the group of schools in the phase one roll out of the FSS programme in the District, which began in 2009. It was a school in Hammersdale, which is within the region of the Mpumalanga Township. Hammersdale is an area which is located midway between the towns of Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The area was originally established to provide a dormitory township for the migrant Black African population during the apartheid era. In the 1980s, the region was consumed by widespread political violence (Kotze, 2015). “It remains an
underperforming area with high levels of unemployment and poverty” (National Treasury, 2006: p4). The area was identified to be part of the local municipality’s regeneration programme.

Photo 3-1 Location of “School One” and its surround

As indicated in photo 3.1., the infrastructure backlogs are reflected in the school surrounds. The school accommodates grades1-7, and a staff compliment of 39 inclusive of the principal. Staff is isiZulu speaking. All staff members had at least a basic teaching qualification. In terms of specialist staff, the school had been allocated as part of the FSS programme 2 Learner Support Assistants (LSAs), a Learning Support Educator (LSE) and a School Counsellor. Currently, the school shares LSE and School Counsellor with two other FSSs in the district. Furthermore, it had an established ILST/SBST. It has a learner enrolment of 1572 and the demographics of the learner population is African isiZulu speaking. The socio-economic status of the homes in which most learners came from qualified the school to be included in the state school nutrition programme. It is a non-fee-paying school. The school buildings are a mixture of brick and mortar and pre-fab classrooms. There are no specialist rooms apart from the care and support centre that was constructed as part of the FSS programme. There is no specialist ground or sporting facilities. The school was fenced, but the fence was not in a good condition. Of the three schools in the study, “School One” had been longest on the programme (+6years).
‘School Two’ was selected in phase three of the FSS programme implementation. The roll-out of the FSS programme to the Phase three schools began in 2012. It is a school that is located in the KwaMashu Township, an area which is 32 kilometres north of Durban. “It is Durban’s oldest township formed by the apartheid state to house the mass resettlement of Africans that were living in Cato Manor during 1958-65. It is an area with high levels of poverty and crime” (Pathfinda, 2009).

The school accommodates grades 1-7, and a staff compliment of 18 inclusive of the principal. Staff is generally IsiZulu speaking. All staff members had at least a basic teaching qualification. In terms of specialist posts of LSE, School Counsellor and LSAs that were allocated as additional human resources to FSSs in line with the KZNDOE strategy to establish schools as Inclusive Centres of Learning, Care and Support (2009), the specialist posts were not filled at this school. The LSE and School Counsellor from other FSSs within the District served as a resource to this school. It has a learner enrolment of 1221, and the demographics of the learner population is African isiZulu speaking. The low socio-economic status of the homes in which most learners came from qualified the school to be included in the state school nutrition programme. Further, it is a non-fee-paying school. The school buildings are of brick and mortar and in good condition. There are no specialist rooms apart from the support centre that was constructed as part of the FSS programme. There was no specialist ground or sporting facilities. The school was fenced and a security guard manned the entrance. This school had been on the FSS programme for approximately 3 years.
Photo 3.2. indicates a school campus that has a decent quality of buildings and sufficient space for play and staff parking. However, images of the surrounding housing are an indication of the social-economic deprivation within the community.

‘School Three’ was selected in the phase three of the FSS programme implementation. It was located in the Verulam area, a town 27 kilometres north of Durban. According to the Census, of 2011(Census, 2012), the two dominate groups of people living in the area are Indian (59.11%) and Black African (38.18%). It is a mixed living area with the town comprising densely populated residential and large farming areas, and several built up and rural townships in the outskirts.

The school accommodates grade 1 -7 and had a staff compliment of 30 inclusive of principal and grade R educator. All staff members had at least a basic teaching qualification. In terms of specialist posts of LSE, School Counsellor and LSAs that were allocated as additional human resources to FSSs in line with the KZN Department of Education (March, 2009) strategy to establish schools as Inclusive Centres of Learning, Care and Support, they were not filled at this school. The LSE and School Counsellor from other FSSs within the District served as a resource to this school. The school had an established ILST/SBST. The school had a learner enrolment of 1101 and the demographics of the learner population includes African, Coloured and Indian race groups. The low socio-economic status of the homes in which most learners came from qualified the school to be included in the state school nutrition programme. The school buildings are a mixture of brick and mortar and pre-fab classrooms. The school has specialist spaces such as a library, computer room and a kitchen. It also has the support centre that was built as part of the FSS programme. Due to shortage of classroom space, the library was being used as a classroom. The school raised funds and had built a school hall. It has netball and soccer fields. The school was fenced, had camera security and a secured administration and staffroom block.
There was limited involvement of district officials in the activities involved in strengthening the schools two and three in the study, to perform in its role as a FSS. Much of the responsibility to strengthen the selected schools as FSSs was delegated to the LSE and School Counsellor. (Interview with District Programme Coordinator, 2016). “School One”, unlike the other two schools in the study, was established with direct involvement from district officials as the School Counsellors, LSEs and LSAs were not appointed at the inception of the programme.

3.2.4.2. Selection of Participants

Participants in the study were purposively selected from the various critical role players in the implementation of the Full-Service School Programme. (Patton, 1990). Except for the OVC subgroup, the only factor that was considered in the selection of participants was the subgroup (e.g. SBST/ILST, SGB, etc.) they belonged to and their willingness to volunteer as a participant. There was no discrimination in the selection of participants based on sex, race, age ethnicity, or any other factors. This sampling method allowed for maximising the variation in the sample thus providing greater insight and obtaining rich data related to the topic of study.
The criteria for the selection of OVC participants was the fact that they were either living in extreme poverty or had lost one or both their biological parents or were living with parents who were ill or the learner himself or herself was experiencing some form of disability. The researcher chose the learners from the highest grade in the school. The learners were selected from grade 7. It was felt that since learners in this grade were likely to be at the school prior and during the implementation of the FSS programme, they would be better able to engage with the research questions. Other than these criteria, there was no discrimination in the selection of participants based on sex, race, age ethnicity, or any other factors. Learner participation in the research was motivated by the guiding principle ‘nothing about us without us’. It was the researcher’s view that by including OVCs in the study, it allowed for the opportunity to hear from the beneficiaries with respect to what their experiences, needs, opinions, ideas and expectations in relation to programmes and services at FSSs were.

The identified role players or subgroups in the Full-Service School Programme were the following: orphans and other vulnerable learners (OVCs); School Based Support Team/Institutional Level Support Team (SBST/ILST), School Counsellors, Learning Support Educators (LSEs), Learner Support Assistants (LSAs), the School Governing Body (SGB), District and Provincial Programme co-ordinators, and the school’s network of support providers such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), other government departments, business, sponsors, and volunteers. The codes used for the participants in this study are reflected in table 3.1.

Table 3-1 Key for Coding Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Governing Body</td>
<td>SGBfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Based Support Team</td>
<td>SBSTfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Network of Support Providers</td>
<td>SPfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Counsellors</td>
<td>SCfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Learning Support Educators</td>
<td>LSEfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Learner Support Assistants</td>
<td>LSAdv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Interviews with FSS Programme Co-ordinators:</td>
<td>PCii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To create anonymity, one code was given to the district and provincial FSS co-ordinates.

To assist the data analysis process, the participants were identified firstly, by the subgroup they belonged to, for example LSE or PC, secondly, according to whether they participated in a focus group or individual interview, for example LSEfg or PCii, and lastly whether they belonged to school 1, 2 or 3, for example LSEfg1. The table below indicates the range, number and code attached to the various subgroup participants.

Table 3-2 Codes attached to Participants in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Minimum participants</th>
<th>Individual / focus group Interview</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBST / ILST</td>
<td>Chair of the committee plus a representative from the 3 focal areas of the SBST/ILST, namely, Whole School Development; Educator Support and Learner Support Portfolios.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>SBST fg1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SBST fg2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SBST fg3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Chairperson or his/her representative and two other members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>SGB fg1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SGB fg2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SGB fg3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellors</td>
<td>School Counsellor appointed for each of the three FSS was targeted to be interviewed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>SCfg **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LSEs
LSEs appointed at FSSs were selected as participants | 3 | Focus Group | LSEfg**

### LSAs
LSAs appointed at FSSs were selected to be interviewed | 4 | Focus Group | LSAfg**

### Network of Support Providers
Representatives from NGOs, volunteers, sponsors and other Government Departments that played a role in the delivery of support for OVCs at the school | 3 | Focus group | SP fg1 | SP fg2 | SP fg3

### Programme Coordinator
1. Provincial Director for Inclusive Education (Act) | 2 | Individual Interviews | PCii *

2. District FSS Co-ordinator

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* There was one District and one Provincial level programme co-ordinator. Therefore, their contributions could be easily identified. Whilst individual interviews were conducted with these co-ordinators, to protect their identity and avoid any possible negative repercussions for sharing any sensitive information related to the research topic, the researcher decided to regard their inputs from the perspective of a programme co-ordinator and gave both levels of co-ordination one code.

** Since the specialist support staff were not appointed at all FSSs and the current available staff had to work across schools, the researcher regarded the specialist groups as one focus group. Furthermore, in cases where the available specialist staff did not meet the minimum number for the focus group, efforts were made to get in the case study of LSAs and school counsellors based at other FSSs that were not participating in the study.

*** Whilst the individual District Programme Co-ordinator was targeted to be interviewed, it was ascertained that there were three changes to the district co-ordination of the FSS programme. The current co-ordinator did not have the historical background of the implementation of the FSS programme at the district. Consequently, the researcher decided to interview the previous co-ordinator as well in order to get a more detailed picture of how the district planned, implemented and supported the FSS programme.
Table 3-3 Codes attached to Participants in the Study

A total of 78 participants were part of this study. The breakdown of these participants per subgroup is reflected in the table 3.4. below.
Table 3-4 Number of Participants in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SBST/ILST</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SGB</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Network of Service Providers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Learner OVCs</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. LSEs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. School Counsellor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. LSAs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Programme Co-ordinators</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diagram below shows how the participants were organised in terms of the interviews.

Diagram 3-1 Organisation of Interviews

3.2.5. Data Collection Methods

In establishing the FSSs, the KZNDOE targeted four areas of provisioning which included a Human Resource Development programme on Care and Support Strategies for the staff of FSSs; the construction of a Support Centre to promote collaboration between the school and the school’s network of support providers for the delivery of
care and support programmes for OVCs, the provision of a care and support budget for FSSs and the provision of specialist staff for FSSs, to promote site based support programmes and services for OVCs. (KZN Provincial Department of Education, 2011). Consequently, to fulfil the aim of the study the following objectives were explored:

(i) the influence of the Full-Service School selection criteria on its OVC support roles and responsibilities;

(ii) how budgets were managed for care and support programme provision;

(iii) the provision of the range of support programmes and services for OVCs;

(iv) how the training and development programme for Full-Service Schools influenced it’s support role;

(v) the role of support structures and specialist personnel in promoting care and support at Full-Service Schools; and

(vi) the collaboration between the FSS and its network of support providers to strengthen its role as a care and support resource for OVCs.

The researcher used different methods of data collection in order to explore the above objectives in relation to the research question. These included individual interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis.

3.2.5.1. Individual Interviews

Data were collected by conducting semi structured individual interviews with the provincial and district programme co-ordinators. These interviews were characterized by question and answer sessions between interviewer (the researcher) and interviewee (the participants). A strength of individual interviews is that participant’s responses are not influenced by the presence of other participants which allowed participants the space to share freely their lived experiences related to the research question (Wong, 2015).

Individual interviews were conducted with the District and provincial programme co-ordinators at the Pinetown Education District Office and at the Provincial
Training Centre called “Dokkies”, respectively. Individual interviews allowed questions to be more direct in relation to the role of FSSs to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs, for example: - ‘Was there a resource /liaison person available from the District/Provincial office to address implementation issues, risks and provide support to FSSs? Who was this and how did they assist the school?’ OR ‘Tell me about what importance was placed on parent/guardian/learner collaboration and consent in the process of identifying educational, psychological and social support needs of OVCs?’. Furthermore, this technique of data collection using open-ended questions to guide the interview provided the researcher not only with the space to probe participant responses until data saturation occurred, but also it provided the researcher with more flexibility to guide the conversation in the direction of the research topic.

3.2.5.2. Focus Group Interviews

Semi-structured focus group interviews were also used as a method of data collection. This type of interview was characterized by small group discussions facilitated by the researcher using a set of guiding questions related to the research topic. Focus group interviews were conducted with specific groups of participants in the FSS programme at school level namely SBSTs; SGBs; LSEs; School Counsellors; LSAs, the school’s network of service providers and the learner OVCs. Focus group interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the research topic from the perspective of the different stakeholders of the FSS programme. The focus group interviews with the learners, SGB, SBST and the school’s network of service providers were conducted at the FSS. The interviews with the School Counsellors, LSEs and LSAs were conducted at a central point in the district namely, the district office, since the participants were located in different schools. Therefore, they used the District Office as the base for operations. The focus group interviews enabled the researcher to get in-depth information from the participant’s perspective, in his/her words and language on the research topic. The narrative nature of such interviews allowed the researcher the flexibility to probe participant responses and collect rich data to the point of saturation.

The following are examples of guiding questions developed to guide the interviews:
“Tell me how was profiling/mapping for psycho-social and educational barriers experienced by learners conducted at the school prior to the implementation of the FSS programme.”

“Tell me more about any budget allocations the school received to provide psychosocial and educational support programmes and services for OVCs.”

“What are the ‘safe spaces’ in the school where OVCs can go to talk about, reflect and learn how to deal with some of the life challenges they face?” (See Annexure E for detailed list)

The researcher also included in the set of guiding questions an additional three (3) general questions related to the overall efficacy of the FSS programme which allowed the participants the space to share any other personal opinions, views and ideas of the efficacy of the FSS programme as a support resource that they didn’t find the space to share during the interview. (See Appendix E p 274)

The same set of guiding questions was used with all interview groups. However, responses were elicited taking into consideration the context and position of the subgroup within the FSS setting. There were variations with respect to phrasing of questions and exclusion of questions that related to specific departmental management processes and procedures linked to the duties and responsibilities of officials and SGBs, in the interviews with the learners and the network of service providers. The focus of the interviews with the learner group was on the experience from the perspective of the beneficiary of the support programmes and services, whilst the focus for the other subgroups was from the perspective of the providers of care and support programmes and services.

3.2.5.3. Document Analysis

Document analysis was selected as a data collection method as documents are “stable, non-reactive data sources” (Bowen, 2009: p. 31). In other words, documents can be read many times but remain unchanged by the researcher’s influence or the research process. In document analysis, documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around a research topic (Bowen, 2009). The set of guiding
questions used in the individual and focus group interviews was also used to guide the extraction of information in the document analysis. This set of guiding questions allowed the researcher to guide the reading, re-reading and extraction of relevant data from the documents under review in respect to the research question and to get in-depth information on the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Public notices, KZNDOE circulars and KZNDOE FSS Resource Documents were also analysed in relation to the objectives of the study. Documents were analysed for information on the identified focal areas. These were planning, budgeting, resourcing and policies for care and support; the range and relevance of support programmes, the accessibility of care and support programmes, monitoring and evaluation of provisioning to gain greater insight into the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs.

There were four categories of documents that were used in the data analysis process namely, KZNDOE FSS policy documents, public notices and KZNDOE circulars, minutes of meetings and programme resources. The table below contains the list of documents that were analysed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title of document</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(iii) Care and Support for Teaching and Learning,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-5 List of Document used in the Document Analysis
The electronic version of the Department of Basic Education: Guidelines for Full – Service/Inclusive Schools, (2010), and the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Resource document were accessed from the Department of Basic Education’s website -: https://www.thutong.doe.gov.za/. The electronic and hard copy of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN (2011), was obtained from the Inclusive Education Directorate in the Provincial Office. Examples of images of resource documents that were used in the document analysis are reflected below: -
The copies of other resource documents in the list above were also obtained from the Inclusive Education Directorate, KZNDOE.

Public notices, KZNDOE circulars and KZNDOE FSS Resource Documents were also analysed in relation to their relevance to the objectives of the study. Documents were analysed for information on the six objectives of the study to gain greater insight into the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs. Documents identified for the document analysis were analysed for information on the six objectives of the study to gain greater insight into the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs. Documents were read and re-read and relevant information related to the research topic highlighted. The researcher’s reading of the
documents and extraction of relevant information was also guided by the list of guiding questions used in the individual and focus group interviews.

### 3.2.5.4. Process of Data Collection

The data collection process began with the individual and focus group interviews by first obtaining permission from the KZN Department of Education to conduct research in KZN Schools. Once the permission was granted by the Provincial Head of the Education Department to conduct the study (See Appendix B, p. 269), the provincial co-ordinator for the FSS programme was notified and a meeting was held with the relevant district officials responsible for the implementation of the Full-Service School programme within the district. At the meeting with the district officials, the researcher not only shared the background to the study and the available departmental approvals, she also shared how the school was identified to participate in the study, namely on the advice of the district programme co-ordinator. The provisional location and selection of schools to participate in the study was agreed upon as the schools best resourced in terms of the additional support resources, indicated earlier, that were associated with the FSS programme. The details around logistics, scope of the study, code of ethics, informed consent, the involvement of the school social worker in interviews with learners and notification from the district office to schools relating to the request for their participation were discussed.

A meeting with the principal of each school was held by the researcher in collaboration with the district officials to brief them on the scope and purpose of the study and to confirm their participation. The School Governing Body was informed in writing with respect to the intention of the research and their anticipated participation and support for the school to be included. This was done via the school principal prior to the commencement of the interviews. (See Appendix G, p. 272)

A roster for the various focus group interviews was agreed upon with the district office, school and the researcher. Based on the criteria for participation provided by the researcher in relation to the subgroups, the school identified and notified all the school level participants of the dates and venue for the interviews. The researcher identified
and notified the participants based at the district and provincial office of the dates and venue of the interviews.

Prior to all interviews, the researcher met with possible participants and briefed them about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, the lines of communication with regards to the research logistics and findings and information related to the study that was to be disseminated via the School Management.

The researcher began both the individual and focus group interviews with a summary of the scope and purpose of the study, the participant’s voluntary participation, issues of recording, reporting, and anonymity of participants, verifying and obtaining all consents with participants. Participants were also informed of the availability of the services of an isiZulu interpreter and access to counselling services should the participant require it. Participants were also allowed to ask questions of clarity prior to the commencement of the interviews.

The researcher conducted the interviews guided by the list of guiding questions, whilst taking advantage of the flexibility of the semi-structured interview to probe participant responses to obtain greater insight into the research topic. Interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participant and transcribed at a later stage. All interviews were conducted over a period of eight months. The researcher ended the interview session by thanking participants for their participation and promised to provide participants with the findings of the study, once finalised, via their school principal.

### 3.2.6. Data Analysis

The Atlas –ti software programme was used to conduct the analysis of the data collected. It was the software of choice to analyse the data collected because one of its features is that it facilitates triangulation by allowing for the description of data collected through different methods of data collection (Contreras, 2013). This feature allowed for the data collected in this study through the various methods namely, individual and focus group interviews and document analysis, to be analysed using the software.
The tools contained in the software do not distract from the actual accounts of participants. An advantage of this software feature for this study was that the analysis process did not impact the participants’ statements that were collected using individual and focus group interviews. Thus the findings could be grounded in actual evidence.

Furthermore, the software does not impose the process of analysis, thus the researcher had the freedom to plan the method of data analysis (Contreras, 2013). This feature of the software gave the researcher the flexibility to not only use the selected method of content analysis to analyse the data, but also afforded the freedom as to how data would be coded or categorized.

Using the various tools in the software, the researcher could integrate (compare and relate) the content of the data collected, which created the space to make findings that could be unexpected (Contreras, 2013). This allowed the researcher to analyse the data from various perspectives. For example, we asked: what did different subgroups in the study think about the role of the FSSs in promoting psycho-social support for OVCs? How did this compare within the different schools in terms of how they utilized their care and support budget? How did national guidelines differ from provincial guidelines?

The following diagram summarizes the critical features of the software that made it suitable for this study.

Diagram 3-2 Properties of Atlas-ti Analysis Process

[Diagram showing the properties of Atlas-ti Analysis Process]
The data sources in the analysis process included all the individual and focus group interview transcripts (17) and the two (2) guideline documents (National and Provincial) on the FSS Programme. The data collected from both these data sources was analysed using the Atlas-ti software and a test method of content analysis as outlined by Kvale (1983) and Tesch (1990). The analysis of the data focused on the purpose of this study which was firstly, to explore what role do Full Service Schools in the Pinetown Educational District of KwaZulu Natal play in promoting educational and psycho-social support for OVCs? Secondly, based on the findings, to make suggestions as to what FSS could do to further strengthen, refine, or design new roles to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVC in the Pinetown District in KZN.

In preparation for the data analysis, the recorded individual and focus group interviews were transcribed into text. The list of all interviews conducted, transcribed and analysed in this study is contained in the table 3.7 below.

Table 3-6 List and number of transcribed interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Number of transcripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial FSS Co-ordinator</td>
<td>1 Individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District FSS Co-ordinator</td>
<td>1 Individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBST/ILST</td>
<td>3 Focus Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>3 Focus Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>3 Focus Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network of Support Providers</td>
<td>3 Focus Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEs</td>
<td>1 Focus Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSAs</td>
<td>1 Focus Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellors</td>
<td>1 Focus Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The policy documents that were analysed included the National Department of Basic Education policy document on the Full-Service/ Inclusive Schools, 2010, and the Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN, 2011, and a list of KZNDOE FSS guideline documents, public notices, circulars, minutes of meetings and programme resources were also analysed. The list is tabulated in Table 3.6. Electronic copies of all KZNDOE FSS documents used in the document analysis
were obtained from the KZNDOE Inclusive Education Directorate. The electronic version of the South African Department of Basic Education policy document on the Full-Service/ Inclusive Schools, 2010, was obtained from the Department of Basic Education’s Thutong website.: https://www.thutong.doe.gov.za/1

The interview transcripts and the documents identified for the document analysis were analysed for information on the six objectives of the study to gain greater insight into the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs. To facilitate the analysis process, individual and focus group interviews were transcribed, and electronic versions of the policy documents were obtained in preparation to be uploaded onto the Atlas-ti software. See Appendix I, p.281 for an example of a transcribed interview.

There were six stages involved in organising and analysing the data collected to facilitate the process of interpretation and critique. The analysis process began with the first stage of setting up the project using the Atlas-ti software. The data sources (the 17 interview transcripts and 2 guideline documents) were loaded using the Atlas-ti software under the project name or hermeneutic Unit - FSS Care and Support Programmes. The data were loaded to reflect each of the transcripts in each subgroup (SBST; SGB, Learners, Network of Service Providers) from each of the schools, each of the programme co-ordinators (District FSS Co-ordinator; Provincial FSS Co-ordinator) and each specialist sub-group (LSEs; LSAs’ School Counsellors). The electronic versions of the two FSS policy documents were also loaded. This is reflected in the image below: -
The data collected was firstly engaged with by repeated reading of the policy documents or listening to the audio recordings together with the reading of the related transcripts. This was done per school for each transcript and for the FSS policy guidelines and resource documents. This initial step in the data analysis process was undertaken in order to get a general overview of the data collected in relation to the research question. This stage was also conducted against the backdrop of my observations and the context of the interview process. This overview of the data collected guided the coding process in the next stage.
In the **second stage** of analysis of the data sources, the *Atlas –ti software* was used to identify participant constructs, in other words to identify their perceptions, views and lived experiences expressed in their own words and language on the research topic. All data sources were read and re-read carefully to identify actual, relevant and meaningful participant statements and information contained in the policy documents as it related to the research question or to the FSSs as a care and support resource promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These direct quotations were referred to as in-vivo quotations (Contreras, 2013), were identified in each loaded transcript and for the documents used in the document analysis. The image below illustrates examples of in-vivo quotations.

**Photo 3-6 Example of In-vivo Quotations**
The **third stage** involved the development of researcher constructs. The researcher, at this stage, went on to link in-vivo quotations made in stage two in both the data collected via the interviews and the document analysis. In-vivo quotations that could be linked were grouped to form sub-codes. This was done for each loaded transcript and for documents in the document analysis. Thereafter, the technique of thematic analysis involving re-reading of the relevant coded data and linking it in terms of its relevance to the six objectives of the study. This process of linking quotations to create dominant categories and sub-categories was done with all transcripts and documents in the document analysis. This was embarked on so that it was possible to integrate the data collected from the document analysis with the data collected in the individual and focus groups (Bowen, 2009). This allowed for further analysis of all data collected. A summary of the range of dominant categories and subcategories identified in the data analysis process are reflected in the table below.

**Table 3-7 Summary of dominant categories and sub-categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant Categories</th>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planning for Care and support</td>
<td>• School Selection Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advocacy by Education Offices school, Network of service Providers, SGB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Profiling of barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaboration with Network of Support Providers, learners, school community in issues of planning for support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implementation strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support from District and Provincial Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Budgeting for Care and Support</td>
<td>• Allocation to schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expenditure Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Allocation to Support Programmes and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Control Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Policies for Care and support</td>
<td>□ Mandate for the Programme National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ School Compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant Categories</td>
<td>Sub-Categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4. **Resources for Care and Support** | - Human resources  
  (i) Role and Responsibilities of:  
  (ii) LSE  
  (iii) Counsellor  
  (iv) Educators  
  (v) LSAs  
  (vi) SBST/ILST  
  (vii) SMT  
  (viii) SGB  
  (ix) Network of Support Providers  
- Training  
  (i) Provided by:  
  - Education Offices  
  - DBST and Principals  
  - Support Staff  
  (ii) Quality of Training Materials  
- Care and support Resources to Schools  
  (i) Physical Resources  
  (ii) Material Resources  
  (iii) Control Measures |
| 5. **Range and relevance of support Services and programmes** | - Psycho-social Support  
  - Educational Support  
  - Additional Support Programmes  
  - Early Identification and Planning  
  - Consultations with Network of Support Providers  
  - Learner feels of being cared for  
- Standardisation of Processes and Practices  
  - Mainstream versus add-on  
  - Parent and Learner collaboration  
  - Collaboration with Network of Support Providers  
- Understanding of FSS Programme  
  - FSS as a Support Resource for OVCs  
  - Advice to District Office  
  - Advice to future participating schools  
  - Participation in the programme if given to choose again |
The sub-categories were aggregated separately for each of the policy documents. Code families were created by linking sub-categories in their relation to the dominant categories. For example, under the dominant category Budget for Care and Support, the range of sub-categories related to budgeting that were made up by grouping similar in-vivo quotations, was grouped into a family belonging to the dominant category of Budget for Care and Support. All the quotes from specific subgroups, speaking to a specific aspect related to the Budget for Care and Support were accessible but kept hidden under the sub-category. The image below illustrates the creation of code families.

Photo 3-7 Family Codes
This organisation of the data enabled the researcher to engage with the text copy and facilitate the aggregation of data in preparation for the fourth stage of analysis, which involved theme analysis.

In the **fourth stage** of analysis, the researcher synthesised the aggregated data for each subgroup (e.g. SGB; SBST/ILST; Learners, Network of Support Providers) across the three schools, using Atlas-ti, along the 7 dominant categories identified in stage 3 of the analysis. This enabled the researcher to engage with the text copy of the aggregated data to identify emerging themes (patterns, trends, concepts) for the subgroup across all three schools or across documents used in the document analysis.

This is illustrated in the example below:

**Photo 3-8 Aggregated Codes for Subgroup: SGB across all three schools**
Creating aggregated codes for subgroups allowed the researcher to draw query reports and then to engage with the text containing the dominant and sub-categories and in-vivo quotations to identify emerging themes (patterns, trends, concepts) in relation to the role that each FSS. This was also done for each specialist group (LSEs; LSAs; School Counsellor) and each of the programme co-ordinators transcripts (District FSS Co-ordinator; Provincial FSS Co-ordinator) and for the documents in the document analysis as it related to the dominant category and the research question. Below is an example of a query report drawn by the researcher using the Atlas-ti software to identify themes, patterns, trends indicated by programme coordinators in respect to the provision of Resources for Care and Support for OVCs.
In the **fifth stage**, the synthesised aggregated sub-group data, was read and re-read to identify emerging themes, points of synergy, expansion and difference with respect to the lived experience of participants in relation to the research question. The identified themes for the interviews were then linked to the themes identified in the fourth stage in the document analysis. The results were analysed to identify points of synergy and difference with respect the information contained in the documents in the document analysis and the lived experience of FSS programme implementers and beneficiaries.

The **sixth stage** of the analysis involved the critique of identified themes and final interpretations of the research data by comparing the findings to the literature review.

The diagram below provides a diagrammatic summary of the research approach, design, paradigm, data collection methods, process of data analysis, and the theoretical framework that framed the study.
3.2.7. Trustworthiness

In order to ensure confidence in the research findings, Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) method of trustworthiness was used. This involved ensuring that the issues of research credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were addressed in the study. Table 3.8. below outline the criteria indicated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) that are necessary to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

To ensure confidence in the research findings, the design of the research provided for the triangulation of data collection techniques. The study had three avenues of data collection namely, individual interviews, focus group interviews and documentation analysis. The researcher also took down field notes, as indicated in to reflect on any biasness in the data collection. (See Appendix J, p.286)

The researcher’s field work began 10 months prior to conducting the actual interviews. The researcher started with preparatory work with the Department of Education discussing with both the provincial and district officials as to purpose of the research, identifying the sites (FSSs) of intervention, and engaging with the suggested schools to obtain consent to participate in the research study. This prolonged and provided variance of the field experience. Using the technique of “Member Checking” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) for data obtained from the individual and focus groups, a random sample of the research participants from the sub-groups was given an opportunity to verify data after the analysis, and to comment on whether or not they felt that the data were interpreted in line with their own experiences. My supervisor also audited my research methods namely, the original transcripts, data analysis documents, and comments from member checking. Furthermore, the researcher is a qualified educational psychologist and has years of experience of group work and working in schools.

To address the issue of transferability namely, the applicability of this study in other contexts, the complete set of the study document description of methodology, literature control, data analysis documents and final results of the study would be on file and be made available to other researchers. The sample used in this study was purposefully selected so that it was reflective of the critical sectors at any FSS in
KZNDOE.

To ensure the dependability of the study, that is findings are consistent, an in-depth description of the methodology was included in the write up to allow the study to be repeated and for the research results to be scrutinized. The analysis was also checked with literature and verified by participants. The research protocol was also discussed with my supervisor.

To address confirmability of the study, or the degree of neutrality, four strategies were used. Firstly, the triangulation of research methods (individual, focus group interviews and document analysis) to promote objectivity. Secondly, the researcher was transparent in relation to context, scope and activities involved in the study design to ensure the creation of an atmosphere of trust between participant and researcher. The researcher briefed all participants prior to interviews about the following aspects: the purpose of the study, all ethical approvals that were obtained, participant voluntary participation, anonymity of participants, how information would be communicated and all logistical arrangements for the interviews that were made with full participation of the schools and the district office officials.

Thirdly, to guard against the risk of biased data collection and interpretation, efforts were made to have debriefing sessions with my supervisor and fellow doctoral students, to avoid prolonged time spent with participants, and thus preventing the risk of going “native” (Patton, 1990), which means over identifying or empathising with participants.

Fourthly, the researcher declared upfront at the presentation of her proposal to her supervisor and at the presentation of her proposal, any knowledge, experience, values and beliefs that would be relevant to the study that could impact on the data collection, interpretation and the general integrity of the study. Whilst the researcher, as a current official within the KZNDOE, was not part of the FSS programme implementation at the commencement of this research study, the researcher declared that she was, as a KZNDOE official, part of the team that was involved in the piloting and phase one scale up of the FSS programme in the province. Consequently, the researcher had knowledge and experience of the processes and events that happened during these
phases of the KZNDOE FSS programme implementation. The researcher made every effort to record and interpret the accounts of the participants’ experience in their own words without judgment about its correctness, in an effort to reduce the risk of her experience with the programme impacting on the data analysis and interpretation process.

Table 3.8. below provides a summary of the above description of how trustworthiness was addressed in this research study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility</th>
<th>Transferability</th>
<th>Dependability</th>
<th>Confirmability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ 3 avenues of data collection</td>
<td>➢ Complete set of data analysis documents and final results were made available</td>
<td>➢ Detailed description of the methodology provided supervisory Input</td>
<td>➢ Triangulation of research methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Member checking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Atmosphere of trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Recording of interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Guard against the risk of bias data collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
<pre><code>                                                                                       |                                                    | ➢ Declaration upfront of any relevant values and beliefs |
</code></pre>

### 3.2.8. Ethical Considerations

All relevant ethical measures were observed to ensure the protection of all participants as well as to respect KZNDOE policies, practices and procedures related to conducting research at schools within the Province.

The approval to undertake the study was obtained from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education of the University of Johannesburg (See Appendix A, p.268).
Permission was obtained from the KZNDOE to conduct research at KZN schools in the Pinetown District (See Appendix B, p.269).

A meeting was held with the Co-ordinators for Psycho-social Support Services based in the Pinetown District to outline the scope of the study and to facilitate assistance to gain entry to the schools. Principals (See Appendix C, p.270) and SGBs of the respective schools were informed of the details of the study (See Appendix D, p.272).

The purpose of the study was thoroughly discussed with all participants prior to the interview. To ensure all participants, including the OVC learners, were not placed at any risk of physical or psychological harm, the researcher declared upfront the nature and scope of the inquiry and the role of the researcher. Participants were informed of their voluntary participation and their right to withdrawal from the study at any point with no repercussions.

Written consent for participation and permission to record proceedings were obtained from all participants. Challenges were experienced in obtaining written consent from parents or caregivers for learner participation in the study. Some learners had no parents or were not living with their biological parents, some parents were unavailable due to work commitments and in some incidences children were living with grandparents with low levels of literacy. To cater for this problem, the principal in his capacity of ‘loco parentis’ provided support for the inclusion of identified participants. The principals or deputies accompanied the learners to the researcher’s briefing session. Their presence and engagement with the researcher provided support to and reassured the OVC participants that the interviews would be a non-threatening experience and the participants were under no obligation to participate. Furthermore, the researcher sought the services of the school social worker to sanction and observe the participation of the OVC learners in the interviews to ensure their rights, safety and protection was not violated in anyway during the interviews. The social worker was present during all interviews with the OVC. At these interviews with the learners, she also provided language interpretation services if participants required it. Once the social worker’s consent was obtained, the social worker assisted the researcher in
getting the learner to sign assent to participate in the study. Examples of these documents are in Appendix E, p. E.

The social worker also served as a language interpreter for parent participants, for example, SGB members, who wished to respond in isiZulu. All participants, including OVC learners were made aware should they feel any discomfort during the interview, that the social worker was available to provide support.

The researcher ensured the confidentiality and privacy of participants’ participation by not identifying them by name in the final report or at feedback sessions with the Department of Education, and by ensuring that all recorded data (voice and written) that could identify participants was kept under lock and key with access limited to only to the researcher and her supervisor. Participants were also made aware that if the information they provided was requested by legal authorities, the researcher would be compelled to comply. However, participants would be notified of such instances via the school management.

All participants were assured that whilst they would not be harmed in any way during the session, they were made aware that they could feel (as a citizen or employee) some emotional discomfort or feel uncomfortable to share sensitive information of their experiences of the programme that was developed and facilitated by government. Participants were reassured that their sensitivities would be considered by ensuring that they were not put under pressure to respond if they felt uncomfortable to respond to a question. In this regard, participants were made aware that they were allowed to decline to continue with the interview at any point without any penalties.

Access to the results of the study was granted via the school management, to participants who requested it. The researcher made every effort to report honestly all data, results, methods and procedures, and the final information and not to fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data. The choice of Atlas-ti software assisted in this regard as it uses the actual accounts of the participants thus limiting the data from being impacted upon in the analysis process.
3.3. Conclusion

This chapter outlined how the qualitative case study design together with its methodological approach was used to explore the role of FSSs in promoting psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. It presented a detailed account of the sample, how entry was gained into the field, the techniques of data collection, the steps followed in data analysis, how trustworthiness and ethical considerations were ensured.
Chapter 4. Presentation of Results

4.1. Introduction

The findings in relation to the research aims and objectives mentioned in chapter one are reported in this chapter from three perspectives as it relates to the role that FSSs play in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The findings are firstly, from the perspective of the provincial and national policy operational guidelines on establishing FSSs. Secondly, the findings are from the perspective of the field based implementers (programme co-ordinators, SBSTs, SGBs, School Network of Support Providers, School Counsellors, LSEs, LSAs) of care and support programmes and services for OVCs at FSS. Finally, the findings were reported on from the perspective of the OVCs of the care and support programmes and services. The intention of obtaining the perspective of the learners was to gain greater insight into the role of the FSSs in providing psycho-social and educational support from the beneficiaries of such support, the OVCs.

4.2. Overview of the Data Analysis Process

In preparation for the data analysis, the recorded individual and focus group interviews were transcribed into text. The policy documents that were analysed included the National Department of Basic Education policy document on the FullService/Inclusive Schools, (2010), and the Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for Full-Service Schools in KZN, (2011), and a list of KZNDOE FSS guideline documents, public notices, circulars, minutes of meetings and programme resources. The list is tabulated in chapter 3. Electronic copies of all KZNDOE FSS documents used in the document analysis was obtained from the KZNDOE Inclusive Education Directorate. The electronic version of the National Department of Basic Education policy document on the Full-Service/Inclusive Schools, (2010), was obtained from the National Education Department’s Thutong website. (https://www.thutong.doe.gov.za/)

The data collected from both the interviews and the document analysis were analysed using the Atlas-ti software and Kvale (1983) and Tesch’s (1990) method of content
The analysis of the data focused on the purpose of this study which was firstly, to explore the role that Full Service Schools in the Pinetown Educational District of KwaZulu Natal plays in promoting educational and psycho-social support for OVCs. Secondly, based on the findings, to make suggestions as to what educational and psycho-social support interventions for OVCs could be designed to enhance the role that the Provincial FSSs in KwaZulu Natal play in supporting OVCs.

To facilitate the analysis process all individual and focus group interviews were transcribed (See Appendix I, p.281), and electronic versions of the policy documents were obtained in preparation to be uploaded onto the Atlas-ti. As outlined in chapter 3, codes were used for the participants in this study in the analysis process. The various school groups of participants were given the same school number, for example, ‘school 1’ SGB focus group was referred to as SGBfg1, whilst the SGB from ‘school2’ was referred to as SGBfg2. The codes attached to participants are reflected in table 4.1.

Table 4-1 Key for Coding Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Service School 1</td>
<td>FSS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Service School 2</td>
<td>FSS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Service School 3</td>
<td>FSS3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Governing Body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>SGBfg1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>SGBfg2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>SGBfg3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Based Support Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>SBSTfg1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>SBSTfg2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>SBSTfg3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Network of Support Providers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>SPfg1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>SPfg2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>SPfg3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: School Counsellors</td>
<td>SCfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Learning Support Educators</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LSEfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group: Learner Support Assistants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LSAfg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individual Interviews with FSS Programme Coordinators:
(i) Provincial
(ii) District*

* To ensure anonymity, one code was given to the district and provincial FSS coordinators.

The documents analysed were also uploaded onto the Atlas-ti software. There were six stages involved in organising and analysing the data collected from the individual and focus group interviews as well as information collected from the document analysis to facilitate the process of interpretation and critique. The table below is a summary of the six stages of data analysis used in this study.

Table 4-2 Stages of Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 1 : Setting Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Loading the transcripts and documents used in the document analysis using Atlas-ti software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating the Hermeneutic Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Repeated reading of interview transcripts and text documents to obtain a sense of the data collected to facilitate coding</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 2: Identifying Participant constructs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reading and highlighting of transcripts for relevant and meaningful statements related to the research question using Atlas-ti software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifying the in-vivo quotations (the actual participant statements/words/language or information contained in KZNDOE FSS resource documents) was guided by the set of guiding questions in relations to the objectives of the study</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>STAGE 3 : Researcher Constructs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• For both the interview transcripts and document analysis, researcher constructs were developed by grouping/linking the in-vivo quotations into sub-categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thereafter the Researcher grouped the second order constructs in the transcripts and the policy documents, to form dominant categories. Dominant categories comprised of the range of sub-categories that related to the dominant category. The dominant category together with the range of sub-categories formed a code family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| STAGE 4: Theme development in Data Sources |
The researcher synthesised the aggregated data for each subgroup (e.g. SGB; SBST/ILST; Learners, Network of Support Providers) across the three schools, using Atlas-ti, along the 7 dominant categories identified in stage 3 of the analysis.

The researcher then engaged with the text copy of the aggregated data to identify emerging themes (patterns, trends, concepts) for the subgroup across all three schools or across documents used in the document analysis, in relation to the role of the FSS as a care and support resource promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

**STAGE 5: Linking Data Sources, Synthesis and Theme Development**

- The synthesised aggregated sub-group data, were read and re-read to identify emerging themes, points of synergy, expansion and difference with respect to the accounts of participants in relation to the research question.
- Identified themes for the interviews were then then linked to the themes identified in the fourth stage in the document analysis. They were analysed identify points of synergy, expansion and difference
- Identified themes were linked and reported across subgroups from three perspectives (i) policy documents and operational guidelines perspective, (ii) the accounts of providers of care and support programmes and services, and (ii) the OVCs, as it related to the research question.

**STAGE 6: Critique and interpretations**

- Critique of identified themes and final interpretations of the research data by comparing the findings to the literature review.

A detailed account of the steps followed in the data analysis process is contained in chapter 3.

The findings of the study are presented as themes and sub-themes that emerged from the process of analysis of the data collected in relation to the research question. The emerging themes and sub-themes are presented from three (3) perspectives in relation to the research question, namely the document analysis perspective, the perspective of the field based implementers of the programme and from the perspective of the OVCs. The researcher represented the participant verbatim accounts as far as possible but made slight adjustments in order firstly to facilitate understanding as English for most participants was the second spoken language, secondly, to clean responses of duplication of words and statements and lastly, to remove names that would identify the participants and replace them with the person’s title or description of position held, for example Ms, Mr, principal, educator, learner.
4.3. Results

The data analysis indicated that whilst the three FSSs, as outlined in chapter 3, where located in three different types of locations, namely rural, low cost township and a peri-urban suburb the conditions and experiences were similar across the all three FSSs. The data analysis indicated there were both challenges and enabling factors in the FSS programme that affected its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. I begin with the seven challenges that emerged namely, issues with (i) FSS selection criteria (ii) budget allocation that affected the FSSs support provision for OVCs, (iii) support structures, (iv) the FSS training and development programme, (v) care and support staff, (vi) collaboration with stakeholders, and (vii) understanding by implementers of the support model of the FSS.

4.4. Challenges

I first present, in Diagram 4.1, a summary of the challenges that emerged in the data analysis in relation to the role of FSSs in providing support for OVCs. This is followed by a detailed presentation of each challenge.

Diagram 4-1 Challenges to Implementation
4.4.1. Challenge One: Issues with the FSS Selection Process

The data analysis indicated that the district officials applied the FSS selection criteria outlined in the national and provincial FSS guidelines documents inconsistently when identifying potential FSSs. This resulted in the selection of FSSs that were challenged in delivering psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. From the perspectives of the implementers of the FSS programme, three sub-themes related to the FSS selection criteria were identified that affected the FSS’s ability to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Firstly, the programme implementers were not fully conversant with the FSS selection criteria, secondly, the programme coordinators showed bias for some selection criteria over others in the selection process, thirdly, inadequate assessment of selection criteria at potential FSSs, and fourthly, there was no input from OVCs in the selection process.

(i) District officials were not fully conversant with the FSS selection criteria

From the documentation analysis, it emerged that both national and provincial FSS policy guidelines advocated selection criteria for potential FSSs to ensure that they had the capacity to provide educational and psycho-social support programmes for OVCs in a cost effect way and within a short space of time. The document analysis indicated that the common FSS selection criteria advocated in both the DBE FSS Guideline Document (2010), and the KZNDOE FSS Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the FSS (2011), included enabling factors such as:

(i) the location and terrain of the school in terms of its accessibility to public transport and other surrounding schools
(ii) the presence of strong leadership at both the school management and governance levels
(iii) present functionality of the school in respect to its operations, capacity of educators and it’s potential to grow and develop
(iv) the presence of a positive ethos to embrace care and support reflected in the school’s existing participation in support programmes for OVCs
(v) presence of collaboration with parents/ caregivers; NGOs; government Departments with respect to support programmes for OVCs
(vi) Openness to embrace transformation or change (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p.12 and KZN Department of Education, 2011, p.5).

The data analysis indicated that programme implementers (at district and school levels) were aware of selection criteria outlined in the KZNDOE and DBE FSS policy guidelines and there was evidence that they used this as a point of reference in the selection of potential FSSs. However, participants’ responses indicated lack of clarity of the selection criteria. Programme co-ordinators, support staff and SBST accounts indicated that they were unable to recall easily the list of criteria that was used in the selection process. Their lack of clarity of the selection criteria was reflected in the use of words such as ‘other things’, ‘I think’ and ‘maybe’. The following participant accounts reflect the lack of clarity among key stakeholders in the FSS programme about the selection criteria: - “One other thing I remember is the topography, the terrain, because there must be road access to the school, water and sanitation, and many other things” (Transcript: PCii p. 1), the SBST subgroup reported - “They were looking for the school which has sufficient space, because the support centre had to be built at the school. Also, they were looking for a school which was going to have nearby transport...and also I think they’re also looking at the capabilities of the school, how the school functions and all those things.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.2) and the support staff subgroup reported- “...looking at the location of the school, can it be accessible to other schools because it will act as a resource centre. Can that school – maybe if the level is not conducive, can it be renovated so that it would suit all the learners” (Transcript: SCfg, p. 1).

The data analysis indicated that, on selection, the programme implementers at school level at all three FSSs did not understand the depth and scope of involvement that was required for FSSs to be effective as a care and support resource for OVCs. This contributed to confusion and anxiety at the FSSs with respect to their ability to fulfil their role as a FSS in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs: “I think, at some stage, we were very worried about the Department of Education programmes and what were expected from us to be properly followed.” (Transcript: SBSTfg 2, p.19); “...When the staff came to know about the real full service system, how it works, then they were like apprehensive and to say, how! What is this?
Something new!” (Transcript: SBSTf3g3, p.7). There was an overall sense of not knowing exactly what to expect and what is expected of them: - “For now I can say that we don’t know what to do, but what we do is try, we only talk to these district officials who used to come here. But we haven’t been given the right path where we can go straight and find answers. Because even them, I think they don’t have answers” (Transcript: SBSTf2g2, p 20), and “Actually we were not aware that we had been identified. We were just doing it willingly in classes, helping the learners, grouping them, all that were slow learners…. We were struggling.” (Transcript: SBSTf1g1, p. 2).

The lack of clarity around the selection criteria in relation to the FSS’s role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs that was expressed by the school based participants was also collaborated by the programme co-ordinators: - “In fact, Khumsila, I think, from the conception of the full-service programme by then, many people didn’t understand it.” (Transcript: PCii, p.4). The programme co-ordinators corroborated the ambivalent feelings reported by the FSS -; “… you find that because of the lack of support of the full-service schools, I will say by the department, ….., they are so demoralised to say why, in the first place, were we chosen to be a full-service school.” (Transcript: PCii, p.12).

The FSS confusion about their role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs was also evident in the school’s network of support provider’s subgroup- “I don’t know. I think if we know what the full objectives of the full service centre are, then we might know where we fit in. We have a general idea, but we need specifics of what is going on.” (Transcript: SPfg3, p.11); as well as in the accounts from the learning support educator subgroup - “Because as the schools are challenging us, we used to ask ourselves which criteria was used.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.2). The lack of understanding of the FSS’s role in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs was also reflected in the OVC learner subgroup descriptions of the FSS’s role – “It is a special school. It is for children who are low in reading and ...who have disability problems and learning disabilities.” (Transcript: OVCfg3). FSS 1 in this study, showed more awareness as to the roles and responsibilities in supporting OVCs. This is reflected in the statement from the
ILST/SBST subgroup: “It’s that we admit that we cannot address every barrier that comes here with the learner, but since the full-service school offers only the middle support, so we are geared towards that...” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 11). However, there was an appeal from the SBST focus group for more advocacy on the role of FSSs as reflected in the following statement: “I think you need to make more advocacy workshops for this full service, because for some officials, it is something that is new to them. I think you need to revive all the stakeholders to have an understanding of what full service is.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 24).

In terms of the selection criteria, there was clear evidence in the data analysis that the FSSs in this study went on the programme not fully conversant with the expectations in respect to their roles and responsibilities to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) District officials showed bias for some selection criteria over others

This study showed that programme co-ordinators were biased towards certain selection criteria listed in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS guideline documents over others when identifying potential FSSs. This fact negatively affected the FSS’s role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. It was ascertained in the document analysis that, among the range of essential critical factors, cited in both the Department of Basic Education (2010) and KZN Department of Education (2011) FSS policy guideline documents, that certain essential factors would have a bearing on the FSS’s ability to serve in the role of providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These were the presence of strong leadership, the level of functionality of the school and the capacity among educators.

It emerged from participant statements that in the selection process, education officials were biased to certain selection criteria. There was evidence in the data collected that the presence of a champion for care and support initiatives (a person who would become willingly engaged in addressing support for OVCs) for OVCs at the school, was viewed as a strong predictor of the school having the potential to successfully promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
This was reflected in the programme co-ordinator accounts: “...we used that, that whole passion and commitment that she (an educator) ...showed as one of the criteria, and we thought that we would overcome all the other barriers” (PCii, p.3). Preference for schools that showed interest or willingness to participate in the FSS programme was also evident in accounts from the LSEfg- “It was like they were looking at the schools which were more involved in supporting learners.” (LSEfg, p. 4). Bias for a champion was also evident in SCfg accounts – “I remember the principal at ‘School A’ was always saying, ‘I was the one who was fighting for this to happen, fighting for the school to be a full service school....’” (Transcript: SCfg, p.4).

At all three schools in this study, the accounts of participants indicated that the presence of a champion alone was not always a predictor for successful implementation of a sustainable psycho-social and educational support programme for OVCs. This was reflected in accounts from the programme co-ordinators “…we thought that we would overcome all the other barriers if we had that (a champion), but that didn’t work.” (PCii, p.3); this was also indicated in accounts from the School Counsellors subgroup: “You know the educators there they have a very negative attitude towards the implementation of care and support. Only the principal had the drive...” (Transcript: SCfg, p.3), and was further corroborated by statements from the LSE subgroup- “If that principal is active and is always loyal ...If a person is passionate in a school where there are maybe 40 teachers or 35, it doesn’t mean that all of them are interested in supporting learners.” (LSEfg, p. 4)

It also emerged from the data analysis that district officials placed greater importance on the presence of a strong leadership at the expense of other essential selection criteria, as an indication of the school’s potential to play a successful role in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This is elucidated in the statement from programme co-ordinators- “…we used strong management at the school, as an important criterion, we found if the management was not strong, then the outcome would be very, very poor.” (Transcript- PCii; p. 1). This declaration by the programme coordinators indicates the emphasis that was placed on strong leadership in the selection process. This was also corroborated by accounts from the
LSEfg and SCfg- “I think maybe sometimes they look at the activeness of the SMT or maybe of the principal.” (LSEfg, p. 4), and – “Only the principal had the drive…” (Transcript: SCfg, p.3).

The accounts of district programme implementers of the outcome of using strong school leadership as the single most important criteria is elucidated in the following statements: -

“…you know, what we thought was a strong school didn’t turn out to be a strong school and there were lots of issues, for example, the principal was charged for rape, and they substituted another principal who also himself jailed for rape, and that created a huge problem in terms of the dynamics of the school.” (Transcript- PCii; p.2)

“For me the biggest challenge is the school management team. Many of them haven’t cut the mustard. For me, they’re not fired up, they haven’t bought, they don’t own the programme. Teachers regard it as an added thing, it’s a pain up the backside, they feel they weren’t trained to teach in a full service school. This has been forced upon me. They are very unhappy with it, so why the hell? They feel I’m not getting paid any extra, so why should I make that extra kind of commitment?” (Transcript- PCii, p. 43).

The analysis of the data also indicated that a factor that weighted in favour of all three schools being selected was that of pre-existing OVC support programmes. This is elucidated in statements from the SBST subgroup: - “. we were doing programmes to assist learners in classes, educationally and psycho-socially. Then doing those programmes, the department realised that we were doing something with a purpose…and they converted the school to full-service.” (Transcript: SBSTfg 1, p.1); and further corroborated by SBSTfg3 “..., our programmes were running before we became a full service school” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.4) and also clarified by SBSTfg2: - “We did have it (remedial education), but then now it’s more active’ (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 11).

Whilst the Department of Basic Education (2010) and KZN Department of Education (2011) FSS policy guideline documents used in the document analysis, indicated as reflected earlier in this chapter, that strong management, an OVC care and support
advocate, or a pre-existing practice in OVC care and support initiatives were enabling factors at a school. There was no evidence in the guideline documents that advocated for the promotion of one essential criteria over and above another essential criteria in determining the selection of a school to be a FSS. The data analysis indicated that the selective application of the selection criteria by district officials, when identifying potential FSSs, compromised the ability of all three FSSs in this study to effectively deliver on the role of providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This was effectively elucidated in the account of the programme co-ordinator:

“Although at the outset there were problems with regard to the infrastructure, and we could see it was glaring, enrolment was huge, absolutely huge, and it was the only school in the area.... It created a huge problem. The school’s teacher pupil ratio was up to about 50 or 60. Now, a teacher teaching in that particular environment is just catering for the ordinary child. What about the child who requires a little bit more support? It becomes difficult. I think we should have focused on that as well” (Transcript- PCii; p.2-3).

(iii) Inadequate assessment of selection criteria at potential FSSs

The data analysis indicated inadequate assessment of the selection criteria at the FSSs to ensure they met most of the enabling criteria outlined in the Department of Basic Education Guidelines for FSSs/Inclusive Schools (2010), and the KZN Department of Education Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the FSS (2011) that would well position them to provide psycho-social and educational support effectively for OVCs. The document analysis indicated that district SNES officials, Ward and Circuit managers were key role players involved in the selection of the FSSs:

“Ward and Circuit managers, physical infrastructure and district SNES should lead the consultation process in identifying potential full-service schools for the district. District selections are to be reviewed by the Provincial Office for suitability to meet the programme objectives.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011).
The Department of Basic Education (2010) FSS guideline document held the Member of the Executive Council (Minister of Education) responsible for ensuring the provision of support services for OVCs. This is evident in the following quote:

“The Member of the Executive Council must, where reasonably practicable, provide education for learners with special education needs at ordinary public schools by providing relevant educational support services for such learners.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

The data analysis indicated that the Circuit Managers and the officials within the District Special Needs Education Services Section (SNES) were key in the FSS selection process—“Now in terms of who identified the schools, it was also circuit management and personnel in the Special Needs Section at a district level...” (Transcript: PCii, p.1). This was further corroborated by the SBST focus group—“Mrs (District SNES Official) is the one who made this school to change ...” (SBSTfg1, p. 8), and “the SEM (Circuit Manager) and the department, the district office, offered FSS 3 a full service site.” (SBSTfg3, p.3).

It emerged from the data analysis that there was no indication of programme implementers having clearly defined indicators of what constituted the enabling criteria. Examples of these criteria were the existence/nonexistence of a functional school, a dynamic staff or strong leadership that would be critical for FSSs in their role to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. It was evident from the programme co-ordinator’s accounts that decisions of potential FSSs were based on the subjective feedback provided by Circuit Managers about the school’s level of functionality and leadership—“.... we did listen very carefully to what the SEMs were saying about their strong schools and we went with that.” (Transcript: PCii; p. 2). District FSS programme co-ordinator’s accounts indicated that the Circuit Managers suggestions of schools indicated gaps in their understanding of the FSS’s role in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs and the guidelines on the school selection criteria as indicated in the KZN Department of Education (2011) and the Department Of Basic Education (2010) FSS policy documents: - “I think we assumed there was a shared understanding of the concept,
and I think maybe that’s where the problems arose. I think we should have – you know things can get fuzzy sometimes, you need to break down into the nuts and bolts what you actually mean. We assumed that the SEMs were on exactly the same level and the same page as us, and unfortunately that wasn’t the case.” (Transcript- PCii; p.3).

The data analysis indicated that the District Special Needs Education Services Section input into the selection of potential FSSs was also based on the subjective working relations that Special Needs Section officials had with the respective schools or with one or two individuals at the school: - “If that principal is active and is always loyal or able to submit whatever is needed by the districts, maybe that is how they chose them” (LSEfg, p. 4). This was also corroborated by accounts by programme co-ordinators- “…I did a lot of work with a very committed teacher at ‘the school’ …we used that.” (Transcript: PCii, p2-3).

It was evident in the data analysis that the absence of clearly defined indicators of the school selection criteria resulted in the selection of FSSs based on subjective views and experiences rather than on facts of the ability of the FSSs to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This negatively affected the role of the FSSs to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(iv) OVCs were not involved in the selection process

From the data analysis, the accounts of OVCs from all three schools indicated that they were aware that their school was on the FSS programme. However, there was no indication in the data analysis of including them as active participants in establishing the school as a care and support resource for OVCs. In all three schools, learners were either informed by the principal post facto: - “Interviewer-Tell me how did you find out that the school was a FSS?”: - “The principal (told us).” (Transcript: OVCfg2, p.4), “The principal told us” (Transcript: OVCfg3, p.12) or they first discovered the fact that the school was a FSS, by accident: - “We saw in papers. The papers (notices) that we were supposed to send to our parents, then we having a meeting for being a full-service school” (Transcript: OVCfg2, p.5-6). The non-involvement of the learners in the selection process was also corroborated by the
SBST subgroup: - “No, the learners were not asked in terms of their opinion.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.3).

The failure to include learners in the process of selecting potential FSSs, compromised the obtaining of critical information from the recipients of the support interventions, the OVCs, of their views and experiences and of the how they felt their school was currently providing psycho-social and educational support and what the school’s strengths and areas for development in this regard was. Such information would have added value to the decision of the suitability of the school to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

4.4.2. Challenge Two: Difficulties with Care and Support Budget Allocations

The data analysis indicated four issues related to budget allocations that negatively affected the role of FSSs in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These included: (i) budgets were allocated inconsistently, (ii) there was a lack of skills and understanding of budgetary processes, (iii) there was limited consultation with key stakeholders in the development of budget utilisation plans, and (iv) there was a lack of monitoring, evaluation and support of the utilisation of funds by FSSs from district officials.

(i) Budgets were allocated inconsistently

From the document analysis it emerged that there was no suggestion of a top up budget or a specific care and support budget allocation as part of the school’s norms and standards to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs in the DBE FSS and Inclusive Schools policy guideline document (Department of Basic Education, 2010). Schools were expected to utilise existing budgets when providing educational and psycho-social support for OVCs as illustrated in the following statements from the DBE FSS guideline document: - “Schools must budget for assistive devices and specialised equipment as part of their LTSM budget; Transport subsidies must be one of the components of the budget of a full-service/inclusive school...” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p. 38-39).
The KZNDOE however identified that one of the essential provisioning items that needed to be in place for FSSs to be effective in its role as a care and support resource responding to the psycho-social and educational needs of OVCs, was a budget allocation for psycho-social and educational support: “A top up to the school’s funding norms and standards is allocated to FSSs. The additional funds are allocated as part of the Inclusive Education allocation that is intended specifically for activities that address care and support programmes for teaching and learning that arise from the SIAS process” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 11). This was also reflected in the notices to district managers dated 18 March 2009 and 20 July 2009.

The provision for care and support for OVCs was further corroborated by programme co-ordinators- “There was a budget which was allocated to full-service schools for care and support” (Transcript- PCii, p. 8). All three FSSs also confirmed receipt of a budget allocation for care and support interventions for OVCs: “We were given a budget last year” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.20). This was also corroborated by the SGB subgroup: - “Yes, there was a budget for OVC.” (Transcript: SGBfg1, p. 18).

The data analysis however indicated that the role of FSSs to deliver on psycho-social and educational support provisions for OVCs were negatively affected by inconsistent allocation of care and support budgets to FSSs. This was indicated by the SGB subgroup: - “No. (did not receive budget allocation for previous year) ……… Still waiting (this year), nothing yet. We are lost. We are struggling.” (Transcript SGBfg2, p.24). Inconsistent allocation of budgets was also corroborated by the SBST/ILST subgroup: - “There was only one year (FSS did not receive a budget), and it continued last year or this year” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 14); “So in actual fact, we don’t have a fully function full service school and due to budgetary constraints.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.10-11), and the programme co-ordinators: - “At one point – so with the budget, then full-service schools benefited, …Now at one point, full-service schools did not receive budget….. It’s only 2014 that the budget was then taken back again to programme 4, and then full-service schools got their budget. Now, in 2015, unfortunately full-service schools again didn’t get allocation.

It was there, but because of some logistical problems at head office, they didn’t receive any funding. Now in 2016, they have received again the allocation” (Transcript: PCii, p. 8).
The data analysis indicated that the inconsistent budget allocations to FSSs compromised the sustainability of resourcing psycho-social and educational support interventions. Participant accounts indicated that they depended on the provision of the top-up budget to fulfil the role of FSS in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) Lack of financial skills and understanding of budgetary processes

It emerged from district programme co-ordinator accounts in the data analysis that school compliance with regards to budget utilisation was a major challenge. District programme co-ordinator reports indicated that schools battled with developing business plans for the care and support budgets and experienced difficulty following the departmental financial procurement procedures. This was elucidated in the statement from the District programme co-ordinator: - “You know the schools, they battled with that. ... I think head office then sent off a clarification document, and then I think at one of the meetings where you all actually, what’s the word; deconstructed, or I don’t know - the word where you unlocked it, the nuts and bolts, even for departmental officials. I think schools battled with that, the financial aspects really, if there was one challenge we had with the full service schools, that was it, the financial aspects” (Transcript: PCii, p.19-20). Challenges with the budgetary processes was also expressed by programme co-ordinators: - “I’m a therapist, I have no clue about finances. I was expected now to follow up on the finances of the full service schools, and I really battled. (Transcript: PCii, p.20-21).

The lack of understanding of what the cost drivers of the top-up care and support budget were and how the cost drivers were to be spent was evident in the ILST/SBST participant accounts from the schools in the phase two selection of FSSs. Participants from these schools did not understand the cost drivers of the care and support budget. They could not confidently report on an approximate percentage of the care and support budget allocation that was spent on interventions to address presenting psycho-social or educational support needs of OVCs. This was elucidated in the following statements: - “...they said like this amount is supposed to go for assistive devices, and this amount is supposed to go for running costs, like paying water,
electricity and stuff (of support centre). And then the other amount was for like, if we are going to like do interventions. But there wasn’t an amount that they said for learners” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p23); “But I don’t think (budget provision for psychosocial and other support intervention for learners) … We get a lot of sponsors.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.14). This was also evident in accounts from the SGB subgroup: - “We don’t know exactly, but what we know is that the centre is allocated its own money.” (Transcript: SGBfg2, p. 8).

The FSS in the phase one selection of schools, could refer to amounts allocated for care and support programmes and services for OVCs as indicated in the following participant statement: - “Initially there was this R12 000 that was meant for learner support … This R12 000, we were given specifications on how to spend it. It was strictly on learner support.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 15). As indicated in chapter three, the roll-out of the FSS programme in FSSs selected in the phase two and three selection process occurred concurrently. The data analysis indicated that FSS 2 and FSS 3 utilised most of their allocation in the initial setup of the support centre at the FSSs (furniture and equipment, running costs). This was reflected in the accounts from the SGB participants: - “…. budget that has been approved by the SGB and the management members was the budget for the actual furnishing of the centre.” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p. 10).

The lack of understanding, of how and for what the care and support budget was to be utilised, was also evident in reports from the support staff at FSSs, namely: - “The first allocation that I remember was to do the environment. The principal was trying to do the touch-ups (to the environment for accessibility), so it ended there. She used it and I saw how it went. And the second budget, I can't tell much about it.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p. 35). The lack of understanding was also shown by the School Counsellor subgroup: - “I haven’t been part of how the monies should be used in terms of the programme.” (Transcript: SCfg, p.14).

In all three schools, learners showed no awareness of the school’s top-up allocation for care and support interventions or the cost drivers of the budget. The lack of clarity of the cost drivers of the top-up care and support budget, poor financial skills and the
lack of transparency and involvement of key stakeholders in the budget planning process was evident in the data analysis.

(iii) Limited consultation with key stakeholders in the development of plans to utilise the budget

In all three schools, the principal led all budget planning and expenditure assisted by his office staff. This is elucidated in the following participant accounts: - “I think with the budget, the principal here is doing it mostly with the clerk, because the clerk is now the finance officer, so she has been using the funds allocated and using it for all the expenses” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.14) and “It was just that he( school principal) told us what is the sum of money (was for the top-up budget)” (Transcript: SBSTfg2: p.26), and “I have never seen (funds for learners) – I don’t know maybe, because it was last year when I was fully involved in the office.” (Transcript: - SBSTfg1, p.15).

The data analysis indicated that key stakeholders were not always consulted or kept abreast with budgetary processes. The SGB, who has a critical role to play with respect to budget planning and execution at a school, in FSS 2 and FSS 3, was not fully knowledgeable about the budgetary processes related to the care and support funds as reflected in the following participant statements from the SGB subgroup: - “We don’t know exactly, (what the money was to be used for) but what we know is that the centre is allocated its own money.” (Transcript: SGBfg2, p. 8) and “The only budget that has been approved by the SGB and the management members was the budget for the actual furnishing of the centre. It stopped there” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p. 10) The FSS 1 SGB spoke confidently about the budget and was aware of the budget guidelines provided by KZNDOE for utilisation of the top-up budget: - “Yes, there was a budget for OVC, I think it was run for 3 years, then stopped….. Yes, they provided us with guidelines” (Transcript: SGBfg1: p. 18).

The lack or consultation on budgetary issues was indicated by the network of service providers’ subgroup: - “But in terms of budget or the set up, I wasn’t included”
The role of the Family Support System (FSS) in promoting the educational and psychological wellbeing of Out-of-School Children (OVCs) was evaluated through interviews and observations. The analysis revealed a lack of involvement of key stakeholders in the budgetary planning process, which poses a risk of utilising funds in a manner that does not effectively address the psycho-social and educational support needs of the OVCs and does not take into account the strengths and weaknesses of critical programme implementers. This approach also undermined stakeholder ownership for the delivery of the programme.

The data analysis indicated that key stakeholders were not involved in the budgetary planning process. Such an approach to budget planning runs the risk of utilisation of funds in a manner that does not effectively address the psycho-social and educational support needs of the OVCs and does not take into account the strengths and weaknesses of critical programme implementers, and such an approach also undermined stakeholder ownership for the delivery of the programme.

(iv) Lack of monitoring, evaluation and support of the utilisation of funds by FSSs from district officials.

The document analysis indicated that the KZN Department of Education FSS Guideline document, (2011) advocated support and monitoring of FSS business plans by the district Inclusive Education Co-ordinator, Circuit Manager, and District Management, supported by the Inclusive Education Section at the Provincial Office.
“a report on expenditure against the business plan must be forwarded to the Inclusive Co-ordinator Education(IE) at the District Office on a monthly basis. The District co-ordinator must peruse the report and address any irregular expenditure using the school management structures viz. Circuit management, SMT and SGB. A summary of all FSS reports in the District together with District comments must be forwarded to the IE Co-ordinator at the Provincial Office.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011, p. 12)

The analysis of participant accounts indicated that site based support and monitoring from district office level in relation to the utilisation of the funds to ensure that it was utilised on care and support programmes and services for OVCs was limited: “I’ve got no background in financial management, so for me it was the following up from the district, … - besides it being a task that was an add on to our core duties, and we didn’t find the time to do it, and also the capacity to follow up on finances.” (Transcript: PCii, p.20-21). It also emerged in the data analysis that district officials admitted reluctance to take on the responsibility to monitor and support the school with respect to the utilisation of the care and support funds: - “And I remembered telling P., Hey, you know what, this is putting our neck on the block. We are appointed as a professional - for a particular purpose. This was for me an add-on, and something which was way beyond me, and I feel that at the end of the day we’re going to be accountable for a thing by appending our signature, for something we’re not too sure about.” (Transcript: PCii, p.2).

Programme co-ordinators declared that they failed in their responsibility to monitor and support schools with the utilisation of the care and support funds: - “We were supposed to check. And I’m being honest, with “School 1” I honestly didn’t have the time to go and check where they actually spent. Up to this day I’m not too certain what they’ve used it for, but the money was devolved” (Transcript: PCii, p.19). This was corroborated by education support staff: “… by them visiting the schools? No, they (District Officials) did not. No, they don’t. They expect us to go and take those reports (financial) and bring to the district” (Transcript; LSEfg, p. 29) and by SBSTfg: -. “They don’t come and monitor” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 16).
The data analysis indicated that the various structures responsible to provide support to FSSs on budget utilisation, and to monitor whether the available care and support budgets were used for educational and psycho-social support for OVCs, failed in their role. This study indicated that budget utilisation at the FSS were in the hands of a few and FSSs were largely left on their own to determine what percentage of the funds were to be used for educational and psycho-social support for OVCs.

4.4.3. Challenge Three: Implementation Concerns Related to the FSS Support Model

Four issues emerged from the data analysis that indicated that there were challenges with implementing the support model of the FSS programme at the three FSSs which affected how they viewed their role in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These included: (i) confusion about the support role of FSSs, (ii) support provision for OVC was linked to the availability of resources, (iii) support interventions revolved largely around basic needs, and (iv) issues using the standardised processing strategy to identify learning requiring psycho-social and educational support.

(i) Role Confusion

The document analysis indicated that in line with Education White Paper 6, 2001, the Department of Basic Education Guidelines to Provinces on FSS and Inclusive Schools, (2010) advocated a continuum of support ranging from low, moderate to high provision for OVCs. Evident in these documents was that policy for support provision for OVCs at FSSs was developed from a rights perspective. In other words, these policy guidelines advocate for a child’s right to access basic education, to safety, protection and well-being to be integrated into the school ethos and day to day operations of the school. Consequently, the national FSS/Inclusive Schools guideline document in line with Education White Paper 6, 2001, advocated that the category of disability should “not determine the level or type of support which is needed by any individual learner, neither does a learner have to be moved to a certain setting to have access to certain types of support programmes (e.g. curriculum differentiation, communication support, therapeutic interventions, etc.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p. 25). In other words, what support is needed and how it is to be
provided for OVCs becomes the key determinant of whether the intervention is low, moderate or high. Furthermore, the National FSS and Inclusive Schools guideline document indicated that every effort should be made to support learners in their current setting: *A full-service school must review its capacity to accommodate the needs of each individual learner who has additional support needs, before considering permanent outplacement to a special school.* (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p.25).

Participant accounts indicated that all three FSSs understood from a conceptual point of view that their role as a FSS required them to be non-discriminatory, provide learning support programmes and to be inclusive in nature to accommodate the diverse learner population. This was reflected in the following participant accounts: - “Inclusive education says that we need to include all the learners; we need to engage them in the process of teaching and learning; we should not isolate them, but accommodate them...; looking at the different problems that they bring about in the classroom. So as a full service school we need to support the learners” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.6), account from SBSTfg1: - “a full-service school is the one that is inclusive in its nature. It doesn’t discriminate any learner according to the challenges that particular learner may have. Inclusive by nature, in a sense that even the school itself must change its premises to accommodate those learners who are coming in, not just operating as it’s for the normal people without any barriers.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 10), and from SBSTfg3: - “If you look at the full service system we are looking at the child, where the child can improve. You get a lot of those cases where the child needs support. How do we support the child?” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 38).

However, in practical terms, all three schools were challenged in making the transition of focus from the learner and his/her disability or challenge experienced, to focusing on the nature and intensity of the support intervention required. SBST focus group accounts indicated that the learner was the focus in determining the nature and intensity of support required: - “…the concept that we understood, was where the learner will be taken out from the classroom; taken to that school (the support centre). We thought that will be the school where the teaching will take place there (at the
support centre).” (Transcript- SBST3, p. 7). The SBSTfg2: - “I have to cater for these kids... as an educator you should have finished this (curriculum coverage). You know that once I am in the classroom with these different kinds of learners, it is not possible. You are not going to follow the pace of the learner, but you have to follow the pace of the department.” (Transcript SBSTfg2, p. 19).

Programme co-ordinators’ accounts also referred to the learner as the focus and not the support provision: - “...let me start by saying the allocation (funding) that full-service schools get, is per screened learner, to say how many vulnerable learners, or how many learners that need additional support; they had to submit that information” (Transcript: PCii, p.18). Statements from the SGB Subgroup representing the parents also indicated that when identifying the nature of support and how it would be provided, parents were also struggling to make the transition from focussing on the learner and his/her challenge experienced to focussing on the nature and frequency of support required: - “I think the community perception was, ...in the past, if my child was not equipped to be in a mainstream school, he would go to a special school. So I think the community is still under that mind-set.” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p. 4). This was further corroborated by the Stakeholder subgroup: - “I thought it was the wing of the school, it is another wing of the school, but for disabilities and those children who are sick, it is for that only.” (Transcript: SPfg1, p. 24).

In terms of role of FSSs as providers of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, the data analysis indicated at all three FSSs that the learner, and not the support required, remained the guiding principle for the provision of psycho-social and educational support. Whilst from a conceptual point of view all three FSSs recognised their role as an institution that needed to be non-discriminatory, inclusive and responsive to the support needs of the diverse learner population, in practical terms, all three FSSs were challenged in making this understanding operational.

(ii) Support provision for OVC was linked to the availability of resources
From the data analysis, it was ascertained that the FSSs in this study linked the extent to which they could provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs to the availability of resources such as specialist personnel, specialist spaces, assistive devices, specialist services and budgetary allocations.

The participant accounts at the three FSSs to the support centre being established at the school indicated appreciation, need and pride, as elucidated by the SGB focus group; - “…to build this centre here, it has made them (community) very proud, because they do have help here” (Transcript: SGBfg1, p. 25-26), and the SBST subgroup: - “I think we were quite excited and waiting for the building to come up, to start this programme.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 3). This was further corroborated by the stakeholder subgroup: - “Since we’ve got a centre, it’s (the FSS programme) already working” (Transcript: SPfg2, p. 6). However, this initial enthusiasm to utilise the centre to respond to the psycho-social and educational support needs of OVCs, was dampened when the schools were not provided with specialist staff, budget and site based support from district officials. as elucidated in the following statements from SBSTs: - “we have to look at how we are going to keep the centre functional, because we are expected to keep it functional, despite the limitation in terms of human resources” (Transcript- SBST3, p. 11); “We haven’t received any money for the support centre this year, but the programme needs to be rolling at the same time”. (Transcript- SBST2, p.21) and: - “We need to have more LSE’S based at a support centre.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 34). These SBST accounts were corroborated by accounts from the SGB subgroup: - “I feel very bad, because from the first time that they told us that our school was going to become a full-service school, we were very happy, but when we must implement, we don’t have resources to continue with the programme” (Transcript- SGBfg2, p.16-17), and from the stakeholder subgroup: “if this a full service school there should be someone who is a teacher or someone else who is strictly to the needs of the centre.” (Transcript: SPfg2, p.22) and the LSA subgroup: - “It’s not functional … once in a while when she’s (principal) having meetings and she calls educators from other schools, then she uses the support centre” (Transcript: LSAfg, p.34, p.17).
Further evidence that support provision was linked to the availability of resources are reflected in the following statements from LSE subgroup: “I remember they said we are going to have computers. You remember? In that room, that activity room. We were told that it will have like 20 computers, but they are not there.” (Transcript – LSEfg, p. 30); “we were told about assisted devices, that those assisted devices, we will be able to share with neighbouring schools…. Yes, we never received anything like that. You know what we received? We’ve just received the furniture. ... .” (Transcript – LSEfg, p. 31); “My school doesn’t have TA’s. (Learner Support Assistants).” (Transcript – LSEfg, p.35). Evidence that support provision was linked to the availability of resources was also indicated in statements from the SGB subgroup: - “...we don’t have resources to continue with the programme.” (Transcript – SGBfg2, p.16-17). and by the programme co-ordinators: - “Now, full-service schools that have got services that are provided by external providers are those that are functional. But the rest of the full-service schools, I think they have got an understanding that let me wait, the department will bring the services to me, which is a wrong understanding.” (Transcript: PCii, p.23).

(iii) Support interventions revolved largely around basic needs and issues related to socio-economic deprivation

The document analysis indicated that, from a policy perspective, the National FSS guideline document for Full Service and Inclusive Schools did not stipulate an essential package of specific programmes or services that needed to be in place at FSSs to ensure that FSSs are responsive to a wide range of support needs of OVCs. Rather, it spoke to the provision of support in broad focus areas. These broad areas included issues related to “a broad range of learning needs impairments, psychosocial problems, different abilities, particular life experiences or socio-economic deprivations.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p10). The KZNDOE FSS Operational Guideline document for FSSs, (2011), and in KZNDOE IE Notice to districts dated 18 May 2009, however, advocated an essential package outlining not only the range of areas for which support to OVCs needed to be provided, but also unpacked the scope of the support package. The support package included curriculum support, extra-curricular support, nutrition, school health, social services, and
therapeutic services. It emerged from the document analysis that FSSs were expected to facilitate, via the support centre, activities addressing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs within the FSSs and outreach programmes for OVCs for the surrounding hub of schools: - “it (FSS)... serves as a site for the delivery of support programmes for learners experiencing barriers to learning from surrounding schools (KZNDOE, 2011, p.7).

From the data analysis, it emerged that at all three schools, the major focus of their support interventions was on addressing immediate basic needs of OVCs and issues related to socio-economic deprivations. Participant accounts indicated that in collaboration with its network of support providers, FSSs were addressing issues targeting three basic needs such as (i) food: - “We also have that programme where those that we know that they only eat here at school... Then we will dish for them, then they will take it home.” (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p.35), “Some teachers were...buying food, bringing breakfast for learners, food, everything.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.3); “When you come here, you get breakfast and you get lunch.” (Transcript- OVCfg3, p. 12-13); (ii) clothing: - “There is that problem educators collect clothes maybe from their relatives or friends, family, then we divide the clothes according to their needs... there are those learners who had nothing... Some teachers were buying clothes or uniforms for the learners.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.3); “In the beginning of the year, we have the OVC clothes, hampers and bags.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 9) and (iii) basic hygiene and health issues: - “Another thing we do here, is sometimes we have eye clinics and dental checks” (Transcript-SPfg3, p.7); “We have this hand wash, the Dettol hand wash. Each learner has a bottle... people from Stayfree came for the Grade 4 – 7 girls to teach about hygiene and stuff” (Transcript-OVCfg3, p.23). SBSTs reported that often they were forced to assume care responsibilities of parents who were unavailable or not in a position to take care of their children’s needs: - “Sometimes they bring learners in school wearing things that are dirty, so sometimes we feel that we have to go and see what is really happening.” (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p.33); “Most of the times we are struggling with parents. If you call them, they don’t come.” (Transcript- SBSTfg1, p.27).
There was also evidence that all three FSSs were actively involved in working with children in receipt of social grants: “I know that they assist them (children) with the grants...” (Transcript –SPfg1, p.4), “This school has more than 70% learners only depending on the grant” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 5), and “We have got about 70 – 80% of the learners collecting child support... or some form of grant.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 2). It also emerged from the data analysis that FSSs also assisted learners to access social services related to trauma or neglect: “They come to us, but sometimes they are coming to us with serious problems – example that we must call the teenage mother. There is no support. So we make an awareness to these people and call SASSA to let them know this money is for the people.” (Transcript-SPfg1, p.29). “We have already sent them to the assessment centre...for counselling.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p34-35).

It also emerged from the analysis that schools were engaging in providing scholastic support (reading, writing, spelling, maths, homework supervision). The findings indicated that FSS 1 and FSS 3 were more active than FSS 2 in generating education intervention using available school resources and staff: “We also had one for maths, where slow learners were coming to school, and we noticed that most of them don’t do their homework. Some of them don’t even have a table. So we had sessions for them, where they come into the class and they do their work (Transcript, SBST3, p.22), “The second programme, is we took 5 minutes of each period and we took 45 to 50 minutes and we had a revision programme, were we just took basic skills of mathematics” (Transcript, SBSTfg3, p. 22); “Then in the classroom our teachers are trying their very best. They do fine tuning programmes just for these learners who have barriers in learning.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 22), whilst FSS 2 had the tendency to look outside the school for assistance with educational support interventions - “There are teachers from Turkish, they used to come here maybe on the Saturdays for just maths and science, to support our learners...... We have that partnership now with Star College.... NGO which is called Mazibuko African Forum.” (Transcript: -SBSTfg2, p.15).
All three schools, however, emphasised that they were challenged in terms of the scholastic support programmes as elucidated by the SBST subgroup: “She (LSE) is helping, but we need more input and support from you guys (district officials).” (Transcript- SBSTfg1, 23). “Let us talk about these programmes, educational programmes, where I have been told as a teacher that, from this date of January and this date of March, you should have finished this, you know that once I am in the classroom with these different kinds of learners, it is not possible. I have to cater for these kids, but I have to do this. …, as an educator you are expected to reach this point (curriculum coverage). You are not going to follow the pace of the learner, but you have to follow the pace of the department.” (Transcript – SBSTfg2, p.19). “Teachers that we are getting now, not going through that phase of an institution of three-year cycle or four-year cycle degree. They will study through correspondence…. so now they are not familiar how to identify a learner that needs attention. …. You know what we need is like we used to have a guidance counsellor.” (Transcript: - SBSTfg3, p. 37).

The sincere intentions and efforts of the schools, to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs in an effort to ensure that they were not left behind was reflected in the OVCs’ accounts at all three schools. The study showed that OVCs at all three FSSs felt cared for by their educators: “The teachers help you when you need some things when you’re sick.” (Transcript: Learnersfg1, p.27); “if I have a problem at home and my teacher knew, she did some things to help me. (Transcript: Learnersfg2, p.2); “When you are sick, the teachers take you to the clinic…. School gives- shoes, socks, trousers, uniforms for girls and shirt and ties, and jerseys.” (Transcript- Learnersfg2, p. 16); “The teachers are like our parents, but better than our parents. ...And our principal cares for us, like if we get hurt, ‘Are you injured badly?’ He will be so caring for us”. (Transcript- Learnersfg3, p. 59).

The learner participants found school to be a happy place: “I like coming to school because our teacher takes good care of us. They love you and other learners, they’re kind and they don’t have a problem with anyone” (Transcript- Learnersfg2, p. 35); “Sometimes they do go out of the way just to make us feel special. They like give us
extra things too.” (Transcript-Learnersfg3, p. 45-46), “So they are helpful, the teachers.” (Transcript-Learnerfg1, p.27).

Learner participant responses to the question “Tell me whether you feel safe at school” showed that they felt safe and protected in the school environment as clarified in the learner responses below:

“Yes, There’s freedom…food…lights…we write…. read…Because no one’s allowed to bring weapons. If anyone brings weapons, they will be reported to the office…they do give you food parcels, and the vegetables from the garden…Also if they can buy clothes…. Buying exercise books. (Transcript: learnersfg1, p. 21-22)

“There are security guards and the learners cannot go out easily…. Ma’am, we have a scholar patrol for our own safety, we even have cameras…In the principals’ office they have a big like flat screen TV that every part of the block has got cameras, which the principal can see. If somebody is out of the classroom, he will phone or he will announce…that child to go back to class…. And security. And the caretaker is by the gate…. Yes. And you can’t go to the office without your permission granted…. You can’t enter the admin block…. (Transcript- Learnersfg3, p.38-39)

“We are not exposed to drugs and violence that is happening maybe at home…Because we have a bodyguard (security) at the gates … Because teachers are here…there’s a fence ..” (Transcript-Learnersfg2, p.26, 27)

(iv) Issues using the standardised support processing strategy: SIAS

To ensure that learners ‘at risk’ were identified early and were given a fair chance to access the available psycho-social and educational support, the document analysis indicated that Department of Basic Education advocated the use of a standardised Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) strategy. This strategy was to ensure a process that was: - “fair, bias-free and sensitive to gender, race, cultural background and abilities” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p. 27), when identifying learners requiring access to additional support services and programmes.

From the perspective of the FSS programme implementers in the study, all three
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schools were aware of the SIAS Strategy and acknowledged that it was the standard procedure that all schools were mandated to follow: - “we went to that workshop on SIAS, yes, we were told how we can screen and identify the learner” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.44). This was corroborated by the SGB subgroup: - “In the SIAS workshop, where the teacher was seen as the driving force” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p.13) and the Network of Service Providers subgroup: - “Yes. They told us about SIAS and that they’re following that, every teacher.” (Transcript: SPfg1, p. 19).

It was ascertained from the DBE FSS guideline document that the SIAS Strategy advocated the participation of three critical role players in the identification of who needs access to psycho-social and educational support. This included the school (educator), learner and parent (Department of Basic Education, 2010). FSS 3 reported that parents were supportive of the school initiatives and would in most cases assist the school if called upon: - “we have got some parents who come every day, Monday to Friday here. They will come and cover textbooks, they will lend a hand.” (Transcript-SBSTfg3, p.31), whilst FSS 1 and FSS 2 experienced challenges with parental involvement: -. “They only come when they have a problem” (Transcript- SBSTfg1, p. 27) and “...we need to handle the parent’s interventions (duties), we need to have a straight policy on that, since I told you that we have realised that sometimes there is a need for educators to go straight to learners’ homes to see what is happening there.” (Transcript-SBSTfg2, p32). However, all three schools reported that initiatives rarely came from parents when it came to their child’s educational support needs: - “Yes, but when it comes to the academics, we do have that case where some parents don’t… You can send so many letters and they will not turn up, and then you have to - and in those cases, most of them are living with their grannies.” (Transcript-SBSTfg3, p.27, p.31), “Their parents, they don’t even see them because they have to go to work early and then they come late when they are asleep, so no one is helping them with their homework” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.33), “Most of the times we are struggling with parents. If you call them, they don’t come. They don’t.” (Transcript- SBSTfg1, p. 27). Challenges with parental response was also corroborated by the LSE subgroup: - “It is a problem, because you’ll find that most of the parents do not attend when they’re invited by the school.” (Transcript: LSEfg,
Parents, sometimes they … don’t come to school. Even if there are parent’s meetings they don’t come.” (Transcript: LSAfg, p. 27).

Consequently, in most instances the findings indicate that the schools led in the process of identification of support needs. The findings of the study showed that there was no evidence of learners being actively involved in the SIAS process or any school level efforts to identify learner support needs. Learner participation was either on an ad hoc basis, non-existent or minimal when it came to involving learners to express their feelings or opinions on support provided or needed. At FSS 2, there was no evidence of active involvement of learners in the process of identification and selection of support interventions for OVCs, whilst at FSS 1 and FSS 3, there were attempts to involve learners in as far as getting their views on programmes expressed. This is elucidated in the statements from the SBST subgroup: - “We do. It varies from time to time. Like you see the uniform they are wearing right now, it came with different uniforms. They had to choose which one they want, so they chose- the learners.” (Transcript- SBST1, p.24) and - “Learner involvement- Yes, to an extent we do that. We do consult with them and we get their views– also we find out what they like, what they want, and then we take it from there”. (Transcript-SBSTfg3, p.29.). The limited involvement of learners in the SIAS and identification of support needs process was also corroborated by the School Counsellor subgroup: “I will say that there are no times where, like times given for learners to voice out their opinions and how they feel. In most of the cases it is the educators or adults who come and inform learners. In most cases we are the ones who come and inform them” (Transcript- SCfg, p.28), and I’ve never thought of involving them (learners). I never thought of doing it.” (Transcript: - SCfg,.29). The limited involvement of learners in the process was also corroborated by the programme co-ordinators: - “you’ll find that in some of the schools, if the institutional level support team is not that functional, sometimes you’ll find that the learner component or the voice of the child is not heard, it is being suppressed. It’s like they are not an important stakeholder.” (Transcript: PCii, p. 20). The minimal or non-existent involvement of learners in the identification and developmental stages of support interventions was corroborated by the School Counsellor Subgroup: - “In my experience, I will say that there are no times where, like times given for learners to voice out their opinions and
how they feel. In most of the cases it is the educators or adults who come and inform learners. In most cases we are the ones who come and inform them” (Transcript-Counsellor, p.28) However, there was no evidence in the participant reports of the three FSSs confidently using the complete SIAS strategy as a standard procedure to identify learners requiring psycho-social and educational support. At FSS 3, there was evidence that the school was attempting to use the strategy but faced challenges: “The teacher sees the SIAS process as a labouring process...it is time consuming and is just nothing but a process, not an application...It’s something that is almost like learning Greek and French for some, because to get to a simple answer on that form is so hard for some” (Transcript-SGBfg3, p.13, 27).

4.4.4. Challenge Four: Inadequacies in the Training and Development Programme

Four issues emerged with regards to the programme of training and development aimed at strengthening FSSs to promote its role in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, namely (i) participants found the training and development programme to be too intense and fast paced, (ii) participants found the quality of the workshops to be inadequate, (iii) FSSs depended on the training and development provided by the district office, and (iv) FSSs reported that there was a lack of ongoing support and mentoring from district officials.

(i) Training was too intense and fast paced

The document analysis indicated that the National Guidelines for Full Service/Inclusive Schools identified the training as one of the foundation activities in establishing FSSs: “Initial steps in the development of the targeted schools include the upgrading of the physical infrastructure to making it environmentally accessible as well as the provision of material resources and training of educators to manage inclusive practice.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 3)

One of the six areas identified in the KZNDOE’s essential package to establish FSSs was the implementation of a training and development programme: “The HRD programme is a multi-year roll-out and involves input from key sections within the Department Viz. Curriculum, Assessment, Governance and Management, Teacher
Development and SNES directorates. Integrated planning at District level for the delivery of the HRD programme is critical to successful implementation" (KZNDOE, 2011, p. 16).

An issue that emerged in the data analysis related to the Human Resource Development (HRD) programme to strengthen FSSs as a care and support resource for OVCs is that both programme co-ordinators and school level participants felt the pace of the HRD programme did not allow enough time for several aspects. These were firstly, reflection: - “you did a workshop you must give time for whatever transpired in the workshop to be translated in action, and I think that was sadly lacking… we were just doing workshops”” (Transcript; PCii, p. 8). Secondly, participant accounts indicated that there was no space to gain understanding of concepts and provide time for consolidation: - “It was a once off hit and run job and I don’t think we really got to grips with changing attitudes of teachers, changing attitudes of management, changing attitudes of SGB and all related people.” (Transcript: PCii, p.4). This in the opinion of programme co-ordinators, negatively affected the FSSs in the study to obtain full benefit from the training to function effectively as a care and support resource responsive to the needs of OVCs: - “I think the problem is we didn’t check how did this (training) meet the expectations of educators and the SMT and the SGB as well.” (Transcript; PCii, p. 8). These programme co-ordinators’ views were corroborated by the SBST subgroup in their statements that they were still in need of training: - “District did have workshops .....but it was just a paper activity. It was still not an activity on the ground, it was just a paper activity.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.6), “The programme has been rolling out, and we have like a lot of workshops... we don’t know how much workshops are left for us, but we are willing to get more information” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 18, p.20) and: - “Well, the issue of training, it’s still going on even right now...we were telling those who are getting the trainers that, okay, this is the level where we are in now; we need this to progress.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 9). Lastly, the cascading method adopted by district officials to train FSSs was found to be unsuitable: - “...a lot of these workshops where there was cascading of information, but no feedback and response and monitoring, supervision of programme, where continuous touching the base is taking place.... (Transcript-SGB3, p.33), and from the SBSTfg1: - “when the training comes, it never comes like it’s
structured from A, B, C, like those stages of development. It just comes, not being informed by how far are we, yes.” (Transcript SBSTfg1, p. 9).

The data analysis indicated that the method and pace of the training programme did not allow for FSSs to obtain the full benefit of the workshops and to put into place the advocated FSS practices and procedures that would have consolidated their role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) Participants found the quality of the workshops to be inadequate.

It emerged in the data analysis that schools felt that their HRD needs were not met. This was reflected in the accounts from SBSTs: - “the department officials were basically reading from the manual and giving us information, but they were not absolutely clued up, they are not practitioners themselves …. because I am just cascading the information that I got, it is not as effective as when you are present at the workshop… Sometimes when department officials have workshops and request to send one representative from the school, I am not in favour of that”. (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.6, p.40). School based participants were quite vociferous about the quality and nature of support they wanted from district officials in order to deliver on the care and support mandate as expressed in the statements from the SGB subgroup: - “I think they need to get people that are qualified in this field, who can interact with the learner and, like the therapist and the counsellor, people that are qualified…I would say be the big brother that holds the hand not just the finger.” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p.33). This was further corroborated by the SBST subgroup: - “We need a high level of support from them…. the district officials, they should not just come to the school just for the sake of writing down in the notebook that we were there. They must come with passion, they must come with enthusiasm in helping...” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.47-48), and: - “…you need experienced people to really drive this programme forward… Yes, people that know how, so you go back to the basics and tell us exactly what needs to be done.” (Transcript- SBSTfg3, p. 37, 41).

Whilst the HRD programme design was detailed in terms of its targets in respect to the areas of focus, the data analysis indicated that the FSS HRD programme within the
Pinetown District was not differentiated with respect to the different levels of staff involved in the programme. More specifically, it was not differentiated to address the HRD developmental needs of support staff such as the Learner Support Assistants, Learning Support Educators, SGBs and School Counsellors. This was elucidated in the statements from the LSE subgroup: “They were training us, with the teachers from the school, as school based” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.20). Support staff indicated feelings of abandonment with respect to the skills development plan: “I learnt on the way”. (Transcript: SCfg, p. 7). This was corroborated by statements from LSA subgroup: - “No, there was no workshops”. (Transcript: LSAfg, p.5). Support staff accounts indicated that, in the absence of training programmes from district officials, they relied on the Provincial HRD Resource Pack to operate in their support role: - “And that pack (Education for All –KZNDOE HRD Toolkit). That pack that was given to us, it was full of information. So we used it... It helped us a lot” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.21). Gaps in the training and development programme was corroborated by programme co-ordinators: - “I think you still have to capacitate the SGBs on care and support. I don’t think we have done justice there.” (Transcript: - PCii, p. 16).

The data analysis indicated that challenges with the FSS training and development programme negatively affected the FSSs role to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The cascading design of the training programme, the expertise among the facilitators of the workshops, and the ‘one size fits all’ units of training compromised the quality and effectiveness of the training and development programme.

(iii) FSSs were reliant on the District Office HRD programme

The document analysis indicated that FSSs were expected, in addition to the departmental HRD programme, to plan their own CPD programme to build their capacity as a care and support resource. (KZN Department of Education, 2011; Department of Basic Education, 2010). The analysis of the data indicated that district officials relied on the training resource pack provided by the provincial office to plan their workshops for the FSSs. There was no evidence of the district programme
coordinators undertaking a skills audit at the respective FSSs inform the training programme for the FSSs.

From the data analysis, it emerged that only FSS 1 was involved in a training and development programme outside the provincial core training programme for FSS. This additional training, however, was facilitated by the district office: - “They (training institution) are continuing with where the district people left off. They are training us now in such a way that we will get certificates at the end of the programme.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 9). In the main, all three FSSs relied on the district and provincial office to provide training and support as stated by SBST focus groups: “We need high level of support from them (district officials).” (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p47), and “Some of the people are asking you in the field, they don’t know what the full service is, what needs to be done. So an advocacy workshop must be done. I think it should be the district doing this.” (Transcript; SBSTfg1, p. 25). This was also corroborated by the learner support assistants at the FSSs: - “We are still hoping there will be more workshops for us”. (Transcript: LSAfg, p.5), and further supported by accounts from the LSE Subgroup: - “No even here, even at the district there is no training, even a single one…no one is caring about us.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.19, p.22). Whilst the support staff claimed to have not received any training from the district office, the document analysis indicated that, on appointment, they received an orientation programme on appointment in January 2011 (KZN Department of Education Notice of Meeting: 24 November 2010), and a further orientation programme on the April 2011 (KZN Department of Education Orientation Programme: LSE/Counsellor, 6 April 2011).

The data analysis indicated that FSSs did not take ownership for assessing capacity among the staff and planning for addressing gaps in knowledge and skills. They expected the district officials to lead in this.

(iv) Lack of ongoing support and mentoring

The document analysis indicated that: - “A full-service school must…. First... develop its own capacity which ensures that it makes optimal use of existing staff expertise and
if more is needed, they should call upon the District for support, training and mentoring.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p. 25)

The data analysis indicated that the lack of ongoing support and mentoring of FSS by district officials negatively affected the FSSs to establish its role of providing psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. The inadequate support and mentoring from district officials were evident from the accounts of participants from all three schools. The following statements elucidate this: “We find like, maybe in a term you will have two or three visits, but not structured visits, in terms of (related to) checking on our problems and our challenges. It is always coming with an agenda to implement certain aspects, like for example maybe budgeting or maybe more information on reading, etcetera, but not the challenges that we were experiencing.” (Transcript, SBSTfg3, p.10); “I think they must try their best to touch base with what is happening within the school especially when it comes to teacher interaction in the classroom environment... it will help a lot, especially those people who are in charge of the whole full-services programmes in KwaZulu-Natal, can make the visitation to us.” (Transcript, SBSTfg1, p.34; 13); “That was just an appraisal workshop... But it was nothing like to say now we came back to school level, we discussed it, we formed our school base support team. But nothing else happened. Nothing.” (Transcript- SBSTfg3, p. 18). “They (District and Provincial officials) must accept everyone with different diversity (has different abilities). They must be patient and have love and tolerance”. (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p. 48).

The data analysis indicated a plea from participants for greater inter-action and support from district officials to enhance the FSS role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs: “I will advise them to come to the teachers and listen to the views of the teachers, of the challenges that they have in their classroom with these mixed learners” (Transcript- SGBfg1, p. 37); “We need more interaction with the district officials”. (Transcript- SBSTfg3, p.10). “They must accept that there will be challenges, there will be constraints, but those challenges will not only be addressed by the teachers. We need a high level of support from them.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.47)
The data analysis indicated that district officials acknowledged that they were challenged in respect to providing the ongoing support and mentoring to FSSs. In their defence, they argued that they were over loaded with core responsibilities: namely, psychological and therapeutic services. The added infrastructure, administrative, logistical and mentoring responsibilities related to the FSSs was given to them as an added responsibility to their core duties. Having been given the responsibility of two programme mandates, they were unable to do justice to both: - “But in our defence, we were thinly spread. We all have good intentions, but then again your activities, you’re split into so many different roles, different parts. It makes it difficult to focus on one...there should have been a designated person appointed at each district to run the process. Here it (FSS responsibility) is defused right across the board, and I think somewhere along the way it lost its momentum” (Transcript: -PCii, p.13; p. 5)

The management plan for implementation of the FSSs provided by the province was also cited by the district officials as being intensive with tight timeframes. They expressed that this left them with little room amidst their myriad of responsibilities to monitor and support the implementation of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs effectively, or to engage in reflection or review of programme implementation: - “You know what, we could have done more, I think....but there was definitely no time between the trainings for district to adequately say, ......whether you’re on the right track or what, whether we could have added to it or whatever” (Transcript-PCii, p.33,p. 8). Furthermore, they argued that they experienced staff shortages which negatively contributed to their ability to support and mentor FSSs effectively. They also argued that they were expected to perform functions that they had no experience or expertise in and felt they needed more support: - “I think as district people, we really expect more guidance from the province in terms of our role in the whole concept, in the full service school concept. We’ve asked for support, just in terms of the problems that we’re experiencing.” (Transcript-Programme Co-ordinator2, p.45; p.24)

Furthermore, the document analysis indicated that if the FSS is to be effective in its role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, support at FSSs should be extended beyond just the support for learners to include collegial and peer
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support, “Support is not only about ‘services’ but also about assistance that educators can offer to one another, or caregivers and families through support groups.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010: p.21) and support “for neighbouring schools” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 7).

FSS 1 reported that initially, when the programme started, in the absence of support from district officials, they drew support from the FSS forum set up by the district to share experiences and find solutions to their challenges in the role to provide psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. This forum comprised of staff from only the FSSs which met to share experiences, challenges and ideas with each other. Schools appreciated this collegial support in helping them understand their support role. They expressed disappointment that the district office over the years discontinued this practice as they felt the collegial support was beneficial: “It was helping us a lot, because we were sharing what we do and how to educate each other and we can see where we go wrong…. they must give us time to come together as full service schools so that we can share our experiences.” (Transcript-SBSTfg1, p.10). The plea for engaging with other FSSs that have been longer on the programme was also made by FSS 3 in the study: “We requested to even go and visit ‘School X’, for instance, and view the set up there, experience what it is for the full service. But to date we haven’t received an information to say when day is scheduled for ‘School X’.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.10).

With respect to ongoing support and mentoring, the data analysis indicated that visits by district officials to FSSs were sporadic and limited to cascading of information. In order to strengthen their role to provide psycho-social and educational support to OVCs, FSSs appealed for greater interaction with district officials with respect to site based support to address implementation issues. Furthermore, FSS1 and FSS3 appealed for opportunities to engage with other FSSs where they could share good practices and brainstorm solutions to common challenges faced.

4.4.5. Challenge Five: Level of Functionality of Support Structures

The document analysis indicated that the DBE and KZNDOE FSS guideline documents advocated for a support structure, that is the ILST/ SBST, at school site level. “The
ILST tracks support and keeps records of meetings and support provisioning.” (DBE, 2010: p. 22). “Education White Paper 6 advocates for support, management, monitoring and processing structures to ensure that there is a fair and just system to identify and support learners in need of additional support services...To this end Institution Level Support Teams (ILST’s) and District Based Support Teams (DBST’s) need to be established.” (KZNDOE, 2011: p. 9).

The data analysis indicated two issues that negatively affected the role of the ILST/SBST in supporting the FSS to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, namely: (i) not all portfolio committees of the ILST/SBST were fully functional, and (ii) ILST/SBST members felt they lacked the specialised skills to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(i) Not all portfolio committees of the ILST/SBST were fully functional

The analysis indicated that the educator and whole school development portfolio committees that were part of the ILST/SBST, as constituted in the KZNDOE FSS guideline document, were not fully functional with respect to its care and support role. The extent to which they were functional was expressed in accounts from the SGB subgroup: “I would say to a certain extent,” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p.30), and corroborated by the SBST/ILST focus group: “we have a committee under educator support structure, the one that is called Educator Assistance Programme. That one is functioning, but we have issues, like teachers as adults, they don’t trust too much in the fellow educator as the one who should come with solutions to whatever he or whatever the teacher experiences” (Transcript: - SBSTfg1, p.29).

Whilst it was noted that FSS3 was engaged in infrastructure projects, which are associated with the activities of the Whole School Development portfolio of the ILST/SBST such as the construction of a kitchen, and a school hall, these were planned for prior to the school being selected as a FSS. From the data analysis, there was no indication at all three FSSs of any short-term or long-term plans by the educator and whole school portfolios to plan actively to develop the institution holistically. There
were no plans to develop its infrastructure, policies, practices and staff development programmes aimed at its responsiveness to the needs of OVCs.

The lack of evidence in the data collected, of ownership from the whole school community to ensure the successful establishment of the school as a FSS, was reflected in the following statement from the ILST/SBST focus group: - “But we didn’t realise that we have to do the work” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p.8). Challenges with the functionality with the ILST/SBST was also reported by the LSE subgroup: - “we used to ask ourselves which criteria was used, because the school base support team is not functional.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p. 3).” This was further corroborated by the programme co-ordinators: - “you’ll find that in some of the schools, the institutional level support team is not that functional.” (Transcript: PCii, p. 20)

The data analysis indicated that of the three portfolio committees, the Learner Support Portfolio Committee was most active at all three schools. In FSS1 and FSS3 in the study, there was some evidence of proactive work in respect to addressing OVC support needs as clarified in the participants’ statements: - “They offer extra services than a normal school gives... they also involve other people who can encourage our minds to learn further, like road safety people, Dettol hygiene and...like people ...who can like wow your mind into learning...” (Transcript: OVCfg3, p. 13-14). This was also supported by the SGB subgroup: - “There are nurses who came here to screen the kids and write letters” (Transcript: SGBfg1 p.6); All three FSSs worked with local municipal or community structures to address presenting support needs of OVCs:- “They come to our meeting, because our Operation Suku-Masakhe (OSS – a local municipal structure comprising of representatives from government departments, local non-governmental and community based organisations) meetings which are monthly to seek help for what they want to do ..., all departments, are given an allowance to indicate what they want to do in this ward, those things that are challenging?” (Transcript: SPfg1, p. 5-6), “I was involved, and from the library (municipal) side of it, I was informed that we are going to be playing a role, a major role in the system and probably helping to set up a library at the school. As well to assist with the needs of the learners that were going to be at the remedial centre there” (Transcript: SPfg3, p.1), and: - “CCGs
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(Community Care Givers) from the municipality, the volunteers.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 14). The activeness of the Learner Support Portfolio Committee of the ILST/SBST in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs was corroborated by the SGB and Network of Support Providers focus group, however, they were of the view that the workings of the committee was more reactionary, addressing the presenting of the needs of learners: - “they come to us, because I know most of the time when there’s things they call us.” (Transcript: SPfg2, p.9), Yes, I think it’s more reactionary. So they’re not planning in advance…” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p.29), and “I don’t think there is any sort of goal setting, if you know what I mean, but when the school comes up with a plan, we rally. (Transcript: SPfg3, p.5).

The data analysis indicated limitations in the functionality of the driving structure, the ILST/SBST, of support provision for OVCs at school level. This in turn negatively affected the establishment of the FSS to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a mainstreamed, whole school responsibility. The data analysis indicated the provision of psycho-social and educational support at FSSs to be largely the responsibility of the Learner Support Portfolio of the ILST/SBST, and was largely related to responding to the presenting support needs of OVCs.

(ii) ILST/SBST felt they lacked the specialised skills to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs.

The data analysis also indicated that the ILST/SBST at all three FSSs felt they lacked the specialised skills to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as elucidated by ILST/SBST accounts- “We don’t have specialisation ourselves as qualified people to assist sometimes a learner. So we need that outside person, but we also need that hands on person to come.” (SBSTfg3, p 38). Further, they felt that they did not have the space in the school programme to fulfil the duties that were expected of them when it came to psycho-social and educational support for OVCs:

- “I have been told as a teacher that, from this date of January and this date of March, you should have finished this… I am in the classroom with these different kinds of learners, it is not possible.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 19). School staff at all three FSSs felt overwhelmed with curriculum demands to embrace the care and support mandate:
“...the school itself has got so much responsibility. As managers we have got so much of responsibilities. Our core function is pushing the curriculum, I feel like now, it is added responsibilities” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 37). The large class sizes were cited as compounding the challenges they faced in their efforts to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCS as reflected in the following statements: - “They (district officials) must be in touch with reality…. having 50-55 learners in one class. It is a problem.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 33-34). “You have got no time. You have got 46, 50 learners in the class. Then you have got other subjects to concentrate on. When you go there, your mind-set is to complete that syllabus” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 39), and: - “So if we have that programme, and you know that once I am in the classroom with these different kinds of learners, it is not possible.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.19).

The data analysis indicated that in the FSS role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCS as a mainstream, whole school responsibility was negatively affected by the challenges with the functionality of the ILST/SBST, and by the lack of skills and knowledge of psycho-social and educational support interventions among ILST/SBST members. Part of the problem were large class sizes and curriculum delivery demands.

4.4.6. Challenge Six: Shortage and Role Confusion of Support Staff

The document analysis indicated that KZNDOE introduced specialised support staff at the FSS level to strengthen the role of the FSS to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCS. (KZN Department of Education, 2011). Evident from the document analysis was that: - “These support personnel in the main will work directly with learners experiencing barriers to learning and development and, with ILSTs and DBSTs.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011, p. 7). From the data analysis, two issues emerged that negatively affected the role of these support staff in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCS at the FSSs. These were (i) non-filling of support staff posts, and (ii) there was a lack of clarity of roles and who was responsible for supervision of the support staff at FSSs.

(i) Non-filling of support staff posts.
The data analysis indicated that the FSS in the first selection phase of the KZNDOE FSS programme had received their allocations of support staff that were to support the FSS and a group of surrounding mainstream schools. The FSSs in the Phase 2 and 3 FSS selection did not have their posts filled due to the department’s budgetary constraints as elucidated by the programme co-ordinator: - “I must also mention that not all full-service schools, as I speak to you now, have got LSEs and counsellors. We had a lot of challenges” (Transcript: PCii, p.11) and corroborated by the SBST focus group: - “It means that for now we don’t have a person who is assigned to us, because of the financial constraints.” (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p.16). Consequently, at district level, support staff at the phase 1 FSS were expected to support FSSs from the second and third selection phases. The LSE and School Counsellor were expected to operate within and beyond the locality to which they were appointed. This had negatively affected their role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at their appointed FSS. This was reflected in the accounts from programme co-ordinators: - “I mean, they (LSE, School Counsellor) do a lot with the full service schools, they are stretching themselves now to support phase two and phase three schools, because we don’t have people positioned there as yet. ... I think if they were given the time to just focus on what they were appointed for they would do a lot more, and they would get our phase one schools to a little bit more along the way to becoming a bit more functional, but now because they are stretched thin themselves, this process is taking a long, long time.” (Transcript- PCii, p.29). This was corroborated by the SBST focus group: - “Because sometimes we encounter problems and there’s no one there. When we phone the district office they are somewhere in a meeting, somewhere doing something, so there are very few LSE’s supporting the schools.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.34).

The analysis of the data collected indicated that all three schools felt strongly that the support staff should be site based and not itinerant if FSSs are to provide psychosocial and educational support for OVCs effectively. This was elucidated in the following participant accounts: - “The person needs to be here full time ...in a class as an educator I can’t do it, so we need more outside support.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 6; p.38); “she used to tell us that she is not assigned to us she is just helping us. It means that for now we don’t have a person who is assigned to us..., we need them to be
appointed in our school.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 16-17); and: “if the school is changed to be a full servicing, then concentration should be given on programmes to assist there, and there should be someone there ... We must have extra pair of hands.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.34; p13). “I think the most disappointing thing, as ‘Mr’ mentioned, we don’t have the personnel... Get the personnel before getting the structure built.” (Transcript: SBSTfg3, p. 10, p. 41). The critical role of the support staff was also expressed in statements from the SGB subgroup: “Get the personnel before getting the structure built.” (Transcript- SBSTfg3, p.40).

The challenge with delivery of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs, as a result of the non-filling of posts, was corroborated by programme coordinators “… But the other challenge that you experience is the employment of this personnel (LSE and Counsellors). . . . We are struggling; we spoke to the department, we wrote submissions, but they indicated that there is no budget. But we are still pushing forward we need this personnel, because to say this is a full-service school, among other things there must be an LSE and a counsellor.” (Transcript: PCii, p. 11-12)

Participant responses on as to how they would they feel if they had to do without the post of school counsellor and the learning support educator, alluded to the positive role of the support staff with respect to providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The following response from the programme co-ordinators captures the sentiments of both school based staff and programme co-ordinators.

This was evident in the data collected about the role of the LSEs and School Counsellors: -

“..a co-ordinator(FSS programme co-ordinator) will still not be able to do the amount of work that the LSE’s do - the hands-on work, and for me as much as you can have programme co-ordinators, but it’s the work with the learners that’s most important…..having supervised their (LSE and Counsellor) work for a short period of time, the impact that they have with individual learners, you know; for me I’m so happy about, so that I would be alarmed if their post is taken away; the learners themselves would not be able to get the support that they’re getting.” (Transcript: PCii, p.30).
(ii) Lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the support staff.

The document analysis indicated that the KZNDOE provincial office held an orientation programme for LSEs and Counsellors on appointment in January 2011 (KZN Department of Education Notice of Meeting: 24 November 2010), and a further orientation/induction programme was held in April 2011 (KZN Department of Education Orientation Programme: LSE/Counsellor, 6 April 2011). (See Annexure G, p.278). The KZNDOE provincial office held a meeting with district FSS co-ordinators in February 2010 to clarifying the job descriptions of LSAs. (See Annexure G p.278)

From the data analysis, it emerged that LSAs were not clear about their roles and responsibilities in the provision of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs. The accounts of the Learning Support Assistants indicated lack of clarity and confusion related to their job description, lines of reporting and to whom they were accountable as elucidated in the statements from the LSA subgroup: - “Before I used to come and do the photocopies and stay by the admin and go to the class and mark for the teachers, just sit there doing nothing.” (Transcript: LSAfg, p.5); “When the LSE calls a workshop in our school, she calls all the teachers from other schools. The only thing she’ll say to us, “Take pictures. Do this’ I won’t sit and listen to the workshop and get some knowledge.” (Transcript –LSAfg, p.21); “...at the full service school we have a learner support assistant...they do not know who are they accountable to. A LSA will say today the principal said...and tomorrow she will say the HOD of the phase is saying something else, so there is not like one person who is directly responsible for an LSA.” (Transcript: SCfg, p.27). Programme coordinators expressed ignorance as to whom the LSAs were accountable to: -

“...learning support assistants, yes, I think both at foundation level and at intermediate level.... Again, in terms of accountability there was a bit of a problem. Who are they actually accountable to?” (Transcript: PCii, p.26).

According to the programme co-ordinators, the lack of clarity with respect to the roles of support staff resulted in LSEs and counsellors defining their roles themselves: - “...the LSE’s were given carte blanche to look at what was out there and bring it to
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The full service schools, and the district people sometimes were not even made aware of these programmes, .... when we took over we realised, Let’s hear what these programmes are about. O my goodness, no, some were not even related to the barriers, it’s just like saying, ‘I think that’s very nice and our full service schools need that. -that is the flavour of the month’” (Transcript: PCii, p. 35).

The lack of support from the district programme co-ordinator for support staff was also corroborated by the School Counsellor focus group: - “I also think the district needs to provide a lot of support to the schools and also to the school counsellors and the learner support educators” (Transcript: SCfg, p.44). This kind of relationship between the district officials and the support staff compromised service delivery of these specialist support staff, which in turn affected the role of FSSs in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs and ultimately the provision of appropriate support to address OVC needs.

Both district officials and FSS support staff reported confusion related to the duties and responsibilities of support staff in the delivery of psycho-social and educational support at FSSs. This was effectively expressed in the account from Programme Coordinators: - “...if they were going to be itinerant people, they would obviously have to work very closely with the district people, and as district people we didn’t know what their roles and functions were, right from the start, so I think we needed to be brought on board right from the outset.” (Transcript: PCii, p.29). The programme co-ordinators’ distance from the supervision of support staff is elucidated in the statement from the School Counsellor subgroup: - “I think in my experience; the most challenge is that lack of supervision.” (Transcript: SCfg, p.27; 44). The lack of supervision was also expressed in the data collected from the LSA subgroup: - “She (LSE) doesn’t even come around, to be honest. I don’t know when last I saw her. This year I haven’t seen her.” (Transcript: LSAfg, p. 8).

The data analysis indicated that the LSE and the School Counsellors looked to the District officials for supervision and development in their role to deliver psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. They reported to the District Officials within the
Special Needs Education Services (SNES) Section in terms of their work: “They expect us to go and take our reports and bring to the districts. It always comes (included) as a section thing (report)” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.22). The School Counsellors came across as being more settled and clearer about their lines of linkages within the SNES section than the LSEs. The School Counsellors appeared to link their work to the psycho-social programme within SNES: - “Whenever we plan, ... I work collaboratively with psycho-social” (Transcript: SCfg, p. 9), whilst the LSEs were uncertain as to which component they could look to for direction and support as at district level there was no Inclusive Education section. There was only the section Special Education: - “But no one is caring about us...... We were not equipped. We found our feet. We always sit together, plan, we took our (toolkit) pack” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.22, p.19).

The accounts above indicated that there were implementation challenges in the provision of specialised human resources (as seen in the LSE, LSA and School Counsellor groups) that were intended to assist FSSs in their role to deliver psychosocial and educational support services for OVCs.

4.4.7. Challenge Seven: Insufficient Collaborations

From the analysis of the data, all three data collection sources indicated the promotion of inter-sectoral collaboration as one of the cornerstones of the FSS role to respond to the psycho-social and educational support needs of OVCs. The document analysis indicated that FSSs were expected not only to promote “strong links/partnerships with other government departments, NGOs, CBOs, HEIs, business and private sector” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 5), but also to encourage alignment and linkages of programmes within the education sector to deliver on the care and support mandate. This is clarified in the following statements contained in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS Guideline documents: -

“Education Department at the district, provincial and national level collaborate with other key line function departments and NGOs to ensure that inclusive education in the schools is supported through inter-sectoral collaboration” (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p.45).
“Additional support programmes are delivered by the FSS in partnership with relevant District officials, LSE and counsellor and the school’s network of stakeholders.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 14).

The data analysis indicated that whilst there was evidence of (i) intra-departmental and (ii) inter-sectoral collaborations, these were insufficient for the provision of support and care of OVCs.

(i) Intra-Departmental Collaborations

The data analysis indicated limited evidence of advocating for collaboration between sections within the education department. The experience of the Programme Coordinators with respect to this kind of collaboration seemed to differ from the experiences of the participants at the FSSs. Programme Co-ordinator reports indicated that, whilst outcomes are not necessarily all the time positive, they worked collaboratively with other sections in the department in respect to the FSS programme as reflected in the following statements: - “Within education, yes. We worked collaboratively” (Transcript: PCii p.8); “We found that the SEMs were very helpful in the whole process.” (Transcript: PCii, p.1).

School based participant accounts indicated that the advocacy programme to promote collaboration among key education stakeholders (e.g. teachers, SEMs, subject advisors) for the implementation of the FSS programme was inadequate: - “Let us say the subject advisors come, they don’t know about this (the FSS programme)”. (Transcript- SBST2, p. 19). Schools reported that sections within the district office appeared to be unaware of the FSS programme as elucidated in the statement from the SBST focus group: - “I think you need to make more advocacy workshops on this full service, because for some officials, it is something that is new to them.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.24).

ILSTS/SBSTs reported that demands were made on them by the various departmental officials without considering their context: “the subject advisors come…Once you try
to explain to them that, I have to go with the pace of the learner, because at the end of the day, they do achieve. But if I (educator) run like this, then they (learners) don’t. So that is the only thing that troubles us, I think as educators” (Transcript- SBSTfg2, p. 19). Furthermore, FSS staff felt that the various sections in the department implemented their programmes in isolation of each other. This was elucidated in the following statements from the SBST focus group: -

“Let us talk about ANA. Let us talk about these programmes, educational programmes, where I have been told there as a teacher that, from this date of January and this date of March, you should have finished this. And you could see that these people, it is easy for them to plan, not knowing what we are doing down here.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.19). This was corroborated by the programme coordinator subgroup: - “…even when you’re looking at the involvement of TLS and exams etc., because in Pinetown for example, we are working with Pilo (DBE Curriculum delivery project), who is doing a lot in terms of curriculum delivery, and they’ve come up with a new concept, Jiga Mfundo, that is helping mainstream schools. So now we’re finding that full service schools are saying to us, ‘Does Pilo know about us?’, and we are informing people as we go along” (Transcript: PCii, p.46-47).

The SGB was identified as one of the key stakeholders with whom not enough advocacy was done. “I think you still have to capacitate the SGBs on care and support. I don’t think we have done justice there” (Transcript: PCii, p.16), this was corroborated by the SGB subgroup: - “the teacher, the SGB, they all need to be educated on what’s to be done, what they can do for this programme to work.” (Transcript: SGBfg3, p.32). Whilst SGB reports from all three schools indicated that they were informed about the activities related to the FSS roll-out at the school, the data analysis indicated that their role however was largely supportive and being kept informed via meetings with the school or principal rather than from active participants in programme direction and development: “We were not involved in how it became the full service school, but the principal told us - SGB now, (name of school) is going to be a full service school, but we were never involved in how the school was chosen.” (Transcript: SGBfg2, p.2); “I only remember the time when the Principal came and told us that our school has been approved “(Transcript: SGBfg3, p.2); “the parents of the learners are told about whatever that is happening within the school.” (Transcript: SGBfg1; p. 4). The lack
of collaboration with the SGB was also corroborated by the School Counsellor focus group: - “I would say the SGB was not part of it. They were only told after they were being identified that you are now going to be a full service school” (Transcript: SCfg, p.3.)

The data analysis also revealed that both the programme co-ordinators and school based staff found that the inadequacies in the advocacy programme had posed a threat to the role that FSSs played in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs: “It (advocacy) was a once off hit and run job… But with hindsight, I think maybe we should have –put the foundations in place, go a bit slower” (Transcript: PCIi, p.4). The need for greater advocacy and collaborations was also supported by the SBST focus group: - “Some of the people are asking you in the field, they don’t know what the full service is, what needs to be done. So an advocacy workshop must be done.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.25). “I don’t know. I think if we know what the full objectives of the full service centre are, then we might know where we fit in. We have a general idea, but we need specifics of what is going on.” (Transcript – Stakeholders3, p.11)

From the perspective of the OVCs, the data collected did not reflect reports of any targeted advocacy programme for learners who were the OVCs of the psycho-social and educational support initiatives. There were no reports indicating a strategy to take learners along, to engage them and keep them abreast with the developments at the school as it went along its journey to be strengthened to become a care and support centre aimed at addressing the psycho-social and educational support needs of OVCs. However, learner reports indicated that on an ad hoc basis, educators or the principal would inform them about certain developments at the school and they would share their feelings about these. In response to the question, ‘Tell me how the school involves you in identifying programmes for learners, learners had this to say’:

“It is usually we approach them (the teachers) with our ideas and stuff” (Transcript- Learnersfg3, p. 5); “The school (decides).” (Transcript: Learnersfg2, p.9); “They (teachers) talk to the prefects” (Transcript: Learnersfg2, p.11).
(ii) Inter-sectoral collaborations

In terms of advocating for collaboration between the FSS and its network of support providers, the data analysis indicated that all three FSSs recognised that forming strong partnerships with their network of support providers was critical to their ability to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. There was a limitation of the FSS efforts to collaborate with their network of service providers. This limitation was reflected in the data analysis at all three schools. The nature of the collaboration was largely school initiated to address the presenting of issues among learners (reactive), as compared to any long term developmental plan to address issues at a macro level. The following statements from the stakeholder focus group elucidate this: - “I don’t think there is any sort of goal setting, if you know what I mean ... But when the school comes up with a plan, we rally.” (Transcript: SPfg 3, p.5). “So they will call us if there is a problem with any child, although we haven’t dealt with many, but we have sent for assessments” (Transcript – SPfg 2, p.14).

“They must accept that there will be challenges, there will be constraints, but those challenges will not only be addressed by the teachers. We need a high level of support from them (district officials).” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.47)

4.5. Enabling Factors

I now present the enabling factors that were evident within the FSS programme that could have facilitated the FSS to be effective in its role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Three dominant themes in this regard emerged in the data analysis. These included: confidence among the participants that the FSS programme had the potential to succeed, secondly, the implementation design of the
FSS programme promoted care and support as a mainstream activity, and thirdly that KZNDOE showed innovation related to budgetary, human and material provisioning for FSSs.

4.5.1. Confidence Among the Participants in the FSS Programme Objectives

The data analysis indicated that all participants were confident and were full of hope in the programme and its potential to address psycho-social and educational support needs of OVCs: This was reflected in the statements from the Programme Coordinators’ Subgroup: - “100 percent I feel it can work, and I feel it works, provided people change their attitude and provided people have a good understanding what a full-service school is... So it can work, and it works.” (Transcript -PCii, p.24). It was also indicated in the Network of Service Provider subgroup: - “This programme is going to work, and this programme will work. From my point of view, I think actually this is what we need in schools” (Transcript: –SPfg, p.20). Statements from the SGB subgroup also indicated faith in the FSSs being successful in their care and support role: - “Yes, it will work, with the support from the department it will work.” (Transcript: SGBfg2, p.33). Confidence in the programme was also expressed by the School Counsellor subgroup: - “I think it’s a beautiful approach, it’s such a beautiful programme, I think it can work” (Transcript: - SCfg, p.40). All three SBST focus groups were full of hope for the FSS programme: “I will say that you know what this programme will work wonders if we implement it and everybody is consistent” (Transcript: - SBSTfg3, p.36), “Not that it will work; it works so if we get enough support from relevant stakeholders, I think it is powerful.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.45), and: - “It’s working right now.” (Transcript: - SBSTfg1, p.30).

Despite the many operational challenges that the LSE, counsellor and LSA expressed, they responded with an emphatic “Yes” when they were questioned on whether they would currently apply for their jobs based on what they know now. The accounts of the specialist support staff also reflected their sincere commitment and passion for their work: - “Yes. I enjoy it. I really do enjoy working with the children.” (Transcript-LSAfg, p27); “Definitely. I think we like what we are doing.
We have passion for what we are doing and we are hard workers on it.” (Transcript-LSEfg, p.55); I love to be a school counsellor, that’s my work. (Transcript- SCfg, p.42).

4.5.2. KZNDOE Programme Implementation Design Promoted Psychosocial and Educational Support as a Mainstream Activity at FSSs

It emerged, from the data analysis that KZNDOE from a design perspective, aimed to implement psycho-social and educational support provisioning as a mainstream function at the FSSs as opposed to an ad-hoc function. At a design level, the provisioning for care and support policies, support structures, budget planning, processes and monitoring were aligned to existing systems and practices at the FSSs. The document analysis indicated that “The school’s financial committee must manage this budget as a ring-fenced fund. The committee must follow all Departmental financial controls as per PFMA regulations when managing these funds... all expenditure must be approved by the school financial committee” (KZN Department of Education, 2011, p.12). The KZN Department of Education FSS Conceptual and Operational Guideline, (2011) and KZNDOE IE Notice to Districts, 8 May 2009, in the document analysis, indicated the financial procedures and processes that FSSs were expected to follow when utilising the OVC care and support budget. FSSs were expected to submit expenditure records to the district office. They were also expected to record all assets and specialised LTSM purchased for support of OVCs utilising the care and support funds, in the schools’ asset management register: - “strict records must be kept in line with the Department’s asset management policy.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p.13).

There was evidence in the data analysis that the design features of the FSS programme promoted the alignment of the FSS programme to existing process and practices at FSSs. This was elucidated in SBSTfg1 focus group accounts: - “We could not use the funds anyhow, except for following the guidelines(programme)-…Yes, it (monies) were in one account, the school account… It was strictly on learner support.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 14-15); in SBSTfg3 accounts: - “the clerk has an inventory, because she uses the cheque numbers and she puts the item that she purchased on it. So that is an inventory that she keeps for her records. Under school assets.” (Transcript SBSTfg3, p.17), and in the SBSTfg2 accounts: - “We do have a
From the data analysis, it was also evident that the FSSs were expected to review their existing policies to ensure they embrace the care and support mandate as elucidated by the statements from the Programme Co-ordinators: - “They (FSSs) were made aware that they need to review their policies, different policies, at school level, to make sure that the policies that they have are in line with the care and support policy.” (Transcript: - PCii, p.17), and was further indicated by the SBST subgroup: - “we had a meeting that we did not finish were we were about to deliberate more on the policies that we have and the policies that we need to add” (Transcript: - SBSTfg2, p. 32), and this was also corroborated by the LSE subgroup: - “I mean some of the policies are not in line with Education White Paper 6, so some of the policies they have changed.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p. 38).

From the document analysis it emerged that KZNDOE made deliberate efforts in the provincial FSS implementation design to mainstream the provision of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. One of the ways it did this was by promoting the alignment of the duties and responsibilities of the support delivery structure (the SBST) to that of the School Management Team (SMT): - “The KZN response to establish these support structures was to adopt the strategy of aligning the mandates of these support structures to existing management and support structures” (KZN Department of Education, 2011, p.9). This was corroborated by the SBST focus group accounts: - “Like here these are all SMT people, so they are the school-based support team” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.28), and: - “We do have this SBST with this three portfolios … the committee will take that (issues) to the SMT.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.13, p.38). The data analysis indicated that the SBST was organised into three portfolio committees involving all staff members. Overseeing or monitoring role of the School Management Team was also evident in the Programme Coordinators statements: - “The ILST is subdivided into the learner component, the teacher component, and the whole school evaluation component…. SMT must monitor.”
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(Transcript: PCii, p.6, p.11). Thus whole school responsibility for the delivery of psycho social and educational support for OVCs was promoted.

4.5.3. KZNDOE Showed Innovation Related to Budgetary, Human and Material Provisioning for FSSs

From the document analysis, it emerged that, in the DBE FSS and Inclusive Schools policy guideline document regarding budgeting for strengthening the FSS role as a care and support resource responsive to the support needs of OVCs, there was no suggestion of a top –up budget or a specific care and support budget allocation as part of the school’s norms and standards to provide support interventions for orphans or other vulnerable learners. (Department of Basic Education, 2010). Schools were expected to utilise existing budgets when providing educational and psycho-social support for OVCs as illustrated in the following excerpt from the DBE FSS guideline document: - “Schools must budget for assistive devices and specialised equipment as part of their LTSM budget.” (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 38)

The KZNDOE, however, identified that one of the essential provisioning items that needed to be in place for FSSs to be effective in its role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, was a budget allocation for care and support interventions: -- “A top up to the school’s funding norms and standards is allocated to FSSs. The additional funds are allocated as part of the Inclusive Education allocation that is intended specifically for activities that address support programmes for teaching and learning that arise from the SIAS process” (KZN Department of Education 2011: p. 11). This was also reflected in the notices to district managers, dated 18 March 2009 and 20 July 2009. The provision for care and support for OVCs was further corroborated by programme co-ordinators- “There was a budget which was allocated to full-service schools for care and support” (Transcript- PCii, p. 8).

All three FSSs also confirmed receipt of a budget allocation for care and support interventions for OVCs: “We were given a budget last year” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p.20). This was also corroborated by the SGB subgroup: - “Yes, there was a budget for OVC.” (Transcript: SGBfg1, p. 18).

From the document analysis, it emerged that KZNDOE provided guidelines to FSSs as to how the care and support budget allocations were to be utilised. As outlined in
the KZN Department of Education FSSs Operational guideline document 2011, and in
the notices to district managers dated 18 March 2009 and 20 July 2009, this budget
was aligned to the package of essential care and support interventions that KZNDOE
FSSs be expected to provide. The broad categories on which the funds could be utilised
included: - physical adaptations to increase physical access, personal care
(health and hygiene), consultancy (therapeutic services), transport, specialised LTSM
and care and support material (KZN Department of Education, 2011). This was
corroborated by SBST subgroup: - - “... they (district officials) came with a
management plan for the utilisation of the funds... because the funds were controlled
in a way. So we could not use the funds anyhow, except for following the guidelines…
we were given specifications on how to spend it. It was strictly on learner support.”
(Transcript: SBSTfg1, p. 14-15). Thus in the design of the FSS implementation
programme, KZNDOE specifically identified psycho-social and educational support
for OVCs that needed to be delivered at FSSs.

Another area that emerged in the data analysis was the KZNDOE illustrated visionary
leadership in the provision of specialised human resources. The DBE FSS/ Inclusive
Schools guideline document analysis did not indicate the provision of specialised staff
at FSSs as a standard issue to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs
at FSSs. The document analysis however indicated that the KZN Department of
Education FSS Conceptual and Operational guidelines made reference to the provision
of support staff as a standard issue at FSSs: - “Three new support posts for schools
within the mainstream sector has been introduced as part of the FSS programme viz.
School Counsellor; Learning Support Educator (LSE) and Learner Support Assistant
(LSA).” (KZN Department of Education, 2011, p.7). There were two school based
Learner Support Assistants (LSA), one for each phase at the FSS and two itinerant
specialists namely, a School Counsellor and a Learning Support Educator(LSE). (KZN
Department of Education, 2011). The data analysis indicated that the provision of the
staff was regarded as one of the essential elements at FSSs to ensure that it was
successful in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This
was elucidated in accounts from the SBST focus group: - “Get the personnel before
getting the structure built” (Transcript: - SBSTfg3, p. 41), also in the statement
expressed by the Programme Co-ordinators: - “They are dedicated, they make a huge
difference at grassroots, where it matters most I find them to be very hands-on, they visit the schools regularly, .... the impact that they have with individual learners, you know, for me I’m so happy about, I take my hat off to them, they’re hard working, all of them; the counsellors, the learner support educators. So that I would be alarmed (if they are taken away) the learners themselves would not be able to get the support that they’re getting.” (Transcript: PCii, p.30-31). The critical role of the support staff in the FSS’s role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs was also elucidated in the Network of Service Providers accounts: - “the only person I phone is her (LSE), ...if you have got the problem with education of a child, just go to ‘Mrs’... she can intervene (Transcript: SPfg1, p.9, p.36).

It also emerged, from the data analysis, that KZNDOE illustrated visionary leadership in the provision of specialised material resources to assist the FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The provision of a KZNDOE developed toolkit to guide and assist district and education support staff with the HRD programme to strengthen FSSs to be effective in their role as a care and support resource for OVCs. This was acknowledged by programme coordinators in the study: - “Yes, we all got a resource pack, like a file, and in that pack was all the content and the activities that we had to do with the schools.” (Transcript: PCii, p.9), and further corroborated by education support staff: - “That pack that we were given to us was full of information.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.19)

The participants’ accounts indicated that they found it to contain all the critical information to enable programme implementers to support FSSs. This was reflected in the statements from the district co-ordinators: - They were comprehensive, beautifully done, no doubt about it... Theoretical aspects together with the activities, I thought it was well thought out, you know, those things.” (Transcript: PCii, p. 6), and this was corroborated by education support staff at FSSs: -. “We always sit together, plan, look at our pack. You remember that pack Yes, the pack ...It helped us a lot.” (Transcript: LSEfg, p.19).

The document analysis indicated that KZNDOE design for FSSs went further than the DBE FSS policy guidelines by providing over and above “...the minimum norms and
standards for public ordinary schools with regards to safety and access for all public facilities,” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 8), designated spaces for integrated service delivery of support programmes and services for OVCs – “FSS should have a Support Centre …. for the delivery of additional support programmes.” (KZN Department of Education, 2011: p. 8). The availability of this resource at FSS was corroborated by accounts from SBSTs: - “We’ve got a full service centre.” (Transcript- SBSTfg3, p8), “We do have a space for learners to talk to somebody. Like this centre, we have consultation rooms here.” (Transcript: SBSTfg1, p.25), and “We explain to them (parents) that this is not a school, this is a support centre.” (Transcript: SBSTfg2, p. 46)

The document analysis indicated that the support centre had spaces to accommodate a counselling room, health consultation room, an activity/ workshop/ therapy room, a kitchenette, storeroom, a strong room, reception area, office space for specialised support staff and a disability accessible toilet. This care and support resource was part of the moderate support provisioning associate with the KZNDOE FSS. (KZN Department of Education, 2011).

Despite the many challenges that the FSSs faced, the data analysis indicated many enabling factors that were present in the FSS programme. If these enabling factors were capitalised on during the implementation process, it would have assisted FSSs to being more effective in their role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Diagram 4.2. below illustrates a summary of the enabling factors that emerged in the data analysis in relation to the role of FSSs in providing support for OVCs.
4.6. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the outcomes of the stages of data analysis ending with the identification of themes that emerged from the data collected. Overall, the results indicated that participants were confident of the potential of the FSS programme to respond to the care and support needs of OVCs. From a programme implementation design perspective, there were many enabling factors to support the FSSs in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. However, from the accounts of participants, there were many threats to implementation. These ranged from the level of functionality of the schools in the study prior to being selected as a FSS, large class sizes, educators feeling inadequate to deliver on the support mandate, the demands of the myriad departmental programmes, lack of specialist support, to inadequate site based support and guidance from programme coordinators. The next
chapter focuses on the interpretation and discussion of the results outlined in this chapter.

“This programme is going to work, and this programme will work. From my point of view, I think actually this is what we need in schools” (Transcript: –SPfg, p.20).
Chapter 5. Discussion of Research Results

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in chapter 4 as it relates to the role of FSSs in the Pinetown District in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This discussion is framed by the identified challenges and enabling factors indicated in chapter 4 in relation to the research question. The discussion of the findings is integrated with the literature review in chapter 2, the theoretical framework for the study and the researcher’s interpretation of the findings. As indicated in chapter 2 an intensive document search has indicated that both globally and within the South African context, research studies on FSSs are scant. Consequently, much of the discussion in this chapter revolves around the possible factors within the context of the FSSs programme and the researcher’s understanding of the factors that may have contributed to the results of the study.

5.2. Challenges

As outlined in chapter 4, whilst the three FSSs in the study where located in three different types of locations, namely rural, low cost housing township and a peri-urban suburb, this study found that all three FSSs were facing similar challenges in relation to their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This study found that there were implementation challenges at the macro system (Department of Basic Education), exosystem (KZNOE – provincial and district) and mesosystem (FSS) levels that compromised the FSSs to function in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a mainstream activity embraced by the whole school community. These challenges are discussed below.

5.2.1. Challenge One: Issues with the FSS Selection Criteria

This study found that all three FSSs were struggling with basic norms and standards issues (e.g. large class sizes, staff shortages, absence of a library), which challenged them in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Three critical issues related to the selection criteria of FSSs were indicated as impacting negatively on ensuring schools that were selected to be FSSs were best positioned to
deliver on the role of promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These included:

(i) Programme implementers were not fully conversant with the FSS selection criteria

This study found that the FSS programme implementers at the Pinetown Education district office were not fully aware of the range of the FSS selection criteria and its associated indicators. It was evident in this study that the gaps in the programme implementer’s knowledge of the FSS selection criteria contributed to the selection of FSSs that were not necessarily the sites best positioned to deliver on the role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

There is an absence of research studies that explore the relation between the FSS selection criteria and its ability to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs with which this finding could be compared. The researcher, however, notes that the reason for the gaps in the programme implementer’s knowledge of the FSS selection criteria could be rooted in one of the findings of this study. The researcher found that the programme implementers were reluctant to take full responsibility for the FSS programme implementation. This understanding links with the arguments put forward by UNICEF (2006), SAIDE (2012) and REPSSI (2009), that emphasizes the importance of strong leadership at government level in partnership with parents, community and private sector, as a critical factor in promoting caring and protective environments for OVC. In line with this argument, the researcher is of the view that for FSS’s to be successful in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, it is of critical importance that there would be strong leadership at KZNDOE provincial, district and school levels.

This study found that there were challenges at the exosystem level (district level). Namely there was a lack of ownership for the programme by district programme implementers, and this contributed to gaps in their knowledge about the FSS selection criteria and its associated indicators. This impacted negatively on their selection of FSSs, which had implications for FSSs at the mesosystem level. FSSs were challenged
in their role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs to address gaps at the microsystem level (family/home).

KZNDOE allocated the leadership responsibility for the FSS programme to an existing directorate, namely: Special Needs Education Services (SNES), which already had a programme focus and defined mandate. Consequently, the SNES section was not committed to the FSS programme implementation. They saw the FSS programme as not being their priority, but as being an additional responsibility to their core mandate. This lack of ownership by the programme implementers for the programme leadership demonstrated support for the arguments of UNICEF (2006), SAIDE (2012) and REPSSI (2009). These organisations argued that the lack of programme leadership can contribute negatively on the commitment of implementers to ensure the achievement of the programme goals.

(ii) The programme co-ordinators showed biasness for some selection criteria over others in the selection process

The presence of a champion for care and support initiatives (a person willingly engaged in addressing support for OVCs) for OVCs, for schools that were already engaging in supporting OVCs and the presence of strong leadership, were three indicators which were viewed by the district FSS selection team as being strong predictors of the school having the potential to successfully promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The literature review in chapter 2 also indicated that leadership and management capacity (SAIDE, 2012), ethos and focus of the school and the classroom (Noble & McGrath, 2015), and caring teachers (REPESSI, 2009), are among the critical factors that promote opportunities for OVCs to develop meaningful relationships, and to be supported to reach their full potential. This study corroborated that these were advocated as essential FSS selection criteria in the KZNDOE (2011) and the DBE (2010) FSS guideline documents. However, these guideline documents and the literature review cited in chapter 2 did not advocate for the presence of a particular selection criteria at the expense of other enabling criteria as being the factor that will guarantee that the potential FSS will be successful in its role to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Consequently, the
biasness (at the exosystem level) towards certain FSS selection criteria by FSS selection team within the Pinetown Education district, would have likely contributed to the selection of FSSs (at the mesosystem level) that were not best positioned to deliver on psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(iii) Inadequate assessment of the selection criteria at potential FSSs

This study showed inadequacies in the scope and range of assessment of the selection criteria at potential FSSs. Firstly, the FSS selection team lacked the inclusion of a range of critical expertise (e.g. finance, infrastructure, governance and management, curriculum, norms and standards) needed for the effective evaluation of the FSS selection criteria at potential FSSs, as advocated in research by Grant and Baumann (2006) and Will Beale (2006). Research by Grant and Baumann (2006) and Will Beale (2006), advocated that when introducing a new programme in an existing setting, it is critical to obtain input from a range of specialists on issues such as the cost of renovations, the financial and programme implications, potential onsite and offsite risks, specialised technologies, physical structure and design needs, for successful programme implementation. In support of this argument put forward by these researchers, both the DBE (2010) and KZNDOE (2011), directives on the selection of potential FSSs, advocated for a range of specialist considerations associated with the selection criteria at potential FSSs. The researcher notes that the lack of involvement of a range of critical expertise in the FSS selection process could have stemmed from the allocated SNES FSS leadership role, which may have resulted in the directorate being viewed as being responsible for all aspects of the FSS programme.

The researcher noted that allocating the responsibility to the SNES section for establishing a critical OVC support resource, (such as the FSS that required input and leadership from a range of experts), would have been an onerous task for the section. Evident in this study was that the SNES comprised of therapists, psychologists, social workers and special education advisors. By their own admission, they did not have the competence to deal with critical issues of finance, human resource provisioning, infrastructure development, governance and management policies and procedures or strategic planning for organizational development. Hence, the failure of KZNDOE to
ensure that the selection process involved input from a multi-disciplinary team (at the exosystem level). Their failure compromised the selection of FSSs (located at the mesosystem level) that were best positioned to deliver on the role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, to address gaps in the microsystem level.

Secondly, this study indicated that the selection team relied on subjective reports of two sections (SNES Officials and Circuit Management) when making final decisions about the selection of FSSs. This study indicated that this did not always correlate with the FSS’s ability in relation to the selection criteria. The researcher notes that there is research evidence to suggest that subjective assessments should not be regarded as less of an assessment and can enhance objective methods of assessing the selection criteria (Danuta et al, 2010; and Inayah et al, 2017). However, cognisance must be taken of the fact that such reports are individual views and understandings and as such, run the risk of being biased or discriminatory (Cucato et al, 2013; Kokemuller, n.d: para. 4). Consequently, the over reliance on subjective methods of identifying potential FSSs could have contributed to compromising the selection process.

Based on the findings of the issues related to the selection process, the researcher came to the following conclusion: that a reason for the FSSs in this study being challenged in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, may not be due to inappropriate selection criteria, but rather to gaps in the selection process. In other words, in line with the bio-ecological systems theory that framed this study, gaps at the exosystem level (district office), of not being conversant with the FSS selection criteria compromised the selection process of FSSs, located at mesosystem level. This ultimately contributed to FSSs being challenged in their role to successfully promote a sustainable psycho-social and educational support for OVCs to address gaps in the microsystem level.

5.2.2. Challenge Two: Issues with Care and Support Budget Allocations

This study showed that FSSs were challenged in utilising budget allocation to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Their challenges were related to implementation issues namely: inconsistent budget allocations, limitations in
understanding of budgetary processes, gaps in the support and monitoring process. (i)

Inconsistent allocation of budgets

This study showed that systemic challenges at the provincial level (*incorrect programme location of funds*) resulted in inconsistent provision of the care and support budget allocations to FSSs. This negatively affected the FSS’s role to provide a range of psycho-social and educational support programmes and services for OVCs. There is an absence of research studies that explore the relation between provision of designated care and support funds to FSSs and their ability to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs with which this finding could be compared.

The inconsistent allocation of these care and support funds to FSSs could be understood from the perspective of arguments put forward by Dorn, Kanikeberg and Burke (2011), and Beale (2006), that emphasize the need for input from a range of expertise when expanding the programme at an existing site. In line with the arguments of Dorn, Kanikeberg and Burke (2011), and Beale (2006), the researcher is of the view that the inclusion of finance expertise in the district and provincial FSS planning and implementation teams would have certain clear-cut results. Such expertise would have contributed to informing the costing of the programme, to identifying and addressing threats to implementation, and to the inclusion for the provision of care and support budgets to FSSs in the provincial and district budget plans.

These challenges related to the utilisation of care and support funds faced by FSSs is a clear illustration of Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study. (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). It illustrates how gaps, such as the absence of financial expertise in the FSS selection team experienced at the exosystem level (district), affects the ability of the mesosystem level (FSSs) to promote psycho-social and educational support interventions for OVCs. Bronfenbrenner’s theory also shows the need for the exosystem (through the inclusion of financial expertise in the FSS selection team) to intervene to address implementation gaps. This ultimately has benefits for OVCs to address gaps at the microsystem level.

(ii) The lack of skills and understanding of budget utilisation
All three FSSs in this study could not provide clarity around expenditure processes. Participants at both district and FSS level were unable to indicate what percentage of the budget was actually utilised for the benefit of OVC needs. More specifically, there was no clarity around budget planning for psychological, therapeutic and educational support for OVCs. Moreover, there was no indication that all stakeholders were appraised or included in discussions around the utilisation of OVC care and support funds.

The researcher notes that the lack of clarity related to the cost drivers and the understanding of the utilisation of care and support funds for OVCs among FSS staff and stakeholders could be understood from the perspective of arguments put forward by authors Lienert (2018), Schoenhard (2017) and Morrissey, (2015). These authors emphasize that failure to plan to ensure understanding among key stakeholders of the programme objectives will threaten the programme’s efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Neglecting to involve the wider school community in the advocacy and training sessions related to the utilisation of OVC care and support funds is probably a factor that contributed to the lack of understanding among the SGB, teachers, support staff, network of support providers and learners of budgetary planning and expenditure processes.

This situation was further compounded by the failure of the Pinetown Education Office to ensure that there was financial capacity within the FSS selection and implementation team to support and develop a plan to track fund utilisation at FSSs. This failure as argued by UNESCO, (2005), Lahey (2015) and Karalis (2016). Programme implementers ran the risk of compromising the role of FSSs in achieving the programme goals. This finding was in line with Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, whilst at the exosystem level (provincial), there was financial provision for care and support at FSSs, but there was a lack of capacity at both the exosystem (district) and mesosystem (FSS) levels to ensure that these funds were utilised to address psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. (iii) Limited consultation with key stakeholders in the development of budget utilisation plans
Evident in this study was the lack of understanding among key FSS stakeholders (SGB, Network of Support Providers, OVCs and SBSTs) of how and for what the care and support budget was to be utilised. FSS stakeholders expressed no or limited involvement in budget planning processes. This finding concurs with the arguments forwarded by researchers Liang, Yu, and Guo, (2017) who have argued that the non-inclusion of key stakeholders in budget planning processes runs the risk of the ineffective use of funds. The non-inclusion of stakeholders also challenges researchers in identifying opportunities and threats to implementation and undermines stakeholder ownership for the delivery of the programme. The researcher’s understanding of the reasons for the non-involvement of stakeholders in the budget planning process is twofold. Firstly, the findings indicated that the management of the funds were delegated to a few members belonging to the finance committee of the school. The support funds were a new allocation to the schools, and support, direction and monitoring from the district office was critical to ensure appropriate processes and practices were in place to promote integrated budget planning for OVC care and support. The findings indicated that this was not forthcoming, as district officials in the implementation team declared that they lacked the necessary capacity to support the process. Secondly, the research notes that there were inadequacies in the advocacy programme on the care and support budget. There was no indication in the findings that the whole school was appraised on the cost drivers and the processes related to the utilisation of the care and support funds.

These gaps in the processes related to the utilisation of the OVC care and support funds at the FSSs, could have contributed, as argued by researchers Liang, Yu, and Guo (2017), to the lack of understanding and active participation among key FSS stakeholders (SGB, Network of Support Providers, OVCs and SBSTs) in budgetary processes related to the care and support budget. This ultimately lead to threats in ensuring that the care and support funds intended for OVC benefit were utilised for the intended purpose.

(iv) Lack of monitoring, evaluation and support of the utilisation of funds by FSSs from district officials.
This study showed that there was an absence of support and monitoring from the district and provincial office. This lack of support contributed to FSSs being challenged in relation to compliance with budget utilisation. Both DBE and KZNDOE programme directives strongly advocated for the monitoring and support of FSSs by district officials to ensure that FSSs were effective in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs (KZNDOE, 2011; and DBE, 2010). This study demonstrated the argument put forward by Lahey (2015), that emphasized that gaps in the oversight role runs certain risks. These risks included failing to measure the programme progress, the successes the monitoring of other influences that could impact negatively on the programme goals and failing to identify what measures need to be put in place to address possible risks to programme success. The researcher notes that the District Programme Co-ordinators who had the support and oversight roles in terms of school utilisation of care and support funds were reluctant to assume the responsibility. This reluctance -- highly likely contributed to the challenges with budgetary issues at FSSs. The researcher notes that the possible reasons for the lack of ownership by the district programme implementers for the monitoring of the utilisation of care and support funds at FSSs are twofold.

Firstly, by their own admission in this study, programme co-ordinators declared that they avoided the responsibility as they lacked the financial expertise and experience to perform this function. They viewed it as a displaced responsibility. District programme implementers belonged to a section (SNES) whose responsibility was to provide an advisory service to special schools, psychological and therapeutic services for learners experiencing barriers to learning and development, and they found the financial monitoring task daunting. Secondly, programme implementers expressed that they were overloaded with the mandates of two programmes which challenged them to find the space and time to fulfil their responsibility to support and mentor FSSs. Consequently, just as Lahey (2015) argues, this study showed that the lack of the oversight role related to care and support budget utilisation, placed the utilisation of a resource intended for psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at risk.

This finding was a clear illustration of Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that underpinned this study. It illustrated how the interactions in overlapping
levels affect the operations at each level. Challenges in the exosystem level (district and provincial) related to financial expertise, had implications for the ability of FSSs at the mesosystem level (FSS), to execute the care and support funds in line with budgetary guidelines. This had implications for the delivery of support to OVCs that were lacking in the microsystem (family, home and immediate supports).

5.2.3. Challenge Three: Implementation Concerns Related to the FSS Support Model

Based on the findings cited in chapter 4, it is the researcher’s view that schools accepted the opportunity to be a FSS with gaps in their understanding of the support role of FSSs as envisaged in Education White Paper, 6 (2001), the DBE Guidelines for Full Service and Inclusive Schools (2010) and the KZNDOE Conceptual and Operational Guideline document for Full Service Schools (2011). The post facto realisation indicated in the findings of this study, affected how all three FSSs viewed their role in providing psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Four areas of concern emerged in this study related to the support model of the FSS programme.

(i) Confusion about the support role of FSSs

This study indicated that teachers only realised their role within the continuum of support that was associated with FSSs within the inclusive education framework once they were already in the implementation phase. The anxiety experienced by FSSs as to their expected role of being integral to the support provision for OVCs, rather than merely being a referral agent can be understood in line with the findings of Mwoma and Pillay (2016) as cited in chapter 2. Mwoma and Pillay (2016), emphasized that it was the work load associated with curriculum delivery that made teachers anxious about delivering on the care and support mandate for OVCs. This study found that teachers viewed the FSS mandate as being an additional task. They argued that the FSS was first and foremost a mainstream school and had the same responsibilities as was expected of all other mainstream schools. Consequently, they saw their core responsibility to be the delivery of the curriculum.

The researcher is of the view that the anxiety among teachers to embrace the OVC care and support mandate can also be understood from the perspective of the finding of this
study. The findings of the study indicated teachers felt that they lacked the specialised skills needed for the OVC care and support mandate. The researcher is therefore in support of the arguments put forward by Hoadley (2007), Morrow (2005), and Mwoma and Pillay (2016). These arguments imply that when we add to the responsibilities of teachers, we need to take cognisance of what teachers are trained in and the realities of the range of roles and responsibilities expected of them. The failure of both DBE (2010) in the national guidelines for FSSs, at the macro system level, and KZNDOE (2011) in the provincial guidelines for FSSs, at the exosystem level, to acknowledge this reality, in the researcher’s view, compromised the FSS’s at the mesosystem level, in this study to be effective in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs...

The FSS confusion about their support role could also be as a result of mixed messages between policy imperatives and implementation directives as received from district and provincial offices. Whilst Education White Paper 6, 2001 and the National Department of Basic Education’s policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2014), advocates for the support intervention to be the organising principle, this study, however, indicated that the provincial planning for funding OVC support at FSSs used the learner as the organising principle. The researcher notes that this could have likely contributed to the finding of why FSSs had not made the transition to using the nature and frequency of the support intervention as an organising principle when planning support interventions for OVCs.

Consequently, according to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, the mixed messages at the macro- exosystem levels related to the FSS policy imperatives and implementation directives created confusion at the mesosystem level (FSSs) as to their support role within the FSS framework. This ultimately had implications for the nature and range of support interventions at FSSs for OVCs to address gaps at the microsystem level (the home/family).

(ii) Support provision for OVC was linked to the availability of resources
The finding of this study that indicated the willingness of all three FSSs in this study to participate in the FSS programme, can be understood in line with the argument put forward by UNICEF (2016). UNICEF (2016) cited in chapter 2, argues that in order to be successful in addressing the inequalities that OVCs face, among the things that are needed, is the investment in resources. It is the researcher’s view that, despite the many challenges that all three FSSs faced in supporting OVCs, prior to being selected, it was the promise of additional resources that attracted schools to participate in the FSS programme. These resources included specialised staff (school counsellor, learning support educator, learner assistants) and a support centre and a budget for care and support interventions. This reasoning is supported by the finding that FSSs felt handicapped to fully embrace the support mandate, if additional resources were not in place. This finding corroborates research by Swart and Pettipher (2005), and Conway (2017) that emphasized the need for resources at inclusive schools. This study showed that challenges related to the implementation of support programmes for OVCs were largely linked to challenges related to access of resources such as specialist personnel, specialist spaces, devices, specialist services and additional budgetary allocations.

This study found that the support centres at FSSs that were intended to promote the integrated delivery of support programmes and services for OVCs were underutilised. This underutilisation of the support centre can be understood, not only from the non-appointment of LSEs and School Counsellors at FSSs, but also from the perspective of the arguments put forward by researchers Hoadley (2007), Morrow (2005), and Mwoma and Pillay (2016). These arguments state that teachers felt they lacked the necessary specialised skills and they were too over burdened with curriculum and assessment demands to be able to embrace the care and support mandate. Consequently, according to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, the use of a resource provided by the exosystem level (KZNDOE), intended to promote the delivery of inter sectoral psycho-social and educational programmes and services for OVCs at FSSs (at the mesosystem level), did not achieve its intended outcome. Namely to address gaps in the microsystem level (family/home), through the promotion of integrated delivery of support interventions for OVCs at the FSS support centre.
(iii) Support interventions revolved largely around basic needs and issues related to socio-economic deprivation

All three FSSs recognised the need for and were active in addressing basic socioeconomic (food, clothing, basic hygiene) demands of OVCs. All three schools were less active in addressing the educational support needs of OVCs. This finding links to the arguments put forward by PEPFAR (July 2012); REPSSI (May 2009) and USAID (December 2008) that indicate one of the critical areas of intervention for OVCs that has the potential to have positive outcomes for the life-long development and future livelihoods of OVCs, is providing interventions that address basic needs (safety, shelter, nutrition, health, education). Schools tended to look externally for guidance when it came to educational support interventions. The researcher notes, as indicated in the literature review, that the possible reason for the difficulties faced by teachers in relation to educational support interventions, is that they are ill equipped to respond to the support needs of OVCs (UNICEF, 2012). Educational support interventions require not only the identification and knowledge of the learning barrier experienced but also skills in specialised teaching strategies. Consequently, in line with the findings of researchers Hoadley 2007, Nel et al (2016), and Smit and Mpya (2011), if teachers are to be successful in addressing the range of diverse needs in the classroom, they need appropriate and adequate training.

Limitations in the range of support interventions for OVCs can also be seen to be rooted in the contextual challenges such as large class sizes, staff shortages, and limitations in the organisation of the school day at FSSs to allow time for care and support activities and curriculum demands. The teachers felt that they did not have the space or time to deliver psycho-social and educational support or OVCs as a mainstream activity. This finding corroborates the findings of Muthusamy (2015), Mwoma and Pillay (2016), and Hoadley (2007), that indicated it is the work load associated with curriculum delivery that challenges teachers with delivering on the care and support mandate. Consequently, failure at the exosystem level (district) to address contextual challenges at the mesosystem level (FSSs) had implications for
FSS’s role to support OVCs and mitigate the negative effects of the gaps at the microsystem level (family/home)

(iv) Difficulties using the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) strategy

Teachers in this study found the support processing strategy, Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS), as advocated in Education White Paper 6, (2001), administratively challenging and time consuming. This corroborated the research findings of Nel et al. (2016), Mkhuma, Maseko, and Tlale, (2014), and Motitswe (2017), that also indicated that teachers found the SIAS strategy challenging and labour intensive. The researcher’s understanding of why teachers experienced challenges with the SIAS process is two-fold. Firstly, in support of the research conducted by Nel, et al. (2016) and Motitswe (2017), teachers’ challenges with the SIAS process arises from insufficient and inadequate training on the strategy. As indicated in chapter 4, participants in this study were very vociferous about the inadequacies in the SIAS training, support and monitoring by district officials. This supports the argument put forward by Smit and Mpya (2011) that stressed the need for teachers to be supported by specialists in order to be effective.

Secondly, at a fundamental level, this study found that FSSs had not made the transition from the past medical model, which promoted a referral system for responding to the needs of OVCs, to the support model advocated in Education White Paper 6 (2001). In line with the findings of Motitswe (2017), which indicated that there are teachers at inclusive schools that still operate within the medical model framework, this study found that teachers did not see the support provision as a process beginning with interventions at classroom level with teachers being integral in the support provision. It is the researcher’s view that if the teachers are still operating within the referral framework, it is understandable that teachers would find the SIAS process challenging and frustrating.

This study showed that teachers were concerned about the sufferings of OVCs and many were moved to the point of sharing meals, collecting clothing and sponsoring school materials or uniforms for learners. However, contrary to the Policy on
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2014), and research by IASC, (2007), cited in the literature review in chapter 2, all three FSSs did not involve OVCs in the decisions about support interventions that were for their benefit. The researcher notes, this could be as a result of the challenge that FSSs faced in making the transition from two distinct models. These models were firstly, the deficit/medical model that promotes the specialists as key stakeholders in determining support interventions as opposed to secondly, the support model that promotes collaboration and input from all stakeholders including the beneficiaries (OVCs) throughout the process towards making decisions about the support programme. Thus, as indicated in the work of IASC, (2007), the exclusion of OVCs in the decision about the support programme, compromised the relevance, ownership and sustainability of such support.

Consequently, according to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, we find gaps in the exosystem’s (district) HRD programme, which resulted in FSSs being ill equipped to embrace the transition from a deficit to support model, when responding to OVC needs. This in turn had implications for the FSS’s role (at the mesosystem) as being integral in the identification and delivery of support interventions for OVCs to address gaps in support at the microsystem level.

5.2.4. Challenge Four: Inadequacies in the Training and Development Programme

KZNDOE’s effort to develop a contextually relevant HRD toolkit during the piloting phase of the FSS programme in the province, was a clear illustration of support for the importance of staff capacity in an inclusive classroom put forward by UNESCO in 2005. Despite the acknowledgement by officials in this study, that the HRD toolkit was a valuable and a relevant resource to assist them in strengthening FSSs, its utilisation in the HRD programme was undermined by a range of implementation factors.

(i) Training was too intense, fast paced and the methodology unsuitable

There was no evidence in this study to indicate that there were efforts made to ensure that the district facilitators and the FSS officials who attended the training had the capacity to fulfil the cascading responsibility. This highly likely contributed to
compromising the quality and delivery of the intended messages of the training programme at the district and school level cascading sessions. This lack of capacity was corroborated in research studies by Zungu (2014), and Karalis (2016), which indicated that, when using the cascading model of training in a HRD programme, failure to ensure the “careful selection of the experts and first phase trainers” could compromise the HRD programme. (Karalis, 2016: p. 107).

This study indicated that the FSS HRD programme failed to allow space or time for consolidation of new concepts, information and interventions. Rather, the training was continuous and fast paced. This resulted in a situation where FSSs were not supported in the process of consolidating their role to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This also resulted in delays in FSSs being successful in its OVC care and support mandate. These results were contrary to the findings of Karalis (2016), which indicated that when using the cascading method of training, there is the need to provide space for support as the HRD programme unfolds.

(ii) The quality of the workshops was inadequate.

Research by Smit and Mpya (2011) stressed the need for teachers to be supported by specialists in order to be effective in an inclusive classroom. This study indicated that HRD facilitators lacked the relevant knowledge and expertise. Here again, this reflects the negative effects of the failure of KZNDOE to review its existing capacity to deliver on the demands of the FSS programme and to put plans in place to address any skills shortages to support the roll-out of the programme. Hence, by allocating the HRD responsibility to a section (SNES) that was established for another strategic programme without a skills audit, this ran the risk of compromising the quality of FSS HRD programme and ultimately the effectiveness of the FSS in its role to promote psycho-social and education support for OVCs.

This study indicated that the ‘one size fits all’ HRD design did not always promote purposeful selection of participants for development in programme specific roles and responsibilities. This study supported the argument by Damato (2017), which emphasized that when an HRD programme does not differentiate or allow for different individuals or portfolios, the returns on personal development and maximising the
potential of each individual will be threatened. The failure to differentiate the HRD programme in line with the specific roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, resulted in uncertainty among some critical stakeholders e.g. SGBs and LSAs, as to their roles and responsibilities in the FSS programme. Consequently, the gaps in the HRD programme did not only impact negatively on the FSSs effectiveness and performance as a support resource promoting psychosocial and educational support for OVCs, but also negatively affected the meaningful participation from critical stakeholders involved in the FSS programme.

(iii) FSSs were reliant on the District Office HRD programme

All 3 FSSs in this study showed no evidence of peer support or a HRD plan driven internally by the school to address specific skills or knowledge gaps in respect to the care and support mandate. This finding was contrary to the finding by Conway (2017) on Teacher’s perspectives of learner support in Full-Service Schools that emphasized that teachers acknowledged the need to assume responsibility for their development by supporting each other to practice inclusion. All three schools in this study were reliant on the district office FSS HRD programme for their professional development. The researcher’s understanding of the possible reasons for the lack of intent by FSSs to engage in an internal HRD programme to address gaps in skills and knowledge, is twofold. Firstly, the uncertainty of the FSSs about their role and direction of the FSS programme, and secondly due to the demands placed on them by the myriad of departmental initiatives (Muthusamy, 2015; Zungu, 2014; Hoadley 2007; Morrow, 2005; and Mwoma and Pillay, 2016). It is the researcher’s view that the failure of FSSs to plan to build capacity in areas in which teachers had gaps was likely to have impacted on their effectiveness as FSSs. This ultimately contributed to delays in the FSSs consolidating their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(iv) Lack of ongoing support and mentoring

FSSs in this study felt strongly that the absence of a district driven mentoring plan to assist FSSs to address implementation challenges negatively affected the expected training outcomes and ultimately the FSS’s role to deliver on psycho-social and
educational support for OVCs. This finding supported the research findings of Karalis (2016), and Forlin and Chambers (2011) that emphasized the need for appropriate continuous professional development in order for teachers to address the needs of learners experiencing barriers to learning.

District officials acknowledged that their monitoring and support of the FSSs were inadequate. This concurred with the findings of the research on Teachers’ Perspectives of Learner Support in a Full-service School by Conway (2017), which indicated inadequate monitoring and support to full-service schools. A possible reason for the absence of an ongoing mentoring and monitoring plan for FSSs, falls back onto the issue of the lack of ownership for the programme by district officials. The SNES section who were given the HRD responsibility regarded the FSS as a secondary responsibility.

The challenge in the leadership role for the programme implementation, support and mentoring at a district level, was further complicated by the high turn-over of district programme co-ordinators. There were three different programme co-ordinators over the last eight years. Findings of this study in this regard concurred with the research of Hana and Lucie (2011), which indicated that “labour turnover results in an organization’s inability to ensure knowledge continuity.” (Journal of Competitiveness, 2011: p. 94). This study revealed that there was not always a proper handover from one co-ordinator to the next in terms of programme developments. Neither was there a report on the gains made and what needed to be addressed. This, in the researcher’s view, could account for the many implementation gaps that contributed to FSSs experiencing difficulties in consolidating their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

According to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, gaps in the FSS HRD programme illustrate how what happens in overlapping levels affect the operations at each level in a cascading way, ultimately impacting on the OVC. Failure at the exosystem (district) level to ensure appropriately skilled HRD facilitators, at both the district and FSS levels, impacted on the roll-out of the FSS HRD programme to all FSS stakeholders. This in turn impacted on the ability of key
stakeholders to deliver on their role to embrace the FSS mandate. This also impacts on the success of ensuring critical support interventions for OVCs to address gaps in support at the microsystem level.

5.2.5. Challenge Five: Level of Functionality of Support Structures

Whilst this study indicated that the three schools embraced the KZNDOE design of the SBST and were not challenged in establishing the support structure, there were challenges related to the functionality of the SBST/ILST at all three schools.

(i) Not all portfolio committees of the ILST/SBST were fully functional

The finding of this study with respect to the functionality of the ILST/SBST concurs with the findings of Nel et al (2016). They also found that this structure was functional to a degree. At all three schools, the Learner Support Sub-committee was most active in addressing the immediate socio-economic needs of OVCs. Whilst there was evidence of attempts to address the educational barriers experienced by OVCs, all three schools were challenged in implementing this intervention as a mainstream activity at the school. Among the reasons cited by teachers for the challenge to mainstream support for OVCs that concurred with findings in other studies included the following factors: large class sizes (Marais, 2016), curriculum demands (Nel et al, 2016; and Mwoma & Pillay, 2016), and the lack of specialised skills (Smit & Mpya, 2011) to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

There was no clarity as to the programme of action for the Whole School, and for the Educator Support sub-committees, in respect of interventions that would promote the FSSs responsiveness to the needs of OVCs. There is an absence of research studies that explore the functionality of ILST/SBST portfolio committees, as identified in the KZNDOE FSS Conceptual and Operational Guidelines (2011). The researcher’s understanding of the difficulties of functionality of the Whole school and Educator sub-committees of the ILST/SBST was based on participant accounts. These accounts were largely related to the issues of ownership for the programme, at both school and district office level, and the lack of clarity with regards to the roles of the respective sub-committees in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
(ii) ILST/SBST felt they lacked the specialised skills to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs.

The finding in this study, related to the ILST/SBST embracing the care and support mandate, concurred with the findings of Wood and Guba (2011), and UNICEF (2012) which indicated that teachers perceived themselves as not adequately prepared to deal with issues affecting OVCs. This study found that teachers were overwhelmed by the curriculum and assessment demands and they found the FSS programme to be additional work for which they did not have the specialised training or the space to assume responsibility. Consequently, gaps in the FSS implementation process to assess and put interventions in place upfront related to shortfalls expertise and risks to implementation. These findings concurred with the findings of researchers Dorn, Kanikeberg and Burke (2011) and Beale (2006), concerning the compromising of the role of ILSTs/SBSTs which pointed towards the creating of gaps in the provision of support interventions at the mesosystem level (FSSs) for OVCs.

5.2.6. Challenge Six: Shortage and Role Confusion of Support Staff

The support posts introduced at KZNDOE FSSs were that of LSEs, School Counsellors and LSAs. This study found that the role of these additional support posts, were undermined by implementation challenges.

(i) Non-filling of support staff posts.

Evident in this study was the non-appointment of support staff at some FSSs, lack of financial planning for the provision of these support posts, the lack of support from senior officials to prioritise these posts, and the stretching of the outreach of existing support staff to FSSs to work in FSSs across the district. In line with findings in research studies by Swart and Pettipher (2005), UNICEF (2016), and Dieltiens and Gibert, (2008), that advocated for resources to be made available to schools to assist in their efforts to support OVCs, this study revealed that KZNDOE FSS programme design made provisions for the appointment of specialist support staff at FSSs (LSEs, School Counsellor and Learning Support Assistants) as a standard provision.
There is an absence of research studies that explore the provision of specialised support teams at FSSs with which these findings could be compared. The researcher, however, notes that the challenges with the appointment of support staff for FSSs can be understood from two perspectives. Firstly, there was an absence of representation of critical expertise such as finance and human resource recruitment sections in the FSS planning and implementation team at both the district and provincial levels. This links with the arguments put forward by Dorn, Kanikeberg and Burke (2011), and Beale (2006), which advocate for input from a range of expertise when introducing a new programme or project. The inclusion of budget responsibility personnel and human resource recruitment practitioners, in the FSS planning and implementation team, could have assisted in ensuring that the provision of support staff was costed and included in budgetary and recruitment planning processes of the department. This would have avoided unnecessary provisioning delays, impacting negatively on OVCs accessing such critical supports.

Secondly, challenges related to the non-appointment of support staff could have arisen from the limitations in the oversight role from DBE (at the macro system level) to hold provincial departments (at the exosystem level) accountable for the absence of plans to appropriately resource and support FSSs at the mesosystem level. DBE FSS guidelines (2010) leaves the mandate of how FSSs is to be accommodated in organisational systems and staffed largely at the discretion of provincial departments. This links with the argument put forward by Lahey (2015) which emphasizes the impact of the absence of the oversight role on the programme objectives. The researcher notes that in the face of compelling and competing resourcing and infrastructure backlogs, at district and provincial levels within KZNDOE, one can understand the finding of this study. The findings indicated that FSS co-ordinators experienced challenges to obtain support from senior officials for the filling in of support posts at FSSs.

It is likely therefore, that education offices used the available support staff at some FSSs in creative ways, stretching their outreach to ensure district wide implementation of the FSS programme. The evident increased outreach of existing support staff
together with the non-filling of the support posts for FSSs, posed as a threat to OVCs accessing critical supports intended to assist in addressing their needs.

The non-appointment of support staff at FSSs is a clear illustration of Bronfenbrenner’ Bio-ecological Systems Theory that framed this study. It illustrates how the lack of clear direction and monitoring of provincial plans to resource and support FSSs from DBE (at the macro system level) results in the provincial department (at the exosystem level) neglecting the provisioning of support posts at FSSs. This in turn has implications for FSS (at the mesosystem level) to be effective in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Ultimately this results in OVCs not accessing critical support intended to address gaps in support in the microsystem level.

(ii) Lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the support staff.

It was evident in this study that both support staff and schools were unclear about the support staff duties and responsibilities. This study concurred with the arguments put forward by Craddick, (2017) and Mañas et al (2017) that advocated that a programme’s outcomes may be delayed or even fail if there is no clarity of functions, or if roles are ambiguous. With the support personnel filling new posts introduced in the system, this study showed that gaps in the clarity of the role of support staff at FSS allowed for the development of a situation for these critical frontline OVC supports (LSEs, School Counsellors and LSAs) to be misused. This study showed that the extension of the duties of the LSEs and School Counsellors had not only compromised the quality and availability of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs, but it also changed the job description of these support personnel.

The researcher notes that the possible reason for the transference of district responsibility to FSS support staff, as indicated in this study, could possibly be attributed to the lack of capacity experienced by the district to deliver on the additional responsibilities associated with the release of Education White Paper 6, 2001, within which the FSS programme is mandated. These specialist supports for OVCs that were meant to be site based, provided direct support interventions for OVCs for a hub of
schools (KZNDOE, 2011). Instead this study showed that they were drawn into district responsibilities of supporting, mentoring and monitoring FSSs across the district.

According to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, the failure of KZNDOE, at the exosystem level (district and provincial), to review its capacity to deliver on the policy imperatives of Education White Paper 6, 2001, and address gaps in skills and knowledge resulted in gaps in delivery of support interventions for OVCs at FSSs at the mesosystem level. This ultimately compromised FSSs to be effective in the role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

5.2.7. Challenge Seven: Inadequate Collaborations

This study found that FSSs were quite resourceful in accessing psycho-social support from relevant government departments and local NGOs on an ad hoc basis to address immediate support needs of OVCs. However, inadequacies in the collaborations were evident.

(i) Intra-Departmental Collaborations

This study found that one or two staff members played a lead role in establishing the FSS as a care and support resource, without ensuring whole school ‘buy-in’. Contrary to the research by Conway (2017), which indicated that teachers acknowledged the importance to collaborate with each other in supporting learners experiencing barriers to learning, this study illustrated that the three FSSs were challenged with whole school ‘buy in’ for the sustainable delivery of the FSS programme. It is highly likely that one of the factors that contributed to the challenge with the ‘buy-in’ of the whole school community could have stemmed from the finding that indicated that there was inadequate foundation work or an advocacy programme with FSS staff, support staff, and the SGB with respect to the programme purpose, goals and clarity of roles and responsibilities. This links with the findings of researcher Erickson (2012), which illustrated that individual team members collaborate better when their respective roles are clearly defined and understood.
There was no evidence in this study to indicate that there were efforts, as advocated in research by Karalis, (2016), to ensure that those officials who attended the advocacy sessions had the capacity to fulfil the cascading responsibility. This lack of effort compromised the quality and intended messages of the advocacy programme at the school level cascading sessions. This would have ultimately had implications for the understanding of roles, responsibilities and ‘buy in’ of the school level stakeholders to collaborate to ensure sustainable delivery of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

This study indicated that insufficient efforts were made to support the SGBs to embrace the FSS care and support mandate. The researcher notes that the location of FSSs in this study, as cited in chapter 3, links with the findings of researcher Tshoose, (2010), which indicates that OVCs generally come from vulnerable families and live in equally vulnerable communities. The FSSs in this study were located in communities where there were high levels of poverty and unemployment. Consequently, there was the great likelihood of parents having limited formal education, resources and capacity to embrace their role in the FSS care and support mandate. Consequently, as indicated in other studies by Cooper (2010), Hornby and Lafaele (2011), and Lee and Bowen (2006), the likelihood of parents experiencing feelings of inadequacy could have been a reason why parents were not actively involved in the FSS care and support mandate. This view was also supported by the researcher’s observation during the SGB focus group interviews. The researcher noted that the lack of depth of the SGB engagement in the interviews were likely not due to lack of interest or concern about their children’s education and future but it was likely that the lack of depth of engagement was a result of the possible insecurity on the part of SGBs about their knowledge and expertise to engage at the level of the researcher or school authorities.

The findings of the study indicated that the experiences of district officials and schools with internal collaborations between sections within the education department at district level, were different. There was an absence of research studies that explore the synergy of the roles of the different sections at district office level to support and mentor FSSs with which this finding could be compared. The researcher, however,
notes that the inconsistency of experiences by the FSSs and the district programme co-
-coordinators about internal departmental collaborations were related to the
differences in the nature of the collaborations.

This study showed that FSSs were concerned that there was no synergy among the
various departmental programme goals, and processes, which resulted in them
struggling to cope. The challenge faced by teachers feeling overload with the range of
departmental programme demands was also reflected in research studies by
Muthusamy (2015), Zungu (2014), Hoadley (2007), Morrow (2005), and Mwoma and
Pillay (2016). The researcher notes that the possible reason for the lack of synergy
between the FSS programme and other the departmental programme targets could be
as a result of the limitation in representation of the various relevant sections in the
district FSS programme selection and implementation team. Wider inclusion of key
relevant programme heads at district level on the FSS programme planning and
implementation team would not only raise awareness of the FSS programme
imperatives but also have the potential to promote greater synergy of the various
competing programme imperatives.

At district level, this study did not indicate any collaborative efforts to promote the
establishment of the FSSs as a whole district responsibility. The programme
implementers defined the nature of the collaborations at district office level in terms
of implementation of tasks rather than at a fundamental level of programme design.
The nature of collaboration between the sections at district level, that were indicated
in this study, did not promote co-responsibility and ownership among the different
sections to review the design and delivery of their respective programmes to ensure
the needs of a diverse leaner population, including OVCs, were addressed.
Consequently, this finding demonstrated a type of collaboration that researcher
Harman, (2016), argues as being integration (putting in the missing part to an existing
programme), rather than inclusion. Consequently, SNES was expected to lead on FSS
issues related to policy, infrastructure, finance, governance, resourcing, training and
development. This was an onerous task for a learner support section within the
education system.
In line with Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, gaps in promoting the implementation of the FSS programme as a whole district responsibility at the exosystem level, had negative implications for collaborations at the mesosystem level (FSS) to ensure whole school ‘buy-in’ for the OVC care and support mandate. This ultimately contributed to the promoting of a mainstreamed and sustainable delivery of support interventions at FSSs that addresses gaps in the microsystem which impact on the development of OVCs.

(ii) Inter-Sectoral Collaborations

This study showed that there was no indication of a clearly defined protocol of engagement for inter-sectoral collaborations. The relationships were ad hoc, based on needs, urgency of the request, and the availability of resources and were characterised by loyalty and mutual respect. These collaborations did not indicate proactive planning to determine risk factors, strengths and supports within the community and brainstorming sustainable solutions that would have long term positive supports for OVCs. The researcher notes that the possible reason for the limitation of proactive collaborations, in respect of establishing sustainable protective measures to address OVC needs, could be as a result of the finding that schools felt overloaded by the myriad of departmental initiatives. The situation was compounded by the finding that also links to the findings of researchers Nel et al (2016), which showed that there was a lack of capacity among teachers to identify the nature of collaborations to enlist the appropriate support to in address the barriers experienced by OVCs.

There was no indication in this study of visionary leadership at FSS level to develop a plan to advocate for the formalising of inter-governmental, NGOs and community based organisation relationships, into sustainable partnerships as advocated by UNICEF (2008) via it’s Child Friendly Schools model, and REPSSSI (2009), cited in the literature review in chapter2. Thus, as advocated in research by IASC (2007), and SAIDE (2012), this gap placed the sustainability of such collaborations at risk. This study also showed that there was a lack of leadership at the FSS level to take advantage of the availability of the support centre at FSSs to promote integrated service delivery of support for OVCs. This finding links to the research of SAIDE
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

(2012) and UNICEF (2016), cited in the literature review in chapter 2 that advocated for the presence of strong leadership to promote protective environments for OVCs. Consequently, the gaps in the process of evaluating the leadership capacity within potential FSSs at the point of selection of the FSS, had implications for FSSs to promote inter-sectoral collaborations that advocated for the delivery of services and programmes for OVCs at FSSs. The researcher also notes that the study indicated that FSSs had the expectation that it was the responsibility of the Education Department to provide resources, programmes and services at the support centres by appointing support staff and providing budgets for care and support initiatives. This ultimately resulted in limitations in the FSS’s role to promote for a range of partnership psycho-social and educational support programmes for OVCs at FSS support centres.

These findings related to inter-sectoral collaborations concurs with findings of researchers Nel, Tlale, Engelbrecht, and Nel et al (2016), which highlighted that FSSs had limitations with community collaborations. Consequently, the researcher is of the view that gaps in leadership, skills, knowledge and the availability of time at the mesosystem level (FSSs) related to the care and support mandate impacted on the extent to which FSSs promoted collaborations. The collaborations were intended to focus not only on addressing reactive needs of OVCs, but also in developing long term, protective and sustainable measures to support OVCs.

5.3. Enabling Factors

Despite the numerous challenges to the FSSs role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, there were enabling factors as well. These enabling factors created fertile conditions for programme implementers to capitalise upon in order to ensure FSSs were successful in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The enabling factors included:

(i) Confidence among the participants in the FSS programme objectives

Despite facing a myriad of challenges to implementation to ensure that FSSs were delivering on their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, all participants in this study were confident that the FSS programme would work and
have a positive impact on the lives of OVCs. In line with the research by Gangwar (2017) on *Understanding the need for positive attitude at workplace*, this study showed that the participant’s positive attitude in relation to the programme goals, contributed to their determination to make the FSS programme work. They persevered with the programme in spite of the challenges. The researcher notes that a factor that most likely accounts for the hope expressed by participants in the FSS programme imperatives was the finding that challenges facing learners that were hungry, sick, neglected, orphaned, abused, disabled or living in child-headed homes was a norm and not an exception at all three FSSs in this study. Consequently, a policy mandated school programme focussing on the support interventions to address the support needs of OVCs would likely be a beacon of hope for the FSSs in this study, who prior to the FSS programme, were struggling to respond to provide a sustainable support programme for OVCs.

In line with the research findings of Conway (2017), this study highlighted the potential of FSSs to respond to the support needs of OVCs. Despite the limited active involvement of OVCs in the decisions about support initiatives, OVCs at all three schools reported that they felt cared for by their teachers. They were happy to come to school and felt safe at school. The researcher notes that the reasons for this finding were that all three schools in this study were what REPSSI (2013), cited in the literature review in chapter 2, refers to as “caring schools.” They were schools that were not only in touch with the risk factors that impacted on their learners and teachers but also schools that made efforts to create an enabling school environment that attempted to address the factors impacting on the OVCs. This illustrated that there was already an informal culture of care and support prior to being selected to be strengthened as a FSS. This indicted that there was an enabling environment at the three schools to promote the embracing of the care and support mandate for OVCs advocated by the FSS programme.

Despite the many challenges they (LSA, LSE, School Counsellor) faced, the support staff stayed committed to their work. They were emphatic that they would apply for their jobs all over again in spite of the operational challenges they faced. Participant faith in the FSS programme focus, the commitment among FSSs and support staff to persevere with the programme in spite of many challenges, suggested that there were
fertile conditions for programme implementers to capitalise on to ensure that FSSs were successful in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) KZNDOE programme implementation design promoted psycho-social and educational support as a mainstream activity at FSSs

This study showed that KZNDOE design of the FSS programme had mainstreaming as one of its underlying principles. This was in support of the work of REPSSI (1 AUGUST 2009), SAIDE (2012), and UNICEF (2016), cited in the literature review in chapter 2, that advocated for the mainstreaming of support provision for OVCs. The design of the FSS programme facilitated the delivery of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a whole school mainstream activity. This study revealed that the design of the FSS programme promoted the alignment of support structures, care and support budgets, monitoring of programme at school level to existing school structures, practices and procedures. This had the effect of increasing the likelihood of the mainstreaming and sustainability of the programme.

According to Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study, the provision of a contextually relevant FSS model was an illustration of leadership shown by KZNDOE at the exosystem level, to provide guidelines for KZN FSSs (at the mesosystem level) to open their schools to provide and facilitate support interventions for OVCs as a mainstream activity at FSSs. This ultimately aimed at mitigating the gaps in support for OVCs at the microsystem level.

(iii) KZNDOE showed innovation related to budgetary, human and material provisioning for FSSs

This study showed that KZNDOE as the education authority fulfilled its leadership responsibility that was argued by UNESCO (2005), as cited in chapter two, of leading the process of creating enabling school environments by defining the KZNDOE FSS implementation model. In line with the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as cited in the literature review in chapter 2, which advocated for investment in resources to reach out to children “who are being left
behind” (UNICEF, 2016: p.4), the researcher noted that, from a design perspective, the study indicated that KZNDOE made many provisions available for FSSs to facilitate their role as a support resource for OVCs.

Firstly, this study indicated that KZNDOE made a top-up budget to the FSSs norms and standards to assist in the delivery of psycho-social, health and additional educational support programmes for OVCs, in the absence of OVC support budget direction and provision from DBE. This action on the part of KZNDOE not only reflected the province’s commitment to ensure that no child was left behind, it also acknowledged that argument put forward by UNICEF (2016) cited in the literature review in chapter 2, that governments need to recognise that OVC care and support needs to be planned, budgeted and programmed for.

Secondly, in terms of the HRD programme for FSSs, as indicated in this study, is the finding that KZNDOE here again showed visionary leadership by developing a comprehensive HRD toolkit relevant to the provincial context. This was a clear illustration of support of the research findings of Smit and Mpya (2011) and UNESCO (2005), which stressed the need for teachers to receive specialised training in order to be effective in an inclusive classroom. It is the researcher’s view that the clarity in the scope, structure and the contextual relevance of the HRD package, not only increased the likelihood of promoting consistency of messages, but also improved the standardisation of the implementation of the FSS programme.

Thirdly, the study indicated that the KZNDOE FSS guideline (2011) document provided clarity as to the actual support interventions that had to be provided at FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The DBE FSS/Inclusive Schools guideline (2010) document, on the other hand, only made reference to the areas in which barriers were to be addressed. In the researcher’s view, with the KZNDOE FSS Guideline document (2011), KZNDOE acknowledged the cautions put forward by researchers Craddick (2017) and Mañas et al (2017).

These cautions indicate that a programme’s outcomes may be delayed or even fail if there is no clarity of functions or if roles are ambiguous. The KZNDOE FSSs Guideline (2011) provided FSSs with a sense of direction as to how support is
organised at a FSS and what constituted psycho-social and educational support interventions for OVCs.

Fourthly, The KZNDOE’s vision to include the establishment of a support centre as part of the essential package of resources for FSSs reflects acknowledgment of the argument put forward by UNESCO (2005), cited in the literature review in chapter 2, which stresses that schools must increasingly be viewed as a centre of community life and a potential site to ensure access to support services for vulnerable children. This approach of extending the FSS to be a community resource has the potential to increase the access to critical supports for OVCs, as well as to increase community ownership for addressing the needs of OVCs. This would ultimately create an enabling environment to facilitate a sustainable implementation of the FSS programme that promotes psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Fifthly, KZNDOE provided specialised support staff (LSEs, School Counsellors and Learner Support Assistants) as a standard provision at FSSs. The role of support staff was viewed by both FSSs and district officials as the single most critical factor for FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. This finding corroborated the research findings by Nel et al (2016), that highlighted the significant contribution of support staff like Learning Support Educators (LSEs) in assisting FSSs in their care and support mandate.

Consequently, the researcher notes that the foresight of KZNDOE to introduce these support provisions at FSSs is a clear illustration of Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Systems theory that framed this study. It illustrated how the interactions between the layers, affect the life of OVCs in a cascading way. The exosystem (provincial office) intervenes with programme policy guidelines and provides supports to address gaps in specialisation at the mesosystem level (FSSs), which in turn addresses gaps in the microsystem level (home/family) so that OVCs are not left behind.
5.4. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research findings in relation to the role of the FSS in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Herein the researcher outlined the many challenges to implementing OVC support as a sustainable, mainstreamed, whole school responsibility, as envisaged in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS policy guideline documents. Highlighted in this chapter is the finding that the challenges were not necessarily rooted in individual deficiencies but, rather more in the implementation process. It was evident that there were many factors operating collectively which contributed to the FSS difficulties in the role to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. Despite the numerous challenges to the FSSs role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, there were enabling implementation factors as well. KZNDOE illustrated visionary leadership in determining a provincially relevant FSS implementation model. It identified an essential package of support resources and programmes for FSSs and, from a design perspective, promoted the support for OVCs as a mainstreamed whole school responsibility. It is the researcher’s view that had the programme implementers capitalised on these enabling factors, FSSs could have been more successful in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the recommendations for improving and strengthening, refining, and designing new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District in KZN.
Chapter 6. Recommendations for improving the role of FSSs in promoting educational and psycho-social support for OVCs

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents recommendations of interventions that KZNDOE could adopt to further strengthen, refine, and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District. The recommendations are presented in relation to the challenges and enabling factors that were found to be evident at the three FSSs in this study.

6.2. Recommendations to deal with challenges faced by FSSs in supporting OVCs

Evident in this study was that FSSs were not functioning in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at the level envisaged in the DBE (2010) and KZNDOE (2011) FSS policy guidelines. The DBE and KZNDOE FSS policy guidelines advocated for FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a sustainable, mainstreamed, whole school responsibility. The range of challenges that FSSs faced in implementing OVC support as a sustainable, mainstreamed, whole school responsibility, were related to the: (i) FSS selection criteria (ii) inconsistent budget allocation to FSSs for OVCs support, (iii) functionality of support structures, (iv) inadequate training and development programme, (v) gaps in provisioning of care and support staff, (vi) inadequate collaboration with stakeholders, and (vii) confusion among by implementers about the support model of the FSS. It was evident in this study that many of the challenges faced by FSSs were related to gaps at the Pinetown Education Office level. At the District level the is a need for: (i) clarity about the scope of the programme leadership role, (ii) the promotion of a whole district approach to establish FSSs, (iii) address issues related to capacity among officials, and (iv) the promotion of an integrated district level plan to establish and support FSSs in their role to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
In identifying interventions to enhance the role of FSSs in the Pinetown District to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, this study found that it is not identifying further interventions to those identified in the KZNDOE FSS (2011) guideline document which was outlined in chapter 2, that is needed. Rather, at the school level, it is the skills, knowledge, organisational space and continuous mentoring that is essential for the sustained whole school delivery of psycho-social and educational support that needs enhancing. Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions are made on interventions that can enhance and refine the promotion of the psycho-social and educational support programmes at FSSs in the Pinetown District. In addition, the recommendations are suggested in line with the bi-ecological systems theory that underpinned this research. In other words, the recommendations refer to what can be done at the macro (DBE), exo (KZNDOE-provincial and district) and meso (FSS) system levels, to enhance and refine the role of the FSSs in the Pinetown Education District, to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

6.2.1. Issues with the FSS Selection Criteria

The possible factors for the challenges related to the FSS selection criteria, which negatively affected the three FSSs in this study to deliver on their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, were outlined in chapter 5. These factors ranged from: issues related to gaps in critical expertise in the FSS selection committee, absence of indicators for the selection criteria and reliance on subjective assessments of selection criteria at potential FSSs.

(i) The programme implementers were not fully conversant with the FSS selection criteria

A key factor, outlined in Chapter 5, as to the possible reason why district programme implementers were not fully conversant with the FSS selection criteria and its associated indicators, was the programme implementers’ reluctance to take full responsibility for the programme implementation. Among the strategies that are suggested to address the issue related to the leadership responsibility for the FSS programme is to firstly, at the macro (National- DBE) and exosystem (Provincial-
KZNDOE) levels, there must be a review of the current FSS process of selecting schools to be FSSs. Critical to this review process is the clarity from DBE to provinces as to whether FSSs are intended to be a system resource or a directorate/programme specific resource. In other words, are FSSs established to address issues of disability (physical, cognitive and learning) associated with the Inclusive Education Directorate’s’ mandate, or are FSSs viewed as a potential site where a range of support services and programmes for vulnerable children can be accessed? The intention of such clarity is to guide provinces and Education Districts on the composition of their FSS selection and implementation team/s and the process that needs to be followed when assessing a potential school’s ability to deliver on the FSS OVC support mandate. The direction given by DBE would ultimately require the Pinetown District Education Office to reflect on the current leadership role for the selection, development and support of FSSs in the district. This kind of direction will also allow for the Pinetown Education District to address any gaps of essential expertise needed in the composition of the FSS selection and support committee. This kind of review process is likely to result in the selection of schools that are best positioned to deliver on the role to promote psycho-social support for OVCs. Moreover, cognisance must also be taken of the fact that each of these approaches will have implications on how the KZN provincial and district office plans, budgets, resources, programmes and supports FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

In addition to the review of the current FSS implementation strategy, secondly KZNDOE needs to develop clear indicators related to the specific FSS selection criteria, to provide clarity of the factors that will indicate the level of functionality of the potential FSS in relation to the selection criteria. Having indicators that are specific (clearly defined), observable (can be seen), measurable (sources or tools of data collection are clear) and reliable (can be measured over time), the less the likelihood of confusion and challenges later on. (Hales, 2010). For example, for the criterion ‘support programmes offered at the school for OVCs’, among the indicators that could be developed to determine the potential FSS’s level of functionality could include-(i) is the school currently engaging in activities to address the support needs of OVCs?, (ii) how many of these activities address the educational support needs of OVCs?, (iii)
how many of these activities address the psycho-social support needs of OVCs?, (iv) how many of these programmes are provided in-house by the school with no or minimal input by external support providers?, (v) how many are provided by external support providers with no or minimal input by the school?

Thirdly, there is a need for KZNDOE to intensify the advocacy programme related to the FSS programme objectives, the selection criteria and its associated indicators at the district level. The district office in turn must ensure that there is clarity at the mesosystem (FSS) level about the FSS programme objectives and selection criteria. As indicated in this study, the advocacy programme must not be a once off event but should be ongoing to consolidate the understandings of the various FSS stakeholders. Without ensuring that all FSS stakeholders have clarity of purpose, they are unlikely to contribute to the programme goals (Aziz, 2014).

(ii) The programme co-ordinators showed biasness for some selection criteria over others in the selection process

It was evident in this study that programme implementers showed preference for schools that had a ‘champion’ for care and support, strong school leadership and a presence of an existing ethos of caring for OVCs. Among the strategies that could be identified to address biasness for some selection criteria over others in the selection process, as outlined in chapter 5, is the need for the exosystem level (provincial and district office) to ensure there is a more rigorous process involving the decision about the final selection of potential FSSs. The rigor of this process could be improved by firstly, expanding the scope of assessment that needs to be conducted, by including input from a wider range of expertise from the district office. Input from sections such as infrastructure, curriculum, governance, human resource management/recruitment, in relation to the selection criteria would provide a richer understanding of the ability and risks of the potential FSS in promoting educational and psycho-social support for OVCs.

Secondly, in addition to expanding the scope of assessment, the rigor of this process could be improved by as Hales (2010) argues, it would be wise to ensure that there are alternate sources of data collection to address the error in the collection of data that
lean in one direction, to reduce the evidence of biasness in the selection process, there should be three levels to the selection process, namely: (i) the district selection team firsts undertakes the assessment of the selection criteria at potential FSSs, and makes suggestions of potential FSSs, (ii) at district level, the district director should vet the suitability of the suggested FSSs in relation to the learner support needs within the district and the distribution of such resources for OVCs across the district. The district thereafter should make recommendations to the provincial office of potential FSSs, and (iii) the recommendations made by the district team, supported by the district director, should be forwarded to the Provincial office for ratification. Such a rigorous process of selecting potential FSSs is likely not only to increase the selection of FSSs that are able to embrace the OVC care and support mandate, but also to ensure that there is a fair distribution of critical resources for OVCs, across the province.

(iii) Inadequate assessment of the selection criteria at potential FSSs

This study found that the FSS selection process was compromised by inadequacies in the assessment of the selection criteria at potential FSSs. Possible reasons for the inadequacies in the FSS assessment process, outlined in chapter 5, ranged from issues related to gaps in critical expertise in the FSS selection committee, absence of indicators for the selection criteria and reliance on subjective assessments of selection criteria. This reliance on the subjective assessment of potential FSSs did not always guarantee that the most suitable school was chosen to be a FSS. Hales (2010), argues that the assessment process should provide clarity of the data collection methodology, data sources, comparison of data collected from different sources, the identification of variations and linkages of the different data collected and the different aspects of the selection criteria.

There are several strategies that are suggested to address these inadequacies in the assessment of FSS selection criteria at potential FSSs. Firstly, the broadening of the assessment method to include both subjective reports as well as objective strategies in relation to the selection criteria. (e.g. verifying the subjective reports from district and circuit level officials of the level of functionality at potential FSSs, ii. reviewing any existing departmental reports related to the school and analysing
Secondly, in line with the research findings of Action for the Rights of Children (2009), cited in chapter 2, the measures that are needed to mainstream care and support initiatives, require action in a variety of areas ranging from legislation, commitment of resources to ensuring the well-being of OVCs, a programme to develop skills, providing targeted support programmes, providing spaces for children to be heard and facilitating the participation of OVCs in issues that affect them. It is the researcher’s understanding that there needs to be an effort to widen the representation of the FSS selection committee. Given the range of resourcing and support needs of the KZNDOE FSS programme, the selection committee should be widened to include input from critical expertise such as finance, governance, curriculum and assessment, human resource recruitment and development, infrastructure planning, norms and standards, school and district management. A selection committee with such a diverse range of expertise is likely to increase system wide responsibility and commitment for the various aspects of FSS provisioning, support and implementation of the programme. A diverse range of expertise on the FSS selection and implementation committee, would also provide the gathering of data from a wide range of perspectives, contributing to a richer assessment of the school’s ability to embrace the FSS mandate. This would present a greater possibility of the identification of FSSs that are fit for purpose. Ultimately, this would contribute to the selection of FSSs that have the potential to be successful in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Thirdly, in addition to ensuring that there are clearly defined indicators associated with the selection criteria, there is a need to determine upfront what will be the rating scale to analyse the data collected to determine whether the school meets the criteria or not. This could be a point system or a descriptor (meets criteria, partially meets criteria, has the potential to meet the criteria, and does not meet the criteria). This point system will facilitate the comparison of findings related to the selection criteria across schools (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, by complimenting subjective reports with objective methods of assessing FSS selection criteria that have
clearly defined indicators and rating scales, this will contribute to increasing the likelihood of selecting FSSs that are best positioned to deliver on the role to promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

6.2.2. Issues with Care and Support Budget Allocations

To address challenges related to the inconsistent allocations of funds, the lack of financial skills, limited consultations on budget issues, lack of support and monitoring of the care and support budget by district officials, the following are recommended:

(i) Inconsistent allocation of budgets

Whilst this study indicated efforts by KZNDOE to make provision for care and support funds to address OVC psycho-social and educational support, there were inconsistent allocations of these funds to FSSs over the years.

Among the strategies that could be used to address the gaps in the provision of care and support budgets for FSSs, are strategies to ensure that the implementation of the programme is costed upfront and factored into the short and long-term budget plans at both the provincial and district office levels. In order to facilitate this, there is a need to include financial expertise in the FSS planning and implementation teams at both the provincial and district office levels. The inclusion of such expertise will likely assist in costing the implementation of the FSS programme upfront and ensuring that the cost drivers of the programme are factored into the short and long-term financial plans at both district and provincial levels. This ultimately will assist in addressing delays in the allocation of care and support funds for FSS. This would enable FSSs to provide psycho-social and educations support for OVCs on a consistent basis.

This study indicated that delays in fund allocations were due to cost cutting measures. Consequently, it is recommended that KZNDOE ring-fence budgets for provisioning needs of the FSS to avoid diverting of funds intended for OVC support provision to other departmental priorities. Failure to take these budgetary planning precautions at the exosystem (provincial and district) level would have
negative repercussions for the delivery of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at the mesosystem level (FSS).

(ii) There was a lack of skills and understanding of budget utilisation

This study showed that participants at all three FSSs were not clear about the care and support budget cost drivers and expenditure processes. To address the gaps at the mesosystem (FSS) level related to the lack of skills and understanding of budgetary utilisation processes, there is a need firstly for the exosystem (district office) to provide more advocacy on the utilisation of the care and support funds for OVCs with the wider school community. The target of the current advocacy programme on matters related to the utilisation of the OVC care and support funds needs to extend beyond the SMT and the school finance committee. It needs to include all FSS stakeholders (teachers, SGB, ILST/SBST, Support Staff, Network of Support Providers and OVCs). The scope of the advocacy could be differentiated in relation to the level of involvement of the stakeholder in the budgetary processes. For example, it may be sufficient for OVCs to understand the broad stages of determining how activities are identified in the budget plan but it may not be necessary for them to understand the intricacies of financial forms that need to be filled and know details of the procurement procedures.

Secondly, in addition to the advocacy programme on the purpose and focus of the care and support funds, there must be the promotion of joint planning in respect to the utilisation of the funds between FSSs and stakeholders involved in the programmes for OVCs at the FSS. Furthermore, there must be transparency of the final budget plan with all stakeholders. Such an approach to manage care and support funds at FSSs will not only promote joint ownership for the budget plan but will also promote the utilisation of the funds for the purpose it was intended, that is to address the psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(iii) There was limited consultation with key stakeholders in the development of budget utilisation plans
UNICEF (2008), as part of its Child Friendly Schools Model advocated that, integral to promoting integrated service delivery of support to OVCs, there are strong linkages and partnerships with the school community. It was evident in this study that there was a lack of involvement of stakeholders (ILST/SBST, Support Staff, Teachers and OVCs) in the development of business plans for the utilisation of the OVC care and support funds. In addition to the need for greater advocacy on the utilisation of the FSS care and support budget for OVCs to promote wider ownership for the budget plan of the care and support funds, it is suggested that the stages of development of the budget plan need to be defined for FSSs. **It is recommended that there should be three stages to the development of the budget plan for the care and support funds.** Firstly, there should be a joint planning session between the FSS and its stakeholders, the outcome of which should be the development of the budget business plan. This plan needs to be forwarded to the finance committee at school level for support. Secondly, the joint planning should be ratified by the programme implementers at district office level to ensure that the utilisation of the funds are planned for in line with the programme mandate. This approach to budget planning will not only ensure wider ownership for the plan, but will also ensure that funds are used for the benefit of OVCs.

(iv) Lack of monitoring, evaluation and support of the utilisation of funds by FSSs from district officials

The researcher is of the view that gaps in capacity identified at the exosystem (district/provincial office) level related to the monitoring, support and evaluation of care and support budget, outlined in chapter 5, could be addressed with the **inclusion of officials from the finance section as part of the district FSS planning, implementation and support team.** The purpose of such support should be to provide direction on issues related to the cost drivers of the care and support funds, creating budget transparency and wider school community involvement in the utilisation of the care and support funds. This kind of support could be facilitated with the inclusion of officials with financial expertise from within the district office in the FSS selection and implementation team. This inclusion will also address the gaps in financial expertise and monitoring among the current programme implementers at the
The advantage of such expertise in the FSS implementation is that it could have positive outcomes for increasing the capacity at FSSs and district office level with respect to budgetary processes, budget planning, expenditure and monitoring. Moreover, it increases the likelihood of ensuring that at the mesosystem level (FSS), the care and support funding is utilised for the purpose it was intended, namely, for the provision of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

6.2.3. Implementation Concerns Related to the FSS Support Model

To address the challenges, outlined in chapter 5, related to the confusion of the support role of FSSs the following are recommended: -

(i) Confusion about the support role of FSSs

This study found that the FSSs, the provincial and district offices, had not fully embraced the transition from a disability to a support framework for the provision of psycho-social and educational support interventions for OVCs. Evident in this study was that there were mixed messages related to the policy imperatives of the support model advocated in Education White Paper 6, 2001, and some FSS implementation directives.

Strategies to address these challenges could include for government (at the macro and exosystem levels) to ensure that there is synergy between Education White paper 6 policy imperatives and all FSS implementation directives. Here again, in the researcher’s view, there is the need for clarity of the strategic approach that underpins the implementation of Inclusive Education. This clarity would help to promote synergy between messaging, planning and issues of implementation. This clarity would ultimately provide direction as to how psycho-social and educational support for OVCs need to be organised and implemented at FSSs, to ensure that no child is left behind.

To avoid post facto realisations of FSSs (at mesosystem level), about their support role, cognisance must be taken of the fact that an advocacy plan ‘is not a tactic or a once off event, but a range of activities directed at bringing about change in line with the goals of the project (MacDonald et al, 2014: p.4). The researcher therefore
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The researcher recommends that there is a need for the district office to plan and implement a more intense, rather than a once off advocacy programme for all stakeholders of potential FSSs. This advocacy programme should be conducted prior to the final selection of FSSs and should continue through the implementation phase.

Consequently, the researcher is of the view that the advocacy programme should comprise of a number of sessions covering a range of topics related to the programme scope and expectations of FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and education support for OVCs. By implementing this advocacy programme prior to the final selection of potential FSSs, the researcher is of the view that it will assist in promoting FSSs making an informed decision to be part of the programme. This will increase the likelihood of selecting appropriate FSSs that will be committed in their efforts to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a seamless programme integral to the operations of the school.

(ii) Support provision for OVCs was linked to the availability of resources

UNICEF (2016) argues that in order to be successful in addressing the inequalities that OVCs face, among the things that are needed, is the investment in resources. It was evident in this study that FSSs highlighted an absence of resources. These resources included support staff, care and support funds, additional to reduce class sizes and specialist advisory services from the district office. They felt handicapped in the role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The researcher recommends that there should be a strategy that could be adopted at the exosystem level (provincial and district office) to address challenges related to the provision and efficient use of resources at the mesosystem level (FSS) intended to assist with psycho-social and educational support interventions for OVCs. There should be efforts to ensure that provisioning of critical OVC supports at FSSs are factored into departmental long and short term financial, infrastructure, resources and recruitment plans. Efforts to ensure that this happens could involve (i) including the section heads for these critical cost drivers in the district and provincial FSS selection, planning and implementation teams, and (ii) making sure that the responsibility for the provision of the respective critical support resources for FSS are factored into the
performance agreements of the relevant programme section heads and the district and provincial heads.

Such an approach will promote system wide responsibility for FSSs and increase the likelihood of gaps in programme resourcing, support and monitoring being addressed. This ultimately is likely to have positive implications for FSSs to deliver on their role to promote OVC support.

(iii) Support interventions revolved largely around basic needs and issues related to socio-economic deprivation

This study supported the research findings of the Human Rights Watch (2005) that indicated that schools appear to be ill prepared to support and accommodate the needs of OVCs adequately. Support interventions were provided on an ad hoc, needs driven basis. All three FSSs in this study were largely involved in addressing basic needs such as clothing, food, basic hygiene and pastoral care of OVCs. They struggled to provide educational support interventions. FSSs related this challenge to the lack of specialised skills, large class sizes, staff shortages, organisation of the school day and curriculum demands. Among the strategies that could be used to address these as advocated by the World Bank (2005) is that at the macro (DBE) and exosystem (KZNDOE) levels, policy directives related to the workloads of teachers must be reviewed to determine how the space for the planning, implementation and monitoring of support for OVCs could be incorporated in the daily life of the school. This strategy would increase the likelihood of mainstreaming and promoting the sustainability of the psycho-social and educational support programme for OVCs at FSSs.

Further, the researcher is of the view that there is a need for the district office to extend the FSS human resource development (HRD) plan to include a comprehensive skill development programme to address the skills gap to embrace the promotion of psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
For example, including a programme to develop basic counselling skills for all teachers at FSSs, strategies to support slow readers, strategies to support learners that struggle with mathematical concepts etc.

(iv) Difficulties using the standardised support processing strategy (SIAS)

As outlined in chapter 5, a barrier to teachers responding to the needs of OVCs is that they felt they were lacking the skills and knowledge to work with the various difficulties presented by OVCs (Kourkoutas and Giovazolias, 2015). There are a number of strategies that could be adopted at the exosystem (provincial and district office) level to improve the understanding, skills, knowledge and expertise in the SIAS strategy at the mesosystem level (FSS). These strategies are firstly: to develop a SIAS training programme that is ongoing and that includes information sharing, skills development, follow-up site based support and a collegial forum to share good practices and brainstorm solutions to challenges. Secondly: for the district office to ensure that the HRD facilitators are skilled in relation to the understanding, knowledge and expertise required to implement the SIAS process. This would involve, (i) a skills audit of current facilitators potential to deliver on being a trainer and mentor to FSSs with regard the SIAS process, and (ii) based on the gaps, there should be a two pronged approach to address the identified skills gap, namely: up skilling of available staff and recruiting new staff to address gaps in specialised expertise that is needed.

6.2.4. Inadequacies in the Training and Development Programme

This study corroborated findings of Kourkoutas and Giovazolias (2015) which indicated that teachers felt unsupported or inadequately skilled to work with learners who had various difficulties. Whilst KZNDOE had a comprehensive HRD programme plan, there was no evidence of the implementation of the HRD programme commencing with a skills audit at both the school and at the Pinetown district office level. Consequently, FSSs found that the HRD programme did not always meet their individual needs. There was no differentiation in the HRD programme. It had a “one size fits all” design. FSS staff found the HRD programme intense, fast paced and inadequate. The inadequacies in the district HRD programme for FSS staff was
compounded by the absence of school based initiatives to address the support skills gaps. To address the inadequacies in the Training and Development Programme of FSSs the researcher recommends strategies within the following problematic areas:

(i) Training was too intense, fast paced and the methodology unsuitable

To address the challenges in the methodology, pace and content of the HRD programme outlined in chapter 5, there is research evidence (Smit and Mpya, 2011; Forlin and Chambers, 2011; UNESCO, 2005), that advocates for the need of the HRD programme to understand the skills gap of participants for it be successful. Firstly, the researcher is of the view that, at the district level, the HRD programme needs to be reviewed. This review should take into cognisance, that in order for it to be effective, in the planning, there should be the acknowledgement that outcomes are determined by the inherent qualities and expertise of those participating in the programme. In other words, there is the need for the FSS HRD plan to have a point of reference for the level of the participants with respect to the relevant knowledge, skills and expertise for successful implementation. To this end secondly, the researcher recommends that there must be a skills audit in respect to the knowledge, skills and capacity of teachers and district officials to guide the method, content and pace of the HRD programme.

Thirdly, in reviewing the HRD programme, cognisance must be taken of the fact that the context in which the programme occurs is critical to the relevance of the HRD methodology and focus. There is research evidence (Kourkoutas and Giovazolias, 2015; World Bank, 2005; Mwoma & Pillay, 2016) to support the fact that teachers, including teachers in the FSSs in this study, were facing a myriad of challenges (e.g. large class sizes, staff shortages, curriculum and assessment demands) related to the daily operations of their school. In planning a FSS HRD programme, consideration should therefore be given as to who needs to be developed, what skills they need to be developed in, and what is realistically possible in relation to the expectant care and support mandate for OVCs.

Fourthly, research conducted by Forlin and Chambers (2011) emphasizes the need to provide long-term professional development and ongoing support for teachers to be
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competent in the demands of ILSTs and to embrace the Inclusive Education imperatives. This study also indicated that HRD plan must include a programme that outlines the nature and frequency of the follow-up support and mentoring as an integral part of the HRD plan. This in the researcher’s view would assist in ensuring the successful development of FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) The quality of the workshops was inadequate.

To address the challenges of the lack of differentiation in the HRD programme and the lack of capacity among district officials to deliver on the content of the FSS programme, it is recommended that firstly: the district officials must review the ‘one size fits all’ HRD programme design. This review needs to take into account that for the HRD programme to be effective, it has to acknowledge the current level of the care and support skills and knowledge of participants, and also what skills need to be developed in relation to the participants’ specific role and responsibilities at the FSS. The HRD programme needs to be customised to meet the developmental needs of the targeted participants in relation to their role within the FSS programme, thus ensuring the consolidation of their roles to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs.

Secondly, research by Wood and Guba (2011) indicated that teachers perceived themselves as not being adequately prepared to deal with issues affecting OVCs. The research findings of Smit and Mpya (2011) also emphasized the need for teachers to receive adequate training and support from specialists if they were to be equipped for an inclusive classroom. To address the finding of this study that indicated that district HRD facilitators lacked expertise, it is recommended that in addition to the skills audit aimed at identifying gaps in the knowledge and expertise of HRD facilitators to deliver of the training programme, the district must have a plan to upgrade the skills of existing staff and/or recruit staff with the appropriate expertise in the FSS programme imperatives.

(iii) FSSs were reliant on the District Office HRD
This study has shown that all FSSs were uncertain of the scope of the FSS care and support mandate for OVCs, and there was a lack of intent by FSSs to take ownership for their own development in their role in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. It is the researcher’s view that before we can expect FSSs to take ownership of their development as a care and support resource for OVCs, there is a need at the district office level for several requirements to be put forward. Firstly, a revised ongoing HRD, mentoring and support programme for FSSs to ensure that FSSs have clarity of purpose in relation to their role as a FSS to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Secondly, to ensure that there is whole school ‘buy in’ for the care and support mandate for OVC. Whole school ‘buy in’ is critical for FSS commitment to programme delivery. (SAIDE, 2012). The researcher is of the view that only if FSSs are committed to the programme imperatives, can we expect FSSs to be intrinsically motivated to take charge for their own professional develop in respect to the care and support mandate for OVCs.

(iv) Lack of ongoing support and mentoring

There is research evidence (Smit and Mpya, 2011; Forlin and Chambers, 2011) for the need of ongoing support and mentoring for teachers to ensure that they are equipped to deal with the care and support needs of an inclusive classroom. The findings of this study indicated lack of capacity among district officials to provide ongoing support and mentoring for FSS, due to multiple programme mandates, lack of specialised skills and staff shortages. FSSs, on the other hand, were uncertain of their roles and were appealing for greater support and guidance from district officials. To address these challenges, related to the ongoing support and mentoring for FSSs, there are several needs at the district level. Firstly, to address this concern here again there is a need to review the HRD programme to ensure ongoing support and mentoring for FSSs is factored into to plan. Secondly, there needs to be clarity in the mentoring and monitoring plan as to who is responsible, for what aspect will the ongoing support and mentoring for FSSs be provided and when will it happen. This will ensure the capacity is built at FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Thirdly, in addition to addressing the lack of
specialised skills through **up skilling of staff or recruitment of staff who have the required specialisations.** Fourthly, **there is a need to review the workloads of officials** to ensure that there is the capacity to meet the mentoring and ongoing support needs of FSSs.

### 6.2.5. Level of Functionality of Support Structures

This study found that all three FSSs did not experience difficulty establishing the ILST/SBST. However, the functionality of this support structure was uneven in relation to its focus areas as outlined in Chapter 2. The learner support committee was more active than the committees that had educator and whole school development as their focus. To address the gaps in the functionality of the ILST/SBST, the following interventions are suggested:

- (i) Not all portfolio committees of the ILST/SBST were fully functional

In line with research findings by Nel et al., (2016) and Conway (2017), this study showed that in all three FSSs, the ILSTs/SBSTs were functional to a degree. Whilst this study found the learner support committee was more active in caring and supporting OVCs, all ILSTs/SBSTs sub-committees found it challenging to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a sustainable mainstream function at FSSs. These challenges were related to the lack of clarity of roles of the sub-committees and the lack of space to incorporate care and support activities amidst the varied curriculum and assessment demands placed on teachers. The following interventions are recommended in order to address the concerns raised by FSSs in relation to the functionality of the ILST/SBST. Firstly, there is a **need at the district level to intensify its HRD programme and mentoring function at the FSS to assist ILST/SBSTs** to consolidate their support functions. Secondly, at FSS level, there is a need to ensure the **inclusion of the responsibilities for the implementation of the FSS programme in the performance agreements of educators, the school management, principal and SGB.** It is the researcher’s view that such an action will promote system wide planning, programming, responsibility and accountability for the establishment of the FSS as a support resource promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The researcher is of the strong view that failure to
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integrate the accountability of the programme, deliverables in the relevant officials’ performance agreements, will relegate the programme to remain as an ad hoc programme for which all responsibility lies with a few individuals

Secondly, at the level of government (DBE and KZNDOE), there is a need to reflect on the workloads of teachers in relation to the care and support mandate for OVCs. The aim of this work study should be twofold. Firstly, to determine how realistic the current care and support mandate is for teachers advocated in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS policy guidelines. Secondly, in the light of the challenges faced by teachers, to determine how the care and support mandate can be incorporated as a sustainable, whole school responsibility.

(ii) ILST/SBST felt they lacked the specialised skills to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs.

In line with other research evidence, namely (Kourkoutas and Giovazolias, 2015; Wood and Guba, 2011), this study found that teachers felt that they lacked the specialised skills to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a mainstream activity. The recommendation made earlier in relation to (i) the need to have a differentiated HRD programme to focus on the specific development needs of the various stakeholders, (ii) the introduction of training in specialised support strategies in the HRD plan, would also be beneficial in addressing the skills gaps in ILSTS/SBSTs. This recommendation is supported by the research of Smit and Mpya (2011) that emphasized the need for teachers to be trained by specialists. In addition, it is suggested that there must be a plan to provide site based support and mentoring. This will help to address contextual challenges faced by the specific ILSTs/SBSTs, thus increasing the relevance of the HRD programme and the likelihood of ILSTs/SBSTs in consolidating their OVC support function at FSSs.

6.2.6. Shortage and Role Confusion of Support Staff

Several factors were found to contribute negatively to the FSS’s role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. These were the non-filling of support posts at FSSs, the lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities of support staff, and the
lack of capacity at district office to supervise and mentor, support staff. Strategies that could be adopted to address these challenges include:

(i) Non-filling of support staff posts.

Challenges associated with the recruitment of support staff (LSE, LSA, School Counsellor) as outlined in chapter 5, were related to the lack of available budgets and non-prioritising of such posts in the face of budget cuts. Hence, the financial challenges at the macro and exosystem levels had negatively affected the FSSs at the mesosystem level in the non-appointment of support staff. This was ultimately affecting the FSS’s role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. To address the challenges related to the recruitment of support staff, the following two procedures are recommended: firstly, as indicated earlier in this chapter, there is a need for DBE to provide clarity as to whether care and support (in the form of the FSS mandate) for learners experiencing barriers to learning as advocated in EWP6 (2001), is given the status of being a mainstream programme, or whether it is an auxiliary function within education. This would determine the extent to which it is prioritised in departmental planning processes. Failure to obtain this clarity, would result in the continued non-prioritising of filling of support staff posts at FSSs. The second recommendation concerns the need to include the involvement of the human resources recruitment section in the district FSS selection, support and implementation team. The intention of this would be to ensure that the staffing needs at FSSs are factored into the short and long term recruitment plans at both provincial and district levels.

(ii) Lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the support staff.

As outlined in chapter 5, it became evident in this study that there was lack of clarity among support staff about their scope of work. This resulted in the misuse of critical frontline support staff (LSE, School Counsellor, LSA) at FSSs intended for OVC support. This ultimately compromised the FSSs and hindered them from being effective in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. In keeping with the research of Erickson (2012), which indicated that individual team
members would collaborate better when their respective roles are clearly defined and understood, it is recommended that in order to ensure that the support staff at FSSs are utilized for the purpose they were appointed several changes are necessary. Firstly, at the district level, **there is a need to review the FSS HRD programme to include training that focusses on the specific support roles of the respective support staff and the protocols of engagement between the support staff and the staff at the FSSs.** Secondly, **included in this HRD programme, should be a plan to provide site based support and mentoring for FSS support staff.**

Thirdly, **there is a need, at the provincial and district levels, to review the capacity of the district to deliver on the mandates of the FSS programme.** The intention of this review should be to address the malpractice of using critical frontline supports (support staff) for FSSs in order to assist with district mandates in the light of staff shortages at district level.

6.2.7. Inadequate Collaborations

This study found that, with both intra and inter departmental collaborations, there were no clear protocols of engagement. There was a lack of synergy in the collaborations between sections at the education offices and between FSSs and the district office and there was no evidence of whole school community participation in the support function of the FSSs. The consequences of these engagement challenges between key stakeholders in the FSS programme, are likely to have contributed to FSSs being challenged in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

As cited in chapter 2, UNICEF (2008) emphasized strongly that it is critical for schools to operate as child friendly spaces, and that there are strong community linkages and partnerships that promote integrated service delivery of support for OVCs.

The researcher therefore makes two recommendations to address the challenges related to internal (within the education department) and external (outside the education department) collaborations to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs at FSSs. **Firstly, at the FSS level, there is a need to strengthen the engagement between the FSS and its network of service providers.** FSSs should be supported to define the protocol of such interactions in order to ensure that it
extends beyond reactive work, and to create proactive planning which would have long-term benefits for OVCs. Key issues need to be factored into the protocol of engagement for FSSs and their network of support providers. These include: areas for collaboration, frequency of collaborations, expectations from the various support providers, turn-around times for responses, integrated planning, review and reflection of programme of action.

Secondly, there is the need to promote collaboration and ownership for the establishment, support, development and monitoring of the FSS programme by education officials. Here again, the inclusion of the care and support mandate in the performance agreements and work plans of officials as it relates to their core mandates and the FSS deliverables is advocated. This promotion of a system wide ownership for the role of FSSs to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, can only have positive spin-offs for the efficacy of the programme and its extent of outreach to OVCs. Table 6.1. below is a summary of the above challenges and the suggestions to address them.
Table 6-1 Summary of Challenges and Suggestions to address them

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
<th>INTERVENTION SUGGESTIONS</th>
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| 1. Issues with the selection criteria | (i) KZNDOE must develop indicators for the FSS selection criteria  
(ii) The KZNDOE must workshop the FSS selection committee and potential FSS specifically on the selection criteria, the selection criteria indicators, the FSS programme objectives prior to the final selection of FSSs  
(iii) DBE must provide clarity to provinces as to whether FSSs are to intended to be a system resource or a directorate/programme specific resource. The intention of such clarity is to guide provinces on their composition of their FSS selection, implementation and support team/s. |
| 1.1. Programme Co-ordinators not conversant with the FSS selection criteria | |
| 1.2. Programme coordinators were bias to some selection criteria over others | (i) KZNDOE and the Pinetown Education District office must ensure that there is a more rigorous FSS selection process to ensure that the selected schools are those that are best positioned to deliver on support for OVCs  
(ii) There should be 3 levels of sanctioning in the FSS selection process namely, selection committee, district director and provincial office levels |
1.3. Inadequate assessment of selection criteria at potential FSSs

(i) The Pinetown Education District office must broaden the assessment methods used in the selection process to include both subjective and objective strategies.

(ii) The representation on the FSS selection committee must be widened to include input from finance, governance, curriculum, assessment, Human Resources and infrastructure sections.

2. Issues with Care and Support Budget

2.1. Inconsistent Budget Allocations

(i) KZNDOE and the Pinetown Education District must cost the implementation of the FSS programme upfront, and factor these costs into the education department’s short and long-term budget plans.

(ii) KZNDOE ring-fence budgets for provisioning needs of the FSS to avoid diverting of funds intended for OVC.

(iii) Financial expertise must to be included in the FSS selection and implementation team.

2.2. Lack of skills and understanding of budget utilisation

(i) The target group for the advocacy on the care and support budget allocation must be broadened to include the wider school community.

(ii) The FSS Principal must ensure that the task of developing business plans for the utilisation of care and support funds must include all SBST members at FSSs and stakeholders involved in
<table>
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<th>2.3. Limited consultation with key stakeholders in the development of budget utilisation plans</th>
<th>providing programmes for OVCs at FSSs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) District Programme Coordinators must clearly define for FSSs the stages and processes of developing the budget plan for the utilisation of the FSS Care and Support Funds</td>
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<td>(ii) Three stages of development of budget plans are advocated to ensure input, ‘buy in’ and ownership by all critical stakeholders for the appropriate and effective use of the care and support funds. Firstly, planning at the involving FSS and it’s stakeholders, secondly, the school finance committee inputs and supports draft plans, and thirdly, FSS programme implementers at district level ratify the plan to ensure it complies with the FSS programme objectives.</td>
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<td>2.4. Lack of monitoring and evaluation of funds from district officials</td>
<td>(i) Here again the necessity for District and Provincial Offices to include the finance section in the FSS selection and implementation team, is highlighted. The purpose of including such expertise in the team would be twofold: firstly, to address the financial skills gaps among programme implementers, and secondly, to assist with support and monitoring of the utilisation of care and support funds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Implementation Concerns related to the FSS model</td>
<td>3.1. Confusion of the support role of FSSs</td>
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<td>3.2. Support provision for OVCs was linked to the availability of resources</td>
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### 3.3 Support interventions revolved around basic needs and issues related to socio-economic deprivation.

- At DBE and KZNDOE there must be a review of policy directives related to the workloads of teachers in the light of facilitating their capacity to embrace the care and support mandate for OVCs.
- The HRD programme for FSSs must be broadened to include skills development in strategies/techniques to address various psycho-social and educational barriers to learning experienced by OVCs.

### FSS implementation team

- Sections are included in the FSS implementation team.
- The responsibility for ensuring the provision/delivery of the respective critical support resources for FSSs are factored into the performance agreements of the relevant programme section heads and the district and provincial heads.
### 3.4. Difficulties using the standardised support processing strategy (SIAS)

1. **(i)** The Pinetown Programme coordinators must ensure that a focussed and comprehensive SIAS training programme that includes information sharing, skills development, follow-up site based support and a collegial forum to share experiences and good practice is developed.

2. **(ii)** The KZNDOE and the Pinetown District Manager must ensure that there is a skills audit is conducted to determine the understandings, knowledge and expertise of facilitators of the SIAS process prior to the training of FSSs.

3. **(iii)** Based on the audit findings there needs to be plans to up the skills of current staff and to recruit new staff to address gaps in specialised expertise.
| 4. Inadequacies in the Training and Development | 4.1. Training was too intense, fast paced and the methodology unsuitable | (i) The District Programme Coordinators must conduct a skills audit in respect to the knowledge, skills and capacity of teachers at the FSS level. The purpose of which is to:  
   a. have a point of reference for the level of the participants with respect to the relevant knowledge, skills and expertise for successful programme implementation.  
   b. guide the method of training, the content and pace of the HRD programme.  
(ii) District Programme Coordinators must ensure that the HRD programme takes cognisance of the context in which the programme occurs and the roles of the specific stakeholders and staff in the FSS programme to ensure the relevance of the HRD content, methodology and focus.  
(iii) Follow-up support and mentoring must be included in the HRD plan |
4.2. The quality of the workshops were inadequate.

(i) District Programme Coordinators must review the ‘One size fits all’ HRD design to provide a differentiated HRD programme to address the stakeholder’s needs related to their specific roles and responsibilities

(ii) To address the gaps in the knowledge and expertise of HRD facilitators, the district office must have a plan to up skill existing staff and/or recruit staff with the appropriate expertise in the FSS programme imperatives.

4.3. FSSs were reliant on the District Office HRD programme

(i) District Programme Coordinators must ensure that the FSS HRD programme is ongoing to allow for the understanding and consolidation of critical concepts of the FSS programme by all FSS stakeholders about the role of FSSs to promote psychosocial and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) Prior to implementing the programme District Programme Coordinators need to ensure that there is whole school ‘buy in’ for the implementation of the care and support mandate for OVC by all FSS stakeholders.
### 4.4. Lack of ongoing support and mentoring

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<td>(i)</td>
<td>District Programme coordinators must review the HRD programme to ensure:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. ongoing support and mentoring for FSSs is factored into the plan.</td>
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<td>b. there is clarity in the M&amp;E plan as to who is responsible, when it will happen and for what aspect will the ongoing support and mentoring for FSSs be provided.</td>
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<td>(ii)</td>
<td>KZNDOE and the Pinetown Education District Office must review the workloads of officials to ensure that there is capacity to meet the mentoring and ongoing support needs of FSSs.</td>
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| 5. Level of functionality of Support structures | 5.1. Not all portfolio committees of the ILST/SBST were fully functional | (i) Pinetown FSS programme coordinators must ensure HRD programme has a target that focusses on site based mentoring of ILST/SBSTs to consolidate their support functions.  
(ii) To ensure accountability and promote the mainstreaming of OVC care and support programmes at FSSs, KZNDOE, Pinetown District FSS Programme coordinators and the Circuit Management must ensure the inclusion of the responsibility for the implementation of the FSS programme in the performance agreements of educators, the school management, principal and SGB, to promote ownership and commitment to the programme goals.  
(iii) Here again there is a need for DBE and KZNDOE to reflect on the workloads of teachers in relation to the care and support mandate for |
OVCs, to determine how realistic the current care and support mandate is for teachers as advocated in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS policy guidelines.
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<td>(iv) For DBE and KZNDOE to determine in light of the challenges faced by teachers, how the care and support mandate can be incorporated as a sustainable, whole school responsibility.</td>
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<td>5.2. ILST/SBST lacked the specialised skills to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs</td>
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<td>(i) HRD programme needs to be reviewed to include training on specialised strategies to address educational and psycho-social support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(ii) District Level intervention at FSSs sites to support and mentor to assist with contextual challenges faced by ILSTs/SBSTs</td>
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</table>
| 6. Shortage and role confusion of Support Staff | 6.1. Non-Filling of support posts | (i) DBE needs to provide clarity to Provinces on the status of the care and support (in the form of the FSS programme) for teaching and learning as advocated in EWP6 (2001). Is it a mainstream or an auxiliary function within education? This would guide provinces on the extent to which it is prioritised in departmental planning, resourcing and budgetary processes.

(ii) As indicated earlier, both at the Provincial and District level it is critical to include the human resources recruitment section in the district FSS selection, support and implementation team. The intention of this would be to ensure that the staffing needs and provision at FSSs are factored into the short and long term recruitment plans at both provincial and district levels. |
| 6.2. Lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the support staff. | (i) The District FSS Programme Coordinators must review the FSS HRD programme to include training that focusses on the OVC care and support roles of the respective support staff, protocols of engagement between the support staff and the staff at the FSSs, and a plan for district officials to provide site based support and mentoring for FSS support staff. |
| (ii) KZNDOE and the Pinetown Education District to address the malpractice of using critical frontline supports (support staff) for FSSs to assist with district mandates, the provincial and district offices must review the capacity of the district to deliver on the mandates of the FSS programme |
| 7. Inadequate Collaborations | 7.1. Absence of clear protocols of engagement |
| (i) District FSS Programme Coordinator must support |
FSSs to define the protocol of engaging with its network of support providers. The focus of such a protocol is two-fold. Firstly, to ensure that collaborations extends beyond reactive work, to proactive planning which would have long-term benefits for OVCs. Secondly, to regularise operational conditions e.g. frequency of meetings, turnaround times, referral and reporting procedures, review and reflection sessions.

(ii) To promote collaborations internally within KZNDOE to establish FSSs as a Care and Support Resource for OVCs, Section Heads must ensure that the inclusion of the care and support mandate in the performance agreements and work plans of officials as it relates to their core mandates and the FSS deliverables is advocated.
6.2.8. Enabling Factors
Also evident in this study was the potential of FSSs to impact on the lives of learners experiencing barriers to learning and development as indicated in the research conducted by Conway (2017). This study also showed that there were enabling factors at FSSs that could facilitate its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Suggestions of how these enabling factors could be used to further promote the FSS as a care and support resource for OVCs is presented below.

6.2.9. Confidence among the Participants in the FSS Programme Objectives
It was evident in this study that, despite the many challenges to implementation, all participants at both FSSs and district office levels acknowledged the relevance of the FSS programme. FSSs expressed being enthusiastic and motivated on being selected as a FSS to participate in the programme. It is the researcher’s view that, if district officials can take advantage of this positive energy at FSSs and partner with FSSs to face the programme challenges head on, it could make the road for FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs clearer and less challenging.

6.2.10. KZNDOE Programme Implementation Design Promoted Psychosocial and Educational Support as a Mainstream Activity at FSSs
KZNDOE showed visionary leadership in the designing and planning stage for the implementation of KZNDOE FSS programme. In this regard KZNDOE provided (i) direction with respect to criteria for potential FSSs, (ii) identified an essential package of support resources for FSSs and (iii) promoted the role of FSSs to deliver psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a whole school mainstream activity. This provided a foundation for FSSs to be successful in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The literature review indicated that in order to build protective systems, strong leadership and management capacity is a critical factor (SAIDE, 2012; UNICEF, 2006). The kind of planning for the FSS programme implementation undertaken by KZNDOE is a clear illustration of how the exosystem takes action to address gaps in the mesosystem, which in turn, assists with addressing gaps in the microsystem, to ensure that no child is left behind.
Here again, it is the researcher’s view that at the exosystem level (provincial and district office) there needs to be a greater desire to ensure that the good foundation work done by the province to develop a KZNDOE relevant FSS model becomes a reality. The KZNDOE FSS model promotes the principal at the FSS level and the District Director at district level as key in the process to ensure the establishment of FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Both the school principal and the district director are, by virtue of their position within the district and school, able to ensure that all sections are held accountable in respect to their core mandates to participate in the selection, support and mentoring of FSSs. By assuming this leadership responsibility for the programme implementation at the school and district levels, the principal and the Pinetown district director can promote system wide responsibility for the establishment of FSSs in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Ultimately, it would be likely to address most of the challenges to implementation that FSSs in this study have faced.

6.2.11. KZNDOE Showed Innovation Related to Budgetary, Human and Material Provisioning for FSSs

UNICEF in their report on the “State of the World’s Children: A fair chance for every child” (2016), argues that reaching vulnerable children is not a matter of a technical barrier but also, among other things, it is concerned with the availability of resources. Research by Swart and Pettipher (2005), also indicates that for inclusive schools to work in South Africa, we need an education system that provides the necessary infrastructure, resources and support. The efforts by the KZNDOE to ensure that there were fertile conditions at FSSs in this regard, illustrates how the exosystem (provincial department of education) intervened to support the FSS (at the mesosystem level) with an essential package of resources, programmes and guidelines, to ensure that FSSs are in a position to provide interventions for OVCs to address gaps in the microsystem (home) level. If the district office can embrace these provisions and ensure that they are supported and mentored in line with the respective district office support functions, it is likely that FSSs, in spite of the many challenges, will be on the road to a higher level of functioning in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
Table 6.2 contains a summary of the enabling factors at FSSs in this study and the associated opportunities it offers to promote FSSs in their role to provide psychosocial and educational support for OVCs.

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<tr>
<th>ENABLING FACTORS</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES CREATED</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Confidence among the participants in the FSS programme objectives</td>
<td>If district officials can take advantage of this positive energy at FSSs and partner with FSSs to face the programme challenges head on, it could make the road for FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs clearer and less challenging.</td>
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</table>
| 2. KZNDOE programme implementation design promoted psycho-social and educational support as a mainstream activity at FSSs | (i) The KZNDOE FSS model promotes the principal at school level and the District Director at district level, as key in the process to ensure the establishment of FSSs in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.  
(ii) By assuming the leadership responsibility at the FSS level, principals are well positioned to promote whole school responsibility for care and support interventions for OVCs. Thus consolidating the role of the FSS to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as a mainstream, whole school responsibility at the school.  
(iii) By assuming this leadership responsibility for the programme implementation in the district, the Pinetown Education District director by virtue of his position within the district is able to ensure that all section heads are held accountable in respect to their core mandates to participate in the selection, support and mentoring of FSSs. This approach will promote district wide responsibility for the establishment of FSSs in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Ultimately, it would likely address most of the challenges to implementation that FSSs in this study faced. |
3. KZNDOE showed innovation related to budgetary, human and material provisioning for FSSs

(i) In its conceptual design of the KZNDOE FSS model, KZNDOE provided an essential package of support resources for the FSS at the mesosystem level (support staff, support centre, ILST/SBST, care and support funds, specialised LTSM) to facilitate its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

(ii) If the district office can embrace these resources and ensure that they are utilised correctly, and are supported in their support functions at FSSs in spite of the many challenges, it likely that FSSs will be on the road to a higher level of functioning in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

### 6.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented suggestions of interventions to enhance the FSSs in the Pinetown Education District, in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. The suggestions were related to making appropriate choices of FSSs, roles and responsibilities, resourcing, budget, HRD, support personnel, support and mentoring that could enhance the role of FSSs to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Herein, the researcher outlined that it is critical to the suggestions of interventions to obtain clarity from the macro system level (DBE) as to whether Inclusive Education is a strategic approach for the education ministry, or a departmental programme associated with a section’s mandate. This clarity would provide direction as to whether FSSs need to be supported and strengthened to become a system resource for the co-ordinated delivery of all care and support initiatives for OVCs versus Full Service Schools selected to be a directorate’s (SNES) resource. This chapter also highlighted enabling factors in the KZNDOE FSS programme. Had the Pinetown District officials capitalised on the enabling factors during the process of strengthening the FSS in its role as an OVC support resource, the researcher hypothesizes that it is likely that the FSSs in this study, would have been at a higher level of functioning in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
Chapter 7. Contributions, Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the contributions of the study, its limitations and recommendations for future research. The researcher concludes this dissertation by making reference to an overall reflection of the study, her own learning and experiences in conducting this study, and finally indicating how the findings and recommendations of this study would be shared with KZNDOE and DBE with the intention of assisting in the refinement and enhancement of the KZNDOE FSS programme.

7.2. Contribution of the Study

The purpose of this study was to firstly, explore what role Full Service Schools in the Pinetown Educational District of KwaZulu Natal play in promoting educational and psycho-social support of OVCs. In order to fulfil this aim of the study the following objectives were explored: (i) the Full-Service School selection criteria on its OVC support roles and responsibilities; (ii) how budgets were managed to promote care and support programme for OVCs; (iii) the provision of the range of support programmes and services for OVCs; (iv) how the training and development programme for Full-Service Schools influenced it’s support role; (v) the role of support structures and specialist personnel in promoting care and support at FullService Schools; and (vi) the collaboration between the FSS and its network of support providers to strengthen its role as a care and support resource for OVCs.

Whilst this study found that the three FSSs were not operating at the level envisaged in the DBE and KZNDOE FSS guideline documents (providing OVC support as a sustainable, mainstreamed, whole school responsibility), all of them were found to be caring schools (i.e. schools that were in touch with OVC needs and attempted to respond to those needs- according to REPSSI, 2013). This study pointed to many factors to implementation that operated collectively, to contribute to the FSSs being challenged to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. Among the
factors that challenged the FSSs in the role as a care and support resource for OVCs were the following: confusion among FSS programme implementers about their roles and responsibilities related to the care and support mandate, educators feeling inadequate to deliver on the support mandate, the demands of the curriculum and the myriad of departmental programmes, lack of specialist support, inconsistent care and support budget allocations, an inadequate training and development programme, inadequate site based support and guidance from programme co-ordinators, inadequacies in stakeholder collaborations, delays in resource provisioning, and gaps in functionality of the FSSs at the point of selection.

Secondly, based on the findings this study aimed to make suggestions, if necessary, as to what KZNDOE could do to further strengthen, refine, and design new roles or programmes to promote educational and psycho-social support for OVCs at FSSs in the Pinetown District in KZN. To this end the researcher made recommendations related to policy review to promote FSS programme efficacy, selection criteria of FSSs, critical expertise needed in FSS selection and implementation teams, planning for the utilisation of care and support budgets, inclusion of FSS infrastructure, resources and recruitment into department short and long-term planning, the roles and responsibilities of FSS staff, support staff and education officials, the focus of FSS training and development programmes, intra and inter-departmental collaborations to promote integrated support provision for OVCs, and the programme of monitoring and ongoing support. It was evident from this study that there was a need to view the establishment of the FSS programme as a process, to acknowledge the contextual differences at each FSS, and that gains may not be uniform and do not occur at the same pace at each FSS.

The contributions related to the role of the FSS in the Pinetown Education District, in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, presented below are as original contributions and they are seen from the perspectives of the OVCs, FSSs stakeholders, FSS programme implementers and relevant educational policy imperatives as well as the theory that framed this study.
7.2.1. Original Contributions

Firstly, this research is a pioneer study, as there are no research studies on the role of FSSs within the Pinetown Education District, to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs. It highlighted the challenges and well as the enabling factors to establishing FSSs within the district as a care and support resource for OVCs. It also provided suggestions on how the programme could be refined and enhanced to strengthen the FSS’s role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Secondly, this research also provides valuable feedback to the KZNDOE as to the effectiveness of the provincial strategy to establish FSSs as a care and support resource for OVCs. It provides greater understanding of where the gaps in delivery are, and which areas in the provincial FSS strategy need strengthening or rethinking to ensure that FSSs are effective in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

Thirdly, this study provided an understanding of the efficacy of the elements in the essential support package in the KZNDOE’s model of FSSs, in relation to the FSS’s OVC care and support mandate. The support package includes the following: support posts, care and support budget, HRD programme, support services and programmes, specialised spaces, support structures. For example, a critical finding in this regard was that education officials and FSS staff agreed that the single most essential resource to ensure the FSS success to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs, was the provision of support staff (LSEs, LSAs, School Counsellors) to FSSs. All three FSSs in this study felt strongly that without additional support, they were challenged in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

7.2.2. Benefits to OVCs

This study revealed that care and support is the business of education and it needs to be at the centre stage with curriculum in the educational planning, budgeting and programming processes. The benefits for OVCs, should KZNDOE embrace this approach to psycho-social and educational support provisioning, would have several results. The first result would be the likelihood of the delivery of such OVC support at FSSs being a sustainable, mainstream, whole school responsibility.
The second result would be the provision of the support staff (the Learning Support Educator, School Counsellor and Learner Support Assistants) would be factored into departmental and district short and long-term budget and recruitment plans, thus ensuring sustainable access to such critical supports for OVCs.

The third result would be that by ensuring the provision of psycho-social and educational support as a sustainable, mainstream and whole school responsibility, there would be an increase in the likelihood of OVCs coming to school, staying at school and achieving better scholastically. This would culminate in the potential to have long term benefits for their development and future livelihoods.

Fourthly, the availability of psycho-social support at FSSs would also be likely to assist in providing the space for OVCs to share their daily challenges and to be assisted in accessing critical supports such as food, shelter and clothing. Moreover, it affords OVCs the opportunity to be assisted in developing relationships, to be accepted and to develop a sense of belonging.

Finally, this study offered learners/OVCs an opportunity to be heard. Teachers, due to their rank, and learners due to their status of being children, do not easily get opportunities to share their views and feelings in the school environment without fear of negative repercussions. For the researcher, the inclusion of OVCs provided rich information about the FSS programme relevance and focus from the perspective of the OVCs. It was interesting to note that the psycho-social support role of the FSS resonated more than the educational support role with the OVCs. They saw their teachers as parent figures, people who made them feel special and people who helped them when they were sick, sad or hurt. Learners expressed the desire to come to school because they were taken good care of by the teachers. OVCs in this study reflected the FSS as a beacon of hope to lead a better life.

7.2.3. Benefit to FSS programme design and policy

This study contributed to providing DBE and KZNDOE with feedback on the efficacy of the FSS programme. All three FSSs confirmed the relevance, need and their support
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

for the objectives of the FSS programme. However, the expected role of FSSs as a model and resource for the provision of psycho-social and educational support for a hub of schools, at this point in time within the Pinetown District, is a goal which would be hard to achieve. In terms of the FSS programme design, this study suggests that for FSSs to be functional in the role of being a resource and model of care and support provision for a hub of schools, it needs to have a strong and visionary management team, good governance and quality teaching and learning in place. It is only after the barriers to implementation of the FSS programme are adequately addressed at the FSSs, followed by a programme to strengthen and address the challenges in capacity at the FSS to function in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs that the outreach role associated with FSSs can be considered.

This research contributed to the FSS programme and policy development by contributing to the discourse of whether the role of the school in the care and support mandate should be conceptualized as sites through which support is offered by a range of appropriately trained professionals/mandated agencies. Conversely, whether the role of schools should be considered to be custodians and generators of psycho-social and educational support. This study confirmed the work of Hoadley (2007), that there is a need to be realistic around what teachers are trained to do and to recognise the overload of the range of programme demands on a teacher’s capacity to deliver on such demands (Morrow, 2005). To expect teachers to embrace the care and support role for OVCs, barriers to delivery need to be addressed. These include large class sizes, staff capacity, the demands of the curriculum and the provision of specialised staff (LSAs, LSEs, School Counsellor).

This research contributed to programme design and policy by highlighting that the responsibility for the establishment of the FSS programme lies beyond the mandate of a directorate. The research indicates the need for DBE at the macro system level, to reflect on the strategic objective of the FSS programme, namely whether it is an approach to planning, programme design and implementation within the education department, or if it is a programme focus of a directorate. The outcome of this reflection would provide clarity as to the responsibility for the establishment of the key drivers of the FSS
programme across the branches within the education department, as it pertains to the core mandates of the directorates.

This study contributed to providing programme implementers with feedback on the effectiveness of the HRD design and the utilisation of the cascading model of training. The ‘one size fits all’ HRD programme design was found to be inadequate. It advocates for a HRD programme design that is differentiated to accommodate variances in skills, knowledge and roles of the various stakeholders (SBSTs, LSAs, LSEs, School Counsellors, SGBs, educators, Network of Service Providers) in the FSS programme. Furthermore, the findings suggest for the HRD programme needs to target the training of all personnel. This is because the utilisation of the cascading model was found to be ineffective in ensuring the requisite skills and knowledge was shared and understood by all at the FSS level.

This study broadened the understanding of stakeholder partnerships within the FSS context. It showed that to have long term positive benefits for vulnerable children, there needed to be (i) clear protocols of engagement, and (ii) collaborations that must go beyond responding to presenting support needs of learners, but which also include collaborations that focus on proactive programme planning to mitigate the risks OVCs face.

Overall, the opportunity to participate in this research study gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the FSS implementation process at their school, to identify the gains they made, and the abilities, skills and resources they had at their disposal to assist with programme implementation. It also created awareness of the challenges they experienced and offered them an opportunity to make inputs into the implementation process.

7.2.4. Contribution to the Bio-Ecological Systems Theory

This study clearly provided support for the bio-ecological systems theory. The FSS is one programme at the mesosystem level that comes in to fill in the gaps in support found at the OVC’s family/home, in the microsystem level. This study contributed to (i) broadening the understanding of the level to which the different spheres of support in
the OVC’s world interacted within the FSS context, to (ii) addressing gaps in support. External support systems to the family, such as the FSS (mesosystem), the district and provincial education offices (exosystem), therefore become critical supports to protect children from developing further emotional, developmental or behavioural disorders.

This study provided clarity on several issues: (i) on how one of the spheres in which the OVC is nested namely, the school at the mesosystem (FSS) level takes action to address the gaps in support (food, clothing, parental guidance, educational and psychological support) and (ii) at the micro-systems level (namely the family/home), by collaborating with the exosystem (i.e. other government departments, NGOs, community) to ensure OVCs are not left behind. It was evident in this study that FSSs were quite resourceful in accessing psycho-social support from relevant government departments and local NGOs, on an ad hoc basis, to address immediate support needs of OVCs. These efforts to address the support needs of OVCs is a clear illustration of the bio-ecological systems theory that framed this study.

This research study offered the researcher, who was a KZNDOE official, the format to reflect on her own expectation of what role FSSs should play in promoting psychosocial and educational support for OVCs. Working within the KZNDOE as an educational psychologist, the researcher noticed that FSSs were struggling in their care and support function in relation to individual support plans for OVCs. This current research provided the researcher with a richer understanding of the challenges faced by educators in delivering on the care and support mandate. It also caused the researcher to have a reality check of the role expected of educators to be integral in the support provision of OVCs in relation to their core mandates and skills.

It also, for the first time, raised questions for the researcher as to the strategic objective of Inclusive Education, and the implications thereof for the establishment of FSSs as a care and support resource for OVCs. The clarity of whether Inclusive Education is a strategic approach that governs the delivery of all departmental programmes and services, or whether it is a programme associated with a specific directorate’s mandate, will have implications for the selection criteria of FSSs. In other words, it will have implications for whether the Full Service Schools are selected to be a system resource
for the co-ordinated delivery of all care and support initiatives for OVCs versus Full Service Schools being selected to be a directorate’s/ a specific programme resource. Clarity around this question will also have implications for the planning, budgeting, selection, implementation, support and monitoring of FSSs.

This research study also offered the researcher an opportunity to hear from OVCs as to the role of FSSs in helping them deal with the adversities they faced daily. The researcher was also intrigued by the level of impact that the simple acts of kindness and words of support from educators had on the OVC’s. This created a sense of belonging and being cared for.

7.3. Limitations of the study

The first major limitation that impacted on the richness of the participants’ responses was the second language issue. Whilst teachers, stakeholders and SGBs were willing to communicate in English, the researcher observed that due to English being a second language for most participants, the clarity of expressions and terms used by these participants did not always reflect the intended meaning. To limit misinterpretations of participants’ responses, the researcher declared upfront when presenting the results, in the results chapter, that participant verbatim accounts were presented but the researcher adjusted statements to allow for the removal of duplication of words or statements and made slight adjustments in the language to facilitate understanding. Furthermore, to deal with the issue of English being the second language for the FSS participants, the social worker based at the Pinetown Education Office, who was proficient in both isiZulu and English, was present in the interviews and served as an interpreter.

The second major limitation to research was this: the researcher was a high ranking official within the KZNDOE. At times the researcher felt that the participant’s level of engagement appeared to be measured despite the researcher reassuring them of their anonymity. It is the researcher’s view that this could have impacted on what and how participants reported. Participants also saw the researcher’s presence as an opportunity to lobby for support, resources and services to improve delivery at school site level. To limit any of the interviews being viewed as a school support visit by a departmental official, the researcher in some instances abandoned the interview at the point once she
realised participants had digressed from the research focus of the interview. The researcher then refocused the group, clarified the boundaries of the study and then continued with the interview.

The third limitation was this: the gathering of rich information about the district and provincial programme co-ordinators experience of the implementation was impacted on by the high turnover of staff at district level. Current programme co-ordinators at both district and provincial level had gaps in their knowledge or they did not have first-hand experience of the range of implementation issues. Moreover, at school level, there were changes in respect to teachers, SGB members and other stakeholders’ involvement in the programme. This affected the depth of knowledge of the history of the FSS programme at the school from some of the current members of these respective groups. To address this limitation, the researcher did not limit the number of participants in each subgroup. This non-limitation of numbers was done to allow for participants that were available, and had experience and knowledge of the FSS programme in the Pinetown District, to be part of the interview process.

In conclusion, if as a researcher, I had to conduct this study again, I would include a process of direct observation of the operations of various elements of the FSS programme in addition to the document analysis, individual and focus group interviews, this would allow the researcher to correlate the findings in the document analysis, participant reports and what is really prevalent daily in the natural setting. This would accommodate for gaps in knowledge, experience and second language challenges among participants, contributing to a richer understanding of the role of the FSS in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.

7.4. Suggestions for further research

Arising from the findings in this study, the researcher makes the following suggestions:

(i) To initiate a study that explores the roles, responsibilities and protocols of engagement between teachers, LSEs, School Counsellor, LSAs and the members of the District Based Support Team in the provision, support and
monitoring of support interventions for OVCs. More information is needed to clarify how each group of professionals collaborate in supporting FSSs to deliver on the care and support mandate.

(ii) To initiate research regarding the role and use of the Support Centre at KZNDOE FSSs in (i) providing access to additional psycho-social and educational support programmes, and (ii) advocating and collaboration with organisations and government departments that provide services and programmes for children to deliver such programmes and services at FSSs. The study has indicated that the potential of the Support Centres at FSSs as a site where inter-sectoral programmes for children can be sustainably delivered in an integrated and co-ordination manner, has not been established. Such linkages will be critical to ensure alignment and mainstreaming of support initiatives, maximum use of available resources and expertise to promote efficient, quality and cost effective delivery of care and support initiatives for OVCs

(iii) To initiate a comparative analysis of the role of FSSs at a national level with these findings of the KZNDOE FSSs in promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs

(iv) To initiate an exploration of Full Service Schools as a System Resource for the co-ordinated delivery of all care and support initiatives for OVCSs versus Full Service Schools as a Directorate/programme resource. Clarity on this issue would have far reaching implications with regards to how the Department of Education plans, budgets, and resources support programmes for FSSs.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the contributions, limitations and recommendations of this study. The researcher also made suggestions for further researcher based on the findings of this research. The researcher concludes this report by first highlighting key issues raised in this research, and secondly, by sharing her growth and development whilst conducting this research.
Evident in this study was that the three FSSs were caring schools, but they were also schools that made efforts to create an enabling school environment that attempted to address the support needs of OVCs. However, the three FSSs were found to be challenged in their role to promote psycho-social and educational support as a sustainable, mainstreamed, whole school responsibility, as envisaged in the DBE (2010), and KZNDOE (2011) FSS guideline documents. The risks to implementation at the three FSSs were not related to the lack of identifying a range of appropriate support interventions for OVCs. Rather, this study showed that the role of FSSs to provide psycho-social and educational support for OVCs were challenged by many things operating collectively within the contexts of the FSSs. This ranged from issues related to policy imperatives, lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities, recruitment of staff, curriculum and assessment demands, support and mentorship.

Consequently, the researcher is of the view that only by facing the reality of what prevails at the FSSs in this study, and developing a plan to address the risks to programme delivery, will we give the three FSS's in the Pinetown Education District a real chance to be effective in its role to promote psycho-social and educational support for OVCs as an integral part of its operations. Moreover, we need to acknowledge that given the contextual differences at each FSS, gains may not be uniform and they may not occur at the same pace at each FSS.

As the researcher concludes this report, she notes that the findings and recommendations of this study impresses upon her, as a provincial co-ordinator of psycho-social programmes, the need to reflect on and refine the current design and implementation strategy of psycho-social programmes for learners at KZNDOE FSSs. It is critical to this programme reflection exercise to acknowledge the findings and recommendations of this study that relate to educators feeling overwhelmed with curriculum demands, and the acknowledgement of educators that they lacked specialised skills to embrace the care and support mandate for OVCs and the roles and responsibilities of support staff. Furthermore, the researcher is well positioned to share the findings and recommendations of this study with the Inclusive Education implementation and monitoring structures at both the provincial and National levels.
The intention of this would be to advocate for the refining of the current KZNDOE FSS model specifically related to issues on promoting psycho-social and educational support for OVCs.
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

References


Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs


https://ssrn.com/abstract=1136879


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Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs


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Appendix A: Clearance Certificate from the University of Johannesburg

Dear XD Naidoo

Ethical Clearance Number: 2014-016

Re: The role of Full Service Schools, in the Pinetown educational district in KwaZulu Natal, in promoting educational and psycho-social well-being of orphans and vulnerable children

Ethical clearance for this study is granted subject to the following conditions:

- If there are major revisions to the research proposal based on recommendations from the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted.
- If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, it remains the duty of the student to submit a new application.
- It remains the student’s responsibility to ensure that all ethical forms and documents related to the research are kept in a safe and secure facility and are available on demand.
- Please quote the reference number above in all future communications and documents.

The Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee has decided to:

☑ Grant ethical clearance for the proposed research.
☐ Provisionally grant ethical clearance for the proposed research
☐ Recommend revision and resubmission of the ethical clearance documents

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Prof Geoffrey Lautenbach
Chair: FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
20 June 2014
Appendix B: Permission to Conduct Research in KZNDOE Schools

Your application to conduct research entitled: "THE ROLE OF FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS, IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN, IN THE PINETOWN EDUCATION DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 20 May 2015 to 31 July 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Khoqhole at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X0137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Pinetown District

Mqsinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 09 June 2015
Appendix C: Letter to the Principal of FSS Detailing the Research Study

30 October 2015

To: Principal of FSS

Sir/Madam

Proposed research study of the KZNDOE Full-Service School Programme in addressing Psycho-social and Educational Support for Orphaned and other Vulnerable Learners

I, Khumsila Naidoo, a PhD student at the University of Johannesburg, have been given permission by the H.O.D. of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education, to conduct a research study on the role of Full-Service Schools in the Pinetown Education District in promoting educational and psychosocial well-being of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs). It is envisaged that the study will (i) provide insight to the role that FSSs play in addressing educational and psycho-social support for OVCs, and (ii) identify psycho-social and educational interventions that will enhance the role that KZN FSSs play in supporting OVCs. Following discussions with your District officials, and consultations with you, your school is one of the three schools identified to participate in this study. To obtain information on the area of study at school level, group interviews will be held with the School Based Support Team (SBST); the SGB (at least 3 members one of which must be the Chair or his deputy) and 10 learners who are identified by the school as an orphan or vulnerable due to poverty, illness or disability.

The interviews will be organized around six (6) focus areas related to the implementation of the Full-Service School Programme viz. (i) planning and organization (ii) budgeting (iii) resourcing (iv) policies for care and support programmes (v) the range and relevance of support programmes provided, and (vi) accessibility of support programmes and services. Every effort will be made to
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

protect all participants confidentially and privacy. Names of participants will not be used. Whilst there is a risk of cohort or group identification in the research report, information that will identify the individual will not be used. Data collected will be anonymous and only the researchers will access the data collected, which will be stored for no longer than 2 years after the publication of the report. Personal identity will be kept confidential. Participants will be made aware if the situation arises that I am compelled by legal authorities to release information they have provided. Arrangements to conduct the SBST and learner interviews will be made via the school Principal. I will also arrange via the school Principal to meet the SGB members and the school’s Network of Support Service Providers. If the school hours are not suitable for these groups, I am happy to meet with them in the afternoon between 2pm-4pm or on a Saturday afternoon between 1pm-3pm. Your support and active participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Khumsila Naidoo
Appendix D: Letter to the SGB Detailing the Research Study

30 October 2015

To: Chairperson of the SGB
   School One

Sir/Madam

Proposed research study of the KZNDOE Full-Service School Programme in addressing Psycho-social and Educational Support for Orphaned and other Vulnerable Learners

I, Khumsila Naidoo, a PhD student at the University of Johannesburg, have been given permission by the H.O.D. of the Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education, to conduct a research study on the role of Full-Service Schools in the Pinetown Education District in promoting educational and psycho-social well-being of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs). It is envisaged that the study will (i) provide insight to the role that FSSs play in addressing educational and psycho-social support for OVCs, and (ii) identify psycho-social and educational interventions that will enhance the role that KZN FSSs play in supporting OVCs.

Your school is one of the three schools identified after consulting the district FSS programme co-ordinators to participate in this study. To obtain information on the area of study at school level, group interviews will be held with the School Based Support Team (SBST); the SGB (at least 3 members one of which must be the Chair or his deputy) and 10 learners who are identified by the school as an orphan or vulnerable due to poverty, illness or disability.

The interviews will be organized around six (6) focus areas related to the implementation of the Full-Service School Programme viz. (i) planning and organization (ii) budgeting (iii) resourcing (iv) policies for care and support programmes (v) the range and relevance of support programmes provided, and (vi) accessibility of support programmes and services.
Every effort will be made to protect all participants confidentially and privacy. Names of participants will not be used. Whilst there is a risk of cohort or group identification in the research report, information that will identify the individual will not be used. Data collected will be anonymous and only the researchers will access the data collected, which will be stored for no longer than 2 years after the publication of the report. Personal identity will be kept confidential. Participants will be made aware if the situation arises that I am compelled by legal authorities to release information they have provided. Arrangements to conduct the SBST and learner interviews will be made via the school Principal. I will also arrange via the school Principal to meet the SGB members. If the school hours are not suitable for SGB members, I am happy to meet with them in the afternoon between 2pm-4pm or on a Saturday afternoon between 1pm-3pm.

Your support and active participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Khumsila Naidoo
Appendix E: Examples of Consent/Assent Forms of Participants

Informed Consent/Assent Form

Project Title:
The role of Full Service Schools in promoting educational and psychosocial wellbeing of orphans and vulnerable children, in the Pinetown Education District of KwaZulu-Natal

Investigator:
Eunice Ndlovu

Date:
6 November 2015

Please mark the appropriate checkboxes. I hereby:

☐ Agree to be involved in the above research project as a participant.
☐ Agree to be involved in the above research project as an observer to protect the rights of:
☐ Children younger than 18 years of age.
☐ Children younger than 18 years of age that might be vulnerable in order.
☐ Children younger than 18 years of age who are part of a troubled family.
☐ Agree that my child/ren may participate in the above research project.
☐ Agree that my child/ren may be involved in the above research project as participants.

I have read the research information about participating in this research project (or had it explained to me) and understand the nature of the research and my role in it. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study. I understand that my personal details (and any identifying data) will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and participation in this study at any time with no penalty.

☐ Please allow me to review the report prior to publication. I supply my details below for this purpose:
☐ I would like to obtain a copy of this signed document as proof of the contractual agreement between myself and the researcher

Name: Pulane Meywa
Phone or Cell number: 083 298 9949
E-mail address: dtmeywa@gmail.com
Signature: Meywa

If applicable:
☐ I willingly provide my consent/assent for using audio recording of my/the participant’s contributions.
☐ I willingly provide my consent/assent for using video recording of my/the participant’s contributions.
☐ I willingly provide my consent/assent for the use of photographs in this study.

Signature (and date): Meywa 05.11.2015

Signature of person taking the consent (and date): Meywa 05.11.2015

Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee, University of Johannesburg, Updated January 2014
Please report any instance of unethical research practice to ethicalagents@uj.ac.za or 011 559 3016.
## Appendix F: List of Guiding Questions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Planning and Organisation for Care and Support for OVCs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tell me about any profiling of the school that was conducted prior to implementation of the programme, with respect to prevalence of psychosocial and educational barriers and support needs for OVCs attending the school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>From the initiation of the OVC support programme at FSSs, tell me about the consultations with the school community (SMT, SGB, Educators and learners) with respect to the nature, selection and prioritizing of psychosocial and educational support interventions for OVCs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>How was the FSS’s network of service providers included in the planning stage of the OVC psychosocial and educational support programme? Explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Was there a resource /liaison person available from the District/Provincial office to address implementation issues, risks and provide support? Who was this and how they assisted the school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tell me about the direction you was given with respect to roles and responsibilities, organisation of school time and staff duties to accommodate the implementation of psychosocial and educational support programmes, record keeping, reporting, consultations, networking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Tell me about the training programme you received on educational, psychological and social needs and support interventions? Give me details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Was there space in the roll out of the programme for reflection and input from school staff, and other stakeholders to facilitate refinement of the educational, psychological and social needs support programme for OVCs?</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.</th>
<th>Budgeting for Care and Support Interventions for OVCs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Was the school allocated a budget for OVC psychosocial and educational support programmes? Explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tell me whether the school was given direction on how to use the funds and what to use the funds with. Give details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>If the school received a budget, approximately what percentage of the budget was allocated or spent on: Direct services /support to OVCs? educational support programmes for OVCs psychosocial support programmes for OVCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>If you received a budget, did District/Provincial programme co-ordinators who (i) monitor the FSS actual and planned expenditure? (ii) Provide support to FSS’s when required to enable effective budget expenditure and control? Explain</td>
</tr>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.</th>
<th>Resourcing (human and material) for care and support interventions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Were FSSs given any resources to assist them in their care and support mandate for OVCs? Tell me more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tell me how the school determines what resources are needed for support interventions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Tell me how are educational, psychological and social needs support material or fixed resources that are procured for the FSS programme, accounted for in terms of the school’s asset management system?

4. Did the school receive any additional material or human resources as part of Provincial planning to strengthen its ability to effectively deliver on the educational, psychological and social needs support mandate? Explain

**D. Policies – promoting care and support for OVCs**

1. Have the immediate School Community (staff, SMT, SGB) been appraised on the National policy/ies as well as Provincial guideline documents supporting the provision of educational, psychological and social needs support programmes in schools for OVCs at FSSs?

2. Were all of the school policies relating to learner safety, support, protection and development reviewed in light of the guiding principle of support interventions for OVCs viz. “what is in the best interest of the child” and child rights? Explain

3. Did the school find it necessary to introduce any new policies to accommodate the OVC educational and psychosocial support programme?

**E. Range & relevance of Support Programmes for OVCs**

1. Does the school know the range of psychosocial and educational barriers experienced by learners at the school? If so, how was this determined?

2. Did the school’s knowledge of the psychosocial and educational barriers experienced by the learners, inform the selection and range of support services and interventions provided by the school for OVCs? Explain.

3. What educational, psychological and social needs support programmes are offered for OVCs at FSS’s?

4. Does the school together with their network of service providers have any process in place to monitor the impact of the social, psychological and educational interventions provided to OVCs, on their scholastic outcomes? Explain.

5. Does the school promote learner participation in all issues directly affecting them including the selection and reviewing of support programmes for OVCs? Explain.

6. What role does the wider school community and parents have in the selection and delivery of school based care and support programmes for OVCs?

7. Does the school work with a network of care and support service providers to address OVC psychosocial support needs? If so, How? If not, why not?

**F. Accessibility of Support Programmes & Services**

1. Is the implementation of the educational, psychological and social needs support programmes integrated as part of the routine and daily life of the school or as a stand-alone programme as part of the timetable or extra curricula activity? Explain.

2. Does the school allow for “safe spaces” for OVCs to share, reflect and learn to deal with life challenges? Explain.
Does the school use a standard procedure/process that allows for early identification of learners at risk and has guidelines to identify OVCs that are eligible for specialized care and support interventions? Explain.

Is there a school based support structure that plans, implements, supports and monitors OVC educational, psychological and social needs support interventions? Explain.

What importance is placed on parent/guardian/learner collaboration and consent in the process of identifying educational, psychological and social support needs of OVCs? Explain.

Does the school have clear rules of engagement with members that form part of its network of support providers on collaboration for the delivery of educational, psychological and social needs interventions? Explain.

Does the school have a process in place to ensure safe keeping of confidential/sensitive information/records about OVCs? Explain.

### LIST OF GENERAL QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Subgroup</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Subgroups</td>
<td>Do you think the FSS programme will work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSSs- SBST</td>
<td>If you were given the choice again will you still want to be a FSS? What advice would you give to a school who is thinking about becoming an FSS?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Subgroups</td>
<td>What advice would you want to give to the District Office/Programme co-ordinators?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. LSE, School Counsellor, LSA</td>
<td>If you knew what you know now about your role in the FSS programme, would you still apply for your post?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:

- The above questions guided the interviews with the following subgroups:
  - District Co-ordinator of the FSS programme
  - Provincial Co-ordinator of the FSS programme
  - School Counsellors
  - Learning Support Assistants
  - Learning Support Educators
  - ILSTs

The above questions also guided the interviews with the SGBs, the school’s network of Support Service Providers and learners, however for these groups the focus was
on the questions that were related to the relevant group’s role and contributions rather than on questions which were more focused on departmental or school focused procedures and policies.
Appendix G: Notice of Orientation for Workshop-LSE, School Counsellor, LSA
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

Resource Pack provided to District FSS Co-ordinators

The following is an example of a work schedule for LSA within the Foundation Phase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Morning 7h45 -10h30</th>
<th>Mid-day 11-12h30</th>
<th>Afternoon 12h30 -14h30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Classroom support-</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
<td>Support Centre-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1A</td>
<td>additional support</td>
<td>duty:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting with the ISP of 2 learners</td>
<td>Grade One – Literacy (6 learners)</td>
<td>• Assisting with Parent Outreach programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Classroom Support</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1B</td>
<td>additional support</td>
<td>additional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting with the ISP of 1 learner</td>
<td>Grade One – Numeracy (8 learners)</td>
<td>Grade three – numeracy (8 learners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Classroom Support</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
<td>Supervision:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 2A</td>
<td>additional support</td>
<td>Meetings with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting with the ISP of 3 learners</td>
<td>Grade two – Literacy (8 learners)</td>
<td>H.O.D; LSE, Counselor, parents and District officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Classroom support</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
<td>Individual work:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 2b</td>
<td>additional support</td>
<td>Implementing ISP’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting with the ISP for 5 learners</td>
<td>Grade Two Numeracy (6 learners)</td>
<td>for 2 learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Classroom Support</td>
<td>Group work-</td>
<td>Admin: filing, report writing, general record keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>additional support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting with the ISP (2 learners)</td>
<td>Grade Three Literacy (8 learners)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Given the nature of additional support programmes viz. that they reviewed at regular intervals, the work schedules of the LSA must also be reviewed in light of gains made by learners. It is suggested that these schedules should be reviewed at least once a quarter.
LEARNER SUPPORT ASSISTANT

1. **Job title:** Learner Support Assistant

2. **Legislation:** The Public Servants Act, Code of Conduct for Public Servants, South Africa Schools Act, White paper Six 2001

3. **Job Description**
   To work collaboratively with the LSE, Counsellor, Educators and parents in the implementation of additional support plans for learners, with barriers to learning and development at Full Service Schools.

4. **CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
   - Provide Extra support to learners with Special needs, such as those with physical or learning difficulties.
   - Tutor and assist children individually or in small groups to help them master assignments and to reinforce learning concepts presented by the educator.
   - Supervise learners in programmes, projects, run via the Support Centre.
   - Enforce Care and Support policy.
   - Observe learners performance and record data to assess progress of learners with additional support needs.
   - Support and monitor learners in the use and care of assistive devices to prevent injury or damage.
   - Present support programme to learners under the direction and guidance of educators, LSE and Counsellor.

Outlined below is a detailed description of the core duties for the LSA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Core Duty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Learner Support | • Implement individual support plan developed by the LSE, Counsellor or Educators with respect to learners that have been identified, via the Screening Identification, Assessment and Support(SIAS) process as having additional support needs.  
• Implement support programmes developed by the HOD in collaboration with the LSE, for learners within the phase that are identified “at risk” of learning breakdown  
• Assist educators in the classroom with the support and management needs of learners with an individual support plan identified and developed via the SIAS. |
### Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Keeping</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- To work together with educators to establish a classroom environment, for learners with barriers to learning, that stimulates positive learning and actively engages the said learners in the learning process. Eg. developing and using specialized LYSM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Record observations and functioning of learners with barriers to learning within the classroom environment eg. Recording of learners progress, noting of common errors, difficult behaviours,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Keep all tracking records of learners identified (via the SIAS) as having barriers to learning, agreed upon between LSE, Counsellor, H.O.D and the Learning Support Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Keep all records agreed upon between LSE, Counsellor, H.O.D and the Learning Support Assistant with respect to parent programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Centre Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- To participate in the support activities of the Support Centre when required, to be determined via the ILST.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline and general duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Develop learner Classroom Code of Conduct for group work sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To observe and assist at an elementary level with discipline, and general welfare of learners with barriers to learning and development eg. Intervening in a crisis - bullying – fighting, or protecting vulnerable learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To assist with fire drills, first aid and accidents eg. Following international safety standards to administer basic first aid, guide learners out of dangerous situations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration with ILST, LSE and Counsellor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- All activities and programmes are implemented through a collaborative approach with all stakeholders (ILST, LSE, Counsellor, parents, educators).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **PROTOCOLS**

- The LSA is a member of staff of the Full-Service school. As such they are to be included in all supervision and administrative control systems of the school viz. duties, signing of register, curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular duties.
- All daily programme supervision will be done by the relevant phase HOD in consultation with the LSE viz. daily forecast, assessment records, work schedules and ISP.
- The LSE and Counsellor will provide direction with respect to all learners identified in terms of the SIAS process for which Individual Support Plans (ISP) need to be implemented, learners to receive small group support programmes and tracking of ISP.s
- The LSE, Counsellor and District Officials will be responsible for specialist skills support and development of ISP.

6. **Official channels of communication:**

   1. A request or communication from the LSA in connection with a matter falling within the scope of the employer’s power or duties shall be directed to the employer via the head of the relevant institution.
   2. Notwithstanding point 1 above, matters regarding the appointment, termination, of service and leave privileges and enquiries about the remuneration shall be referred to the head of education by the Principal of the school concerned.

7. **Lawful instruction:**

   See Handout on Roles and responsibilities-Protocols

8. **Work schedule:**

   Work schedules may vary depending on the phase and the ethos of individual schools. It is however compulsory for the LSA to have a work schedule.
SECURITY CLEARANCE
Your permanent employment in the department is subject to you receiving a positive security clearance relevant to your level. Security clearance will be issued by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). Security clearance forms will be provided to you by the Directorate Security situated at the Head Office.

PLACE OF WORK AND REPORTING
Your normal place of work will be at the Full Service School, as indicated on your letter of appointment.

HOURS OF WORK
You will be required to work 40 hours per week.

The employer may determine that an attendance register be kept in which an employee shall record the time of his/her arrival at and departure from his/her place of duty.

REMUNERATION
Your salary will be based on salary level 3. Your salary will be paid into your bank account on the last day of every month or on the last working day if the pay falls on a weekend or public holiday. On completion of your 12 month probation period your salary pay date will change to the 15th of every month.

PENSION FUND
Membership of the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) is compulsory. You will contribute at the rate of 7.5% of your basic monthly salary. The employer’s contribution is fixed at 13% per month.

REMUERATIVE WORK OUTSIDE PUBLIC SERVICE
Remunerative work outside the Public Service may only be performed if prior approval is obtained from an official with the delegated authority and the written consent of your supervisor.

SERVICE BONUS
You will receive an annual service bonus amounting to 100% of your basic monthly salary which is payable in the month of your birthday. If you have less than a year’s service; you will receive a pro-rata service bonus. The bonus is taxable but not pensionable. Kindly note that provisions exists for your service bonus to be taxed on a monthly basis instead of a lump sum in your bonus month. Should you elect to have your service bonus taxed monthly, the appropriate application form must be obtained from the Personnel Office.

LEAVE
Should you resign, you will be entitled to claim payment in respect of the value of leave standing to your credit up to the maximum of 22 days. The granting of vacation leave is subject to prior approval by your supervisor. Application for leave must be in writing on the approved form.
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

ACCOMMODATION AND TRANSPORT

A collective agreement makes provisions to compensate a person who, in the interest of the state and at the request of the state, is transferred or appointed on duty to a new duty station or to a new position, and who may be required to perform duties away from his or her headquarters, or on retirement or death, within the framework of the provisions and allowances in the collective agreement.

SETTLEMENT EXPENSES

Transport and accommodation expenses are paid in accordance with the laid down rates and provisions of the collective agreement or as paid by the employer.

The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act No. 33 of 1953 applies to you should you contract a disease arising out of and in the course of your employment. As a result of an accident or should you contact a disease arising out of and in the course of your employment, the Medical Aid Scheme (i.e. the Company) will pay the necessary expenses. The compensation claim should be submitted to the Company in writing. If you use the services of a hospital, you should be provided with an itemized bill, indicating all services rendered and the fees charged.

In the event of the death of your child or spouse, the benefit will be paid to your immediate family.

You may be granted 3 days leave in the event of the birth of your child or spouse, provided that the benefit will be paid to your immediate family.

An employee shall receive four months' paid maternity leave for each confinement.

Johannesburg

VACATION LEAVE

Vacation leave accrues at the rate of 2.5 days per annum for the first 7 years service and thereafter at 3 days per annum. Vacation leave must be authorized before you proceed on leave. Leave may be authorized by signing an instruction record, which must be submitted to the office. If it is in the interest of the office, the leave may be authorized by signing an instruction record.

SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is granted at the rate of 5 days, subject to a doctor's certificate for sickness. A medical certificate must be provided if more than 3 days sick leave is taken in a period of 21 days. Leave may be authorized by signing an instruction record.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE

You may be granted 3 days leave in the event of the birth of your child or spouse, provided that the benefit will be paid to your immediate family.

IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER

Please note that the total number of days to be utilized in respect of the above may not exceed 5 days.

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the measures and guidelines set out in the Collective Agreement, for the reasonable expenditure actually and necessarily incurred as a result thereof.

BURSARIES

Bursaries are offered for a wide range of studies ranging from grade 12/ Matric up to the level of a National Diploma or a Degree. All studies have to be undertaken through recognized Tertiary Institution. Bursaries are only meant for people who intend studying what is relevant to their work sphere/department in general.

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS (LABOUR UNIONS)

In terms of Labour Relation Act, 1995 read in conjunction with Chapter 111 of the Labour Relations Amendment Act, 1996 you have the right to be fully represented by the Union of your choice, provided the union meets the requirements in terms of the conditions stipulated in the Labour Relations Act, 1995. Details of all the recognized Trade Unions are obtainable from the Directorate: Labour Relations.

AGENCY SHOP AGREEMENT

In terms of an agreement reached between organized labour and the employer at the Public Services Co-ordinating Bargaining Council, an agency shop agreement has been established within the Public Service. This agreement requires every employee to join a recognized Union/Staff Association or, alternatively, if they choose not to join a Union, to have 1% of their monthly salary (to maximum of R60) deducted from their salary. Details of recognized Union/Staff association are obtained from the Directorate: Labour Relations.

PUBLIC SERVICE CO-ORDINATING BARGAINING COUNCIL (PSCBC) LEVY

In terms of an agreement reached between organized labour and the employer at the (PSCBC) a levy in the amount of R 0.50 per month will be deducted from your salary irrespective of whether or not you are a member of a Union and the employer will make an equal contribution.

STATE HOUSING GUARANTEE SCHEME

This scheme assists qualifying officials in the public sector to obtain 100% home loans from financial institutions without cash deposit, in order to promote home ownership.

AGE AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

You must be 21 years or older and have completed 1 year satisfactory pensionable service. Persons, who are older than 55 years are eligible, provided they would have completed 10 years pensionable service compulsory retirement age 60 or 65 as the case may be.

PROPERTY REQUIREMENTS

If you already own a dwelling, you do not qualify for participation in the scheme, i.e. only one property per family. If your current property was subsidized by your previous employer you will still qualify for the housing subsidy however, no new state guarantee will be issued in the case of a bond that is already running. In order to apply for the State Guarantee Scheme you must approach your Personnel Office and complete Form 2572 “Application for State Guarantee Scheme”. The form will then be processed and you will be advised of the outcome.

HOME OWNER ALLOWANCE (HOA)

This allowance renders financial assistance to qualifying officials with regards to their monthly bond repayments.

In order to qualify you must comply with the following requirements:
Role of FSS in Promoting educational and psychological wellbeing of OVCs

- Must contribute to a Pension Fund.
- Must own a dwelling (HDA is not payable for land only).
- Dwelling must be situated in South Africa.
- Must be registered in your name.
- Must be occupied by yourself and or your dependants.
- Must have a registered bond against the property, and
- The property may not be leased or let for renting without pre-approval by the Superintendent General.

RETIREMENT

Compulsory retirement age is 55 years. Normal retirement age is 60 years. (Payment of pension benefits will be made up until the age of 60 years i.e. no added service). You may elect to retire from the age of 55 years. (There will be a reduction in payment of benefits, on a sliding scale, should you elect to retire between the ages of 55 and 59 years).

RESIGNATIONS

One month’s written notice is required should you wish to resign. If you resign by giving at least a month’s notice salary and allowances will be paid for the full month irrespective of whether or not the month ends on a day of rest or consecutive days of rest, provided that you are normally paid for days of rest and that you remain in active service up to and including the last working day of the month. If you do not give at least a month’s notice you will only be paid up to and including the last day on which you actually render service. A certificate of service will be issued to you once you have indicated that you wish to resign from the Department.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Should you be dissatisfied or discontent with an official action or omission, you may raise the matter with your supervisor. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to attempt to determine the cause of the dissatisfaction or discontent and if possible deal with it accordingly. If your complaint concerns a matter which cannot be dealt with by your supervisor, or if your complaints is about your supervisor, or if you are not satisfied with the answer given by your supervisor, you may make representations about the matter to the officer in the Personnel Office or another competent senior officer specifically designated by the Head of Department to deal with complaints and grievances. It should be noted that in all cases of dissatisfaction and grievance, the provisions of the Collective Agreement must be strictly complied with. Should you wish to consult the said agreement, please contact the Personnel Office.

DISCIPLINE

This Department will subject you to the disciplinary procedures and rules. Attached is a Code of conduct, the provisions of which you are obliged to comply with, non-Compliance will result in a misconduct case being instituted against you.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Other than the conditions of service detailed in this document, you will be subject to those policies and procedures laid down by the Department as amended from time to time.
Appendix H: Editor’s Certificate of Competence

Writeway Services
Freelance Editing, Proofreading and Assessing of Manuscripts B.A. Hons.
(English) and H.D.E. University of Natal
Associate Member of Professional Editors’ Group.
Member of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Language Editing Team
Cell: 0833 202 944 E mail: info@ecmirror.co.za
24 August 2017

Khumsila Naidoo
Certificate of Competency

After teaching for many years, I retired from teaching English Language in secondary schools in 1993 in order to pursue a career of writing and publishing on my own. I have been running my own publishing company, El Shaddai Publishing, for 15 years and I have successfully written and published 15 books of my own. I also publish my own community newspaper: The Eastern Cape Mirror, since its inception in 2010.

In 2013, I began working as an online English editor for an international online company that required editing services for secondary and tertiary students. This was very helpful because I had the opportunity to brush up my language skills seriously, especially with the different systems of resourcing manuscripts: namely the APA, MLA, Chicago and Harvard systems of referencing.

In 2015, I joined the Professional Editors’ Group in South Africa (P.E.G.) and began to edit, proofread and advise post graduate students in a variety of disciplines on a regular basis. Because this pays very much better than the online editing company, I decided to resign from them late in 2015 and to continue with P.E.G.

Also, in 2015, I was asked to join the Language Editing Team which is a part of the English department at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

These days, I frequently edit and proofread manuscripts for postgraduate students from all over South Africa. I thoroughly enjoy becoming involved in this process and I have formed many good friendships with intellectual students in the process. Many of these students then refer me to their colleagues who are studying in the same disciplines for help and advice in future semesters. Khumsila, I look forward to working with you in mid September.

Kind Regards
Robbie Hift. B.A. (HONS.) H.D.E.
Appendix I: Excerpts of 3 Transcripts

RESPONDENT: School One- STAKEHOLDERS
DATE: 22 June 2016

INTERVIEWER All right, we are going to start off with the first section here, and firstly thank you for participating as stakeholders in this School One interview. We are looking at the full service school programme, and when we are looking at the full service school programme, and all of you have been involved in this school from the time the programme has started. Do you recall whether there was any profiling of the school done in the early days when the programme was conducted, were you involved in any way in identifying barriers and the needs or you were asked to participate in surveys or anything regarding the prevalence of maybe vulnerable children, orphans or support needs in the area? Were you all involved?

RESPONDENT No, but what we remember, because really in the first place I didn’t know what is this – what is this special school, is it dealing with what, but because this is the poverty ward, I know this is something that is going to help us, but let me go focus and keep on listening what is this. But I remember one day they came to me, I was working in the office here at “school One”. They come to check the profile, all those things; the drugs, crime, the rate of poverty, those children with IDs, SASSA, they are checking with me.

INTERVIEWER Who is ‘they’?

RESPONDENT Sis ‘N’…. (specialist staff at FSS).

INTERVIEWER Oh, so the school?

RESPONDENT They work together. I really don’t understand what is this, but they say that they are looking at the whole ward, what is happening. I only remember that.

INTERVIEWER So you didn’t really understand why you are being asked this information, but you were asked about the needs of the ward?
Example of Transcript: Excerpt from School 2 SBST Date: 4 October 2015

**INTERVIEWER:** Firstly I’d like you to tell me about how was the school selected to participate in this full service school programme, which is a care and support programme? In responding to this I’m looking at you commenting on whether there were any consultations with the school community, like the SGB, the wider parent community, educators, learners, maybe the surrounding community, in the process of deciding on the school participating in the full service school programme. Maybe you can start by telling me a little bit about how the school was selected to be on the programme?... Anyone?

**RESPONDENT:** Unfortunately for me and …[Indistinct] [00.01.54] we have just joined the staff late last year, when the school was already a service school, so I really don’t know how it happened, but I came here already the school was a full service school.

**RESPONDENT** : Okay, what I know is that we were actually competing with Usukane Primary, which is a nearby school. One of the criteria that they were looking for, they were ...[intervention]

**INTERVIEWER:** Who is “they”? Let me just start there, who was “they”?

**RESPONDENT:** Who was?

**INTERVIEWER:** Who was “they” that was looking for? You said “they were looking for”, who was “they”?

**RESPONDENT** : I think the Department of Education, the team that was responsible to identify the school that was going to become a full service school.
INTERVIEWER: So it’s your local district office?

RESPONDENT: Yes. They were looking for the school which has sufficient space, because the support centre had to be built at the school, so our school was the one which had a big space. They were able to choose this side or the other side, which is a wetland. So our school was chosen because of there was sufficient space it had. Also they were looking for a school which was going to have nearby transport. We’ve got a taxi rank nearby, so anyone can just take a taxi, and also I think they’re also looking at the capabilities of the school, how the school functions and all those things, so I think we were the ones who was identified to accommodate the service centre, looking at those all criteria that they picked.

INTERVIEWER: Did they share the criteria with you? Any documentation they gave you?

RESPONDENT: Now, well, I’m not too sure about the documentations and ..., but that is what – when the team came to the school to have the staff meeting, they were transparent about the criteria that they were going to identify as the FSS school?

INTERVIEWER: So the team from the district office came and addressed your school?

RESPONDENT: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did they address the whole staff?

RESPONDENT: Yes, they did address the whole staff.

INTERVIEWER: Ma’am, you remember that?

RESPONDENT: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me your experience.
RESPONDENT: It was also ...[inaudible] [00.04.18] because it was surrounded by the community that was poor, and most of the parents and grannies are depending on the grant.

Excerpt of Transcript of interview with School 3 – Learners Date: 3 November 2018

INTERVIEWER: Okay. So you make exceptions for children that are travelling long distances. That is one way. You see how the school programmes and the rules now are taking care of those children that have difficulties.

RESPONDENT: We have a food programme for children who don’t bring lunch.

RESPONDENT: Feeding scheme.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Pardon? You eat in the feeding scheme? I can see you are excited. [laughter] You are excited. Okay, so the programme is just not only the classroom and books; they are taking care of other needs too. And in terms of children that are struggling?

RESPONDENT: I [speaking simultaneously]

RESPONDENT: and ma’am, there is a school down ... [speaking simultaneously]

RESPONDENT: A special school.

RESPONDENT: Especially for learners who can’t read.

RESPONDENT: Slow learners.

INTERVIEWER: Where is that?

RESPONDENT: Ma’am, it’s ... [speaking simultaneously] below the hall.
INTERVIEWER: in your school?

RESPONDENT: Yes, in our school.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. What is that?

RESPONDENT: It is a special school.

RESPONDENT: It is for children who are low in reading and ...[intervention]

RESPONDENT: Who have disability problems and ... [speaking simultaneously]

RESPONDENT: Learning disabilities.

INTERVIEWER: And how do you know that?

RESPONDENT: We were told about it and.

INTERVIEWER: Who told you about that?

RESPONDENT: The principal went from class to class asking for names, and he also mentioned it in assembly.

RESPONDENT: They give circulars ... [speaking simultaneously]

RESPONDENT: Yes, we received circulars about it, to alert the parents about the special school.
Appendix J: Field Notes

School 1: FSS 1.
- SGB members were members in community -> priest, nurse, local municipality, disability support group.
- Age range: young adult (≤ 30 years) to middle age (≥ 45 years).
- Well spoken, presented with a sense of genuine care for the children in the community.
- Engagement measured when it came to their role in the FSS programme - they were unsure about what was expected. They were hesitant to respond. However, willing to learn more about the FSS programme.

School 2: FSS 2.
- SGB members were unemployed parents and a local member of an NGO dealing with library programmes.
- Members had limited gaps about the FSS programme.
- Researcher had to probe a lot to obtain clarity about their involvement in the FSS programme.
- Researcher had a sense that they were genuinely concerned about what happened to their children at school but did not appear to have the skills or knowledge or resources to be more actively engaged in the FSS at this point.

School 3: FSS 3.
- SGB members - appeared to well educated, qualified teachers, university student, employer, active, more engaged with FSS than the Prov 2 FSS. However, they too were uncertain about the workings of the FSS programme. They were concerned about the lack of division.
Appendix K: Turnitin Report

Report after filtering all less than 1% similarity
Appendix L: CD Containing Audio Recordings of Interviews

Appendix M: CD Containing All Transcribed Interviews

Appendix N: CD Containing All Consent/Assent Forms From Participants