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# Challenges of school governance: a case study of a secondary school in Gauteng

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# CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GAUTENG

**by**

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand in 25% fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management).

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# ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by School Governing Bodies (SGBs) regarding school governance in Gauteng Province, South Africa, and specifically a public secondary school in Soweto, west of Johannesburg. A qualitative approach was applied to the case study and data was collected from participants via semi-structured interviews, observational field notes and document analysis.

This study began with an overview of the background and purpose for this research together with the primary research and secondary research questions. The literature review focused on the various aspects relating to school governance including an international perspective. South Africa's non-democratic and current democratic approach to its challenges was explored.

The qualitative research methodology findings led to data being classified into three main themes, namely (i) the role of SGB components, (ii) the effectiveness of the SGB, and (iii) the competency of the SGB. These themes within the categories framework were used to discuss the findings. The study then provides an analysis and interpretation of results which informed the conclusion and recommendations of the research.

Three critical findings emerge from the study. First is the allocation of the prescribed role and functions within the SASA (1996). Secondly, there is a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the roles and responsibilities of the SGB members and the legislation. Thirdly, there is a lack of capacity, knowledge and skills by SGB members to efficiently and effectively execute their required functions. Therefore, this study recommends a comparative study of the monitoring tools and techniques used to monitor the effectiveness of the SGB at the selected schools in Soweto.

# DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

_____

**Gugulethu Mpanza**

_____

**Date**

# DEDICATION

For my family; my brother Mshazi, my sister Philisiwe, my children Qinisio, Khanyo and Cebo, and my friends, mentors, learners and youth of the Church of the Holy Ghost.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my Heavenly Father for being with me through this challenging task.

To my supervisor, I would like to extend a special thank you for his guidance, sheer patience, valuable input and continuous encouragement in this learning experience.

I also wish to thank all the principals, parents serving on governing bodies, educators and learners of the school who participated in this research.

Furthermore, I wish to thank Jennifer Croll, Lucille Jenniker and Laureen Bertin for language editing of this dissertation.

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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**School Governing Bodies**

The School Governing Body is a body responsible for governance which means that they make the rules and plans and set the framework for how the school operates.

**Governance**

Governance is an act of governing, guiding or ruling within a system of accountability and responsibility with the application of clear guidelines and shared common values, with the aim of building strong partnerships between government and communities.

**Management**

Management is based on supervising staff, implementation and making day–to–day decisions about the operations of a school.

**Democracy**

Democracy is a mode of decision-making about collective binding rules and policies over which the community exercises control and has equal rights to take part in decision-making.

**Capacity Training**

Capacity training is required to ensure the empowerment of school governing bodies and school management in order to implement effectively the system of democratic governance and management.

**Parent**

A Parent has the primary responsibility for the education of their children and they form part of the decision-making structures in relation to their children's educational policy and governance issues.

**Participation**

The parent community is required to participate in policy formulation and provide input regarding decisions about school governance and educational development matters at the schools in which their children are educated.

**Decision–making**

The parent community has the opportunity to participate in the processes related to decisions about the governance and development of their local school community.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| CEPD: | Centre of Educational Policy Development |
| CSA: | Community School Alliances |
| DOE: | Department of Education |
| EFA: | Education for All |
| FGSA: | Federation of School Governing Bodies of South Africa |
| GBF: | Governing Bodies Foundation |
| LTSM: | Learning and Teaching Systematic Materials |
| NAPTOSA: | National Professional Teachers' Association of South Africa |
| NECC: | National Education Crisis Committee |
| NGO: | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| OECD: | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PAR: | Participatory Action Research |
| PTSA: | Parent–Teacher–Student Association |
| RSA: | Republic of South Africa |
| SASA: | South African Schools Act |
| SGB: | School Governing Body |
| SGBS: | School Governing Bodies |
| SMT: | School Management Team |
| UNDP: | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO: | United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| UNICEF: | United Nations Children's Emergency Fund |
| USAID: | United States Agency for International Development |

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

School governance as a theoretical construct has existed since the 1940s, and became the centre of attention both internationally and locally between the 1960s and 1980s. A shift in the global economic trends of the early 1980s led to the reform of the educational system internationally and that led many countries to adopt new school governance and management policies (Karlsson, 2002). This shifted decision-making powers from centralisationto decentralisation, which means that the powers of control were redistributed amongst three spheres of government, namely, nationally, provincially and to the local level (Daun, 2007).

## 1.2 BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

This section examines the best practices of school governance after countries adopted decentralisation in their schooling systems. This section will review trends in the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States and New Zealand; in Sub-Saharan countries such as Kenya, Senegal and Zambia; and regional African countries closer in proximity to South Africa, namely, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Included in this section is the examination of the South African trends of school governance before and after the apartheid era. Lastly, the section will discuss the trends in schools in Gauteng, where the study is located.

### 1.2.1 Global trends

- **United Kingdom**

Bullock and Thomas (1997, p. 52) explains that decentralisation of responsibilities in the United Kingdom (UK) mainly concerns “finances, human and physical resources” and that this legislation, known as the Education Reform Act (ERA),

was passed in England in 1988. The school trustees are the members of the School Governing Body (SGB) which consists of the principal, elected parents (who dominate in numbers), community members, teaching and support staff members, and learners in the secondary schools. Through legislation, their primary roles are to determine how funds will be spent and to make decisions regarding the appointment of personnel and the purchase of equipment for the school (Williams, Harold, Robert & Southworth, 1997, p. 627).

Williams, Harold, Robert and Southworth (1997, p. 631) suggests that decentralisation in the UK has brought about the change of schools adopting a "new culture, values and ideologies". This means that the enterprise culture requires the schools to engage in aggressive marketing and image projection to recruit more learners and raise funds for their schools.

- **Australia**

Victoria is the most prominent state in Australia as far as practicing democratic governance in their schooling system is concerned. Development towards decentralisation in Victoria was shaped by a series of Ministerial Papers. These papers detailed the changes that government was intending to take in their adoption of a decentralisation policy.

Caldwell and Spinks (1998, p. 14) states that there were two key changes implemented by the Australian Government, namely, "a comprehensive School Improvement Plan (SIP) and a budgeting programme in all government departments". This laid the foundation for the far-reaching changes to school-based management.

The main aim of the SIP was to encourage and support collaborative practices between parents, students and teachers in schools and is a form of SGB. In addition, it encourages and supports a cyclical process of school evaluation, planning, implementation and re-evaluation. In Victoria, Australia, parental involvement is an important component of the self–management of schools.

- **United States of America**

According to Bullock and Thomas (1997, p. 56), "school governance is widespread in America even though the practice varies from state to state. Its major emphasis throughout the United States is with respect to the choices of resources, and less focus on the curriculum. Decentralisation is therefore geared more towards financial delegation within the schooling governance system. District curriculum guidelines are produced at the regional level in the USA's education system and it is the responsibility of the school to "modify, supplement and deliver the curriculum" with the emphasis on determining how, rather than what, to teach (Bullock & Thomas, 1997, p. 57).

Mohrman (1994) notes that school governance in the USA is based on the delegation of budgeting powers to schools to improve their capacity by increasing the involvement of school level stakeholders in managing, since this would improve school performance. The school level councils, which are the equivalent of SGBs in the UK, are therefore given decision-making powers because it is believed that members better understand the needs of their learners.

This council comprises the principal, educators, learners, community members and the administration personnel (Mohrman, 1994, p. 3). The impact of decentralisation in American schools has contributed positively to the devolution of finance, human and physical resources (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). In addition, schools have gained significant control over staffing, budgets, policies and daily operational procedures. Schools are expected to develop their own policies in line with state policies.

- **New Zealand**

According to Bullock and Thomas (1997, p.53), the Picot Report of 1988 "recommended drastic changes, such as devolution of power, resources and decision-making responsibilities from the national government to schools and their communities". Following the release of the Picot Report, the New Zealand government released the Tomorrow Schools White Paper, accepting most Picot Report recommendations, and the implementation process was set in motion (Bullock & Thomas, 1997).

This led to the passing of the Education Act in October 1989, where schools in New Zealand took over their regional school boards by establishing governing school councils to manage school affairs (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988).The impact of the 1989 educational reforms in New Zealand shifted substantial financial and administrative responsibilities for managing schools to elected governing school councils (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). The governing school council comprises parents in the majority, educators, the principal and learners in the secondary school. Their roles are to plan and manage financial resources; appoint educators and staff; dismissal of staff; and the maintenance of buildings and grounds.

The implementation of school governance internationally was briefly explained, citing examples from the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. In South Africa, school governance structures are aligned with democratic core values and principles, such as participation, representation, collective decision-making and tolerance in their education system. Parents, educators, staff, learners and community members are given an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making about their school's development with the aim of promoting quality education.

School councils and SGBs are responsible to ensure that schools' financial resources are managed on the basis of proper planning in order to enhance the effectiveness of education. There is also a strong focus on parental involvement in their SGB systems.

### 1.2.2 Sub Saharan trends

This section discusses the following Sub-Saharan African countries, Kenya, Senegal and Zambia, and their implementation of SGBs in their respective countries. These developing countries were specifically selected because they have managed to implement the school democratic governance structures in their schooling system.

- **Kenya**

School governance in Kenya consists of a Board of Governors (BOG) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs). BOG members are appointed by the central ministry (World Bank, 2008).According to Bennell and Sayed (2002, p. 29) the BOG in Kenya is responsible for the following functions:

- setting up the secondary school fees using government guidelines;
- the overall sound financial management of schools that includes the mobilisation of resources;
- the setting of priorities for spending;
- authorising expenditures;
- overseeing school facilities; and
- Monitoring school performance at the district office.

According to the Presidential Directive of Kenya (World Bank, 2008), PTAs were established after BOGs. The PTAs, however, have little authority because they were not established through the same legislation that created BOGs. While BOG members are appointed, PTA members are volunteers.

The role of PTAs is to assess the quality of education offered at their schools and express their opinions regarding the standard of education provided (Bennell & Sayed, 2002). They also support school programmes by raising funds to supplement secondary school budgets and make decisions about the spending of these funds (World Bank, 2008).

- **Senegal**

Senegal school governance created the School Management Council (SMC) for upper and lower secondary schools to oversee the provision of learning material and other activities, such as academic, administrative and financial matters. The members of SMC consist of secondary school administrators and representatives from the Regional Council include the Mayor's office, the local Treasury, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the study board. They also ensure that the school complies with health regulations and responds to all questions from the Ministry of Education and the Education Inspectorate (World Bank, 2008).

- **Zambia**

In Zambia the government has created and regulated High School Education Boards (HSEB), linking upper and lower secondary schools with ministry offices and local civil administration (World Bank, 2008). According to Bennell and Sayed (2002), the HSEB members represent the district education office, the local administration and the school, while the PTA meets the basic needs of schools. The PTA also oversees financial and general school management.

From the above discussion, it is clear that PTAs and other school governance structures in Kenya, Senegal and Zambia play a significant role within their various schooling governance systems. Although every country has different roles assigned to their various PTA structures, they all have a participatory role and aim to improve the quality of education for their children, whether the role is authoritative or supportive.

It should be noted that in Kenya and Zambia the role and level of authority is divided into two separate bodies, unlike SGBs in some developed countries that hold all the authority. Therefore, the supportive role refers to Kenya and Zambia's PTAs which have little authority regarding aspects of governance, compared to Senegal's school governance structure that is more in line with international trends.

### 1.2.3 Regional African trends

- **Botswana**

According to Moswela (2007), school governance was established in the 1980s and known as School Boards, which included government and local communities. Their role was to manage schools, finances and other resources. These boards were found to lack the required knowledge to carry out their duties as school governing bodies (Moswela, 2007). Therefore, the Government of Botswana decided to remove all functions that demand a certain level of education, but implemented school boards that will represent the community at the school level, which would increase parental involvement.

The board's role was to participate in ceremonial activities such as fund-raising, prize-giving days and anniversaries (Moswela, 2007). This level of parental involvement has helped schools to complete major projects such as building of staff houses, school kitchens, and school hostels for boarders; fundraising activities to purchase school vehicles and computers; and encouraged parents with a child at the school to pay some form of levy (Moswela, 2007).

- **Zimbabwe**

Zvobgo (1996) indicates that the Government of Zimbabwe promulgated the Education Act of 1987 to regulate the involvement of the parents in both government and non-government sectors in order to increase parental involvement in their children's education. In 2006 the School Development Committee (SDC) was established and this committee serves as the school board. The aim was to bring a new dimension to the management and education arena. The board is expected to raise funds towards improving the school's infrastructure through levies and donations.

The above discussion regarding school governance in the developing countries of Botswana and Zimbabwe indicates there has been an increase in parental involvement within their schooling systems due to their governments' instituting parental involvement. Parental involvement in school governance shifted in

Botswana from a level of authority to a more supportive role because the schooling governance members lacking the required knowledge to carry out their duties as school governing bodies.

This led to a shift where parental roles became supportive in the form of school fundraising and were largely ceremonial. In Zimbabwe, however, the parental role has evolved, but remains authoritative within the country's school governance system. It can therefore be surmised that Zimbabwean parents who are involved in school governance do not have the same challenges regarding a lack of knowledge to effectively carry out their required duties.

### 1.2.4 South African trends

- **Apartheid Era**

In 1948, the year apartheid was formally implemented; school governance in South Africa consisted of statutory bodies, namely school committees and boards (Seroto, 2004). According to policy, the main purpose of the school committees and boards was to increase the participation of parents in decision-making during the formulation of educational policies (Nzimande, 1993).

Unfortunately, this apparently participative approach was not applicable to black South Africans, as the white officials who were responsible for their educational affairs became the only actual decision- and policy-makers. Hyslop (1989) argues that blacks were allowed in principle to take ownership of schools, even though practically this was not the case. The school governance structures had no voice in any decision-making about the quality of education.

In 1958, the ruling government further muted stakeholder participation by the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1958 (Seroto, 2004; RSA, 1958). This allowed the government sole control of black education, and led to the introduction of a mediocre and discriminatory school educational curriculum for all black learners. Black parents were now legally voiceless and powerless during the formulation of educational policies and curricula, which contributed to black

children receiving a mediocre education as compared to white children (Chaka, 2008).

- **Non-statutory bodies**

In 1985 the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was established during a time of deepening crisis in black children's education (Karlsson, McPherson & Pampallis, 1999). The NECC called for the establishment of a new Parent-Teacher-Student Association, commonly referred to as the PTSA (Seroto, 2004, p.112). Sithole (1994, p. 2) points out that, "the name PTSA is a representative body of school governance comprising the parents, teachers and students of a secondary school". According to Karlsson (2002, p. 132), "at the primary school level, the body was called a Parent-Teacher Association, referred to as the PTA". Here, the student component was excluded because they were considered too young to be involved in decision-making.

The PTA and PTSA brought together local stakeholders to participate in the running of schools, ensuring continued operation and education, while still effectively channelling anti-apartheid struggle activities. Its function was also to promote a democratic approach to decision-making, problem-solving and communicating the importance of the educational aims of the school within communities (Sithole, 1994, p.48). These were the building blocks of the "People's Education", which was used as the term to express a "democratic and non-racial alternative to Bantu Education" (Nzimande, 1993, p. 66).

PTSAs were therefore established as a struggle instrument to oppose the apartheid government, together with another way of trying to manage the problem of instability at schools. Disregarding the discrepancy in role and function, the number of PTSAs and PTAs grew after 1990, and were accepted as school governance structures in the schools in black communities.

- **Post-apartheid Era**

This section discusses South Africa's democracy and the changes it brought to education for Black learners. The changes included most prominently new legislation, namely the South African Schools Act (No. 84) of 1996. This Act introduced the mandatory SGB. Here the structure, function and the level of competency of SGB members are discussed. The challenges experienced by SGBs both internationally and locally are examined. The section concludes with an outline of the strengths of South Africa's SGB system.

In April 1994 South Africa, a developing country, became a democratic country with a constitution that promoted democratic values and principles (SASA, 1996). In line with democracy, the South African Constitution includes an "unequivocal commitment to representative and participatory democracy incorporating the concepts of accountability, transparency and public involvement" (RSA DoE, 1997; RSA DoE, 1996). In the South African context, participatory democracy is defined as "a form of direct democracy that enables all members of a society to participate in decision-making processes within institutions, organisations, societal and government structures" (RSA, 1996).

The Education White Paper 2 (RSA, 1996) has provided guidelines regarding the building and governing of the educational system. It states that, "government should democratisethe education system by including stakeholders such as parents, educators, non-educators, learners and members of the community in partnership with schools" (RSA, 1996 p, 38). This ensures that all stakeholders enjoy rights and responsibilities.

The main role and responsibility for all the stakeholders, including government, is to provide the best possible education for all learners. The best way to achieve this is when the stakeholders form a partnership with the state and build a strong relationship based on mutual trust. Thus, the South African Schools Act (SASA) No.84 of 1996 was passed. SASA (1996) recognises the rights and duties of all stakeholders and makes it compulsory for every public school to establish school

governance structures. For this reason SGBs were established (RSA DoE, 1997; RSA DoE, 1996). The structure and function of SGBs are explained in detail in Annexure A.

### 1.2.5 Gauteng Province trends

Mitchell (1999) has researched the effect of change based on the establishment of SGBs on the development of schools. The findings indicate that in most communities the formal establishment of SGBs has been the community's expression of the new governance structures (RSA DoE, 1996). There was, however, no trend in which the relationship between the SGB and Senior Management Team (SMT) functions together.

The SMT refers to the school's staff members who have a senior management role within a school (RSA DoE, 1996). However, Mitchell (1999) found that in Model C schools SGBs have successfully managed to put pressure on parents who had not paid their school fees. For the purposes of this study, Model C schools are defined as schools that were only meant for white children during the apartheid era. These schools were characterised by having the best resources, the best educators and a range of educational opportunities (RSA DoE, 1996).

Overall, disregarding Mitchell's (1999) research findings, in South Africa SGBs have been shown to play a positive role in school management and governance. For example, SGBs have managed to implement disciplinary measures for those educators who are absent, drunk and ill-prepared (RSA DoE, 2011). In addition, due to the SGBs, parental involvement has improved with parents doing voluntary work to supervise homework and undertake school patrols.

There has also been an increase in participation in school safety and security that resulted in a reduction of vandalism in Soweto schools, based in Gauteng. Lastly, the SGBs introduced the Spelling Bee programme to improve literacy at both primary and secondary school level (RSA DoE, 2011).

This section of the study concludes that both locally and internationally, schooling systems have successfully improved parental involvement due to various school governance systems. In most countries, school governance structures have promoted democratic values such as participation, representation, collective decision-making and tolerance in their education system.

This appears to be the case for all developed or First World countries. It should also be noted that in Kenya and Zambia the role and level of authority is divided into two separate bodies, unlike SGBs in some international countries that hold all the authority. However, in Africa, Botswana face challenges regarding PTAs or SGBs not having the required knowledge to carry out their duties as school governing bodies. This disparity in parent's involvement in school governance in developed versus developing countries appears to be due to parental lack of knowledge.

Therefore, at present the major roles and responsibilities of the PTAs or SGBs in many African countries are to raise and manage funds, to ensure that the basic needs of schools are catered for and to support the school management with their professional duties, while in South Africa's schools, SGBs are doing well such as those affiliated to Model C schools and public schools.

However, it is unclear based on the studies reviewed whether SGBs are fulfilling their role and function as required by legislation and if they have the necessary knowledge and skill. It is within this context that the study is undertaken to investigate whether the SGB of one particular secondary school in Gauteng (in Meadowlands, Soweto) has the necessary skills, competence and capacity knowledge to perform successfully, as mandated by SASA (1996).

## 1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY

According to Seroto (2004, p. 112), "in support of apartheid policies, the previous government passed different legislation such as the Group Areas Act (No. 41 of 1950), which created different residential areas for different races, promoting racial restrictions on the use of the facilities by non-white people". In 1959, black South Africans who were living in Sophiatown (a suburb of Johannesburg) were removed and settled in Meadowlands, Soweto (Seroto, 2004).

The public school selected for this research was founded in 1973 in order to accommodate the educational needs of children living in Meadowlands. In 1978 it became a secondary school in terms of the Education and Training Act of 1977, under Johannesburg West, District 12 (RSA DoE, 1980). It was classified as an underperforming school between 2010 and 2011.

The major function of the SGB, as previously stated, is to promote the best interests of the school and to ensure the development of the school by providing quality of education for all learners. In this case, research into the challenges of the SGB regarding the members effectively performing their roles and responsibilities to improve the overall performance and functionality of the school needs to be examined. It is within this context that the present study is undertaken.

Having highlighted the background that informed the study, a detailed account of the rationale for conducting the empirical investigation is discussed in the following section. This comprises the problem statement, purpose statement and the significance of the study.

## 1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Mabasa and Themane (2002) and Chaka (2008) have written about the effective functioning of SGBs since the advent of democracy in 1994. Their findings indicate that there are various challenges that the governing bodies in public schools face regarding their effective functioning as required by the SASA (1996). The Act

states that a critical role of the SGB is to promote the best interests of the school (RSA DoE, 1996).However, there are many examples of public township schools, such as the aforementioned secondary school in Meadowlands, where poor school performance appears to be influenced by the SGBs struggling to fulfil their roles as defined by the Employment of Educators Act of 1998, Section 16(a). At the secondary school under review, school performance had dismal results in 2001; by2009 the school managed to attain a good pass rate but unfortunately in 2010 and 2011 the results worsened and Grade 12 results fluctuated between 20% and 60% (RSA DoE, 2011).

In this case, little is known about the challenges faced by the SGB at the site of this research with regard to fulfilling their roles and responsibilities to improve the overall performance or the functionality of the school. The present study is thus undertaken to investigate the challenges experienced by the SGB.

In addition, there has been no formal research undertaken to examine whether this SGB has the necessary skills, competence, capacity and knowledge to perform successfully, as prescribed by the South African Schools Act (No 81) of 1996.

## 1.5 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the challenges faced by the SGB at the public secondary school in question and establish which opportunities exist for the School Governing Body to improve the overall performance and effectiveness of their school.

The secondary aims are:

- to present the research to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), and to the research site's SGB;
- To analyse the findings in order to understand the challenges faced by the SGB at the secondary school. This will be discussed in Chapter Five; and

- To recommend new governance strategies for consideration in Chapter Six.

## 1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section consists of primary and secondary research questions.

### Primary research question

What challenges does the school governing body face within the South Africa School Act (No 81) of 1996?

### Secondary research questions

1. What are the factors affecting the governing body at the school?
2. What are the school governance trends internationally and locally?
3. What are the new school governance strategies for consideration?

## 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this research will be useful to the Gauteng Department of Education and to the South African education system as a whole in order to enrich the knowledge-based pertaining to SGBs at public schools and the challenges that the secondary schools encounter. It will provide recommendations on how SGBs may be supported at the school that is the site of this research, in order to optimise functionality.

## 1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

### Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter discusses the background to the study, the problem and purpose statements, followed by the research questions, the significance of the study and overview of the chapters.

### Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review focuses on the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter therefore serves as the basis for the evaluation and findings in Chapter Four and Five.

### Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The research methodology is discussed. It provides information about the research framework, namely the research approach, research design and data analysis strategies.

### Chapter 4: Data Presentation

This chapter deals with the presentation of data collected from the SGB research conducted at the selected school.

### Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Discussion

This section of the study discusses and analyses the research findings, and attempts to answer the primary and secondary research questions, while supported by the literature review.

### Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendation

In this section, the study is concluded and recommendations made.

## 1.9 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to provide a brief background and introduction to educational governance. The section began with an overview of the perceived democratic educational governance systems in a number of countries, where various First World countries, Sub-Saharan countries and regional African school governance systems were examined. The United Kingdom, South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Senegal all adopted school governance models in the early 1980s.

The findings indicated that some countries, specifically developed countries, have adapted better to the democratic values that underpin the school governance system as compared to Sub-Saharan and regional African countries. However, most countries that implemented the new governance structures within schools have shown that countries both internationally and locally are succeeding in increasing parental involvement. In addition, it has increased community participation due to the school governance system.

This chapter has also outlined the scope of the study. The research site was introduced, namely the secondary school in Meadowlands (Soweto) that had adopted school governance in line with implementation in South Africa in 1997. However, little is known about how the school governance members are performing their assigned role as the SGB of the school. The aim of this study is to investigate the challenges faced by the SGB at the school.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an outline of the origins of the changes in the educational governance system, both internationally and locally. This chapter begins with defining the purpose of the literature review. This is followed by an overview of governance and its theories, namely participatory governance, good governance and democratic governance, which have been selected as the theoretical framework of the study.

## 2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW OVERVIEW

A comprehensive literature review has been undertaken to establish the foundation for this study. The review examines research in the field of SGB as its basis. Through the literature review the researcher is able to sharpen and deepen the theoretical framework of this research, as well as examine the different approaches of governance that may be appropriate and potentially effective in this context.

According to Cooper (1988, p. 104) the literature review is a "database of reports of primary or original sources and does not report new primary sources itself. Therefore, primary reports used in the literature may be verbal, but the majority of cases of reports are written documents". Hofstee (2006, p. 91) describes a literature review as a "comprehensive, critical and contextualised" written document, which means that the literature review must provide the researcher with a theoretical framework, a review of work published that is valid to the investigation, and an analysis of that work.

Both primary and secondary sources were used to deepen and strengthen the theoretical framework of this study. The purpose of using a literature review is also

to provide an opportunity for the researcher to develop an understanding of the current state of knowledge, both local and international, pertaining to certain aspects of the phenomenon under investigation. Wiersma (2000) argues that if the researcher fails to build a solid foundation on other researchers' findings in the field under investigation, the researcher will fail to understand what still needs to be investigated further. The researcher's successes are based on the increased understanding of the importance related to the aspects of the study and being able to broaden the discussion.

The importance of the literature review, as stated by Wiersma (2000, p.52), is to assist the researcher to "determine what others have learnt about similar problems" and thereby to focus more strongly on the relevant problem. This process can be divided into three stages, as explained below.

In stage one the information is collected from a wide variety of sources such as newspapers, journals, books and the Internet. This is supported by Mouton (2001, p. 90) who indicates that a good literature review starts with the most "recent sources and then works backwards".

Stage two refers to the retention of the assembled content summarised in a proper manner. A well written literature review should be well-structured to accommodate all the relevant information captured in a chronological presentation (Mouton, 2001).

The final stage consists of evaluating and making a critical analysis of the content. Mouton (2001, p.90) supports Wiersma (2000, p. 52) by stating that when the researcher discovers that a source is relevant to the study, systematic reading must continue in order for the reader "to gain in-depth knowledge on the topic".

The researcher is thus able to identify and determine the author's logic and line of thinking. In other words, this chapter aims to communicate the main arguments put

forward by other authors, and critically analyses and restructures arguments in order to give meaning to the topic under investigation.

## 2.3 GOVERNANCE

In this section, the researcher defines governance and its theories. Here, the importance of implementing the governance theories within all the sectors of government, including education and non-government organisations, is also discussed.

### 2.3.1 Definition of governance

Peters (2005, p. 87) argues that governance is an increasingly "multi-actor phenomenon". The author observes that, "if the perceived trustworthiness of government continues to decline, the part played by civil society in governance will become more important and collaboration may become the principal source of the policy capacity of government" (Peters, 2005, p. 87). The OECD (2000, p.112) agrees that, "collaboration is experienced by both parties, when they form a good relationship so that they are able to act as partners", and not as individuals.

Carrington, Debuse and Lee (2008) supports the views of both Peters (2005) and the OECD (2000) by stating that the act of governance involves collective decision-making in order to address shared problems. In addition, the processes and institutions that guide and restrain the collective activities should be made known publicly and should be able to be adopted by anyone, such as international organisations and their members or local organisations and their members (Carrington, Debuse &Lee, 2008).

Stoke (1998, p. 17) notes that, "the development of governing styles in public and private sectors has become blurred due to its similarities". Therefore, the general governing styles or guidelines are applicable for both public and private organisations.

Stoke (1998, p. 19) also refers to governance as, “institutions and actors from within and beyond government”. The author further states that there are no strong relationships between government and its governance because there is a “divorce between the complex realities of decision-making associated with governance” (Stoke, 1998, p. 19). Carrington, Debuse and Lee (2008, p. 2) adds that governance is more about, “the process through which decisions are made, rather than the substance”.

This means that the essence of governance is to focus on the mechanisms that do not depend on recourse to authority and sanctions of the decision itself (Carrington, Debuse & Lee, 2008). In other words, governance is not about making international organisations stronger, rather governance defines an international organisation’s rules and procedures that are used to fulfil its goals.

Carrington, Debuse and Lee (2008) argue that governance is vital to the success of any organisation, whereas Stoke (1998) indicates that governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for social and economic challenges. Government policies, however, have a tendency to discourage partnerships because governance is about institutionalisedmatters which contributes negatively to the success of private and public sectors (Stoke, 1998). Carrington, Debuse and Lee (2008) concludes that there is no concrete answer to the question of what governance is, but that the definition of governance depends on the context of the individual.

While Hyde and Thompson (1995, p. 3)recommends a “loose framework” for the definition of governance, the need for a clear definition within the sphere of this research is necessary in order to address governance problems experienced within government sectors. Therefore, this study defines governance as the act of governing, guiding or ruling within systems of accountability, responsibility with the application of clear guidelines and shared common values, and building strong partnership between government and communities (World Bank, 2008).

It can therefore be deduced that governance requires structure and accountability that is provided by guiding and collective activities to function successfully. Furthermore, governance is viewed as an interdependent set of relationships, because it depends on the quality of the effective functioning of the system as a whole (World Bank, 2008). In essence, governance cannot function without systems of accountability, responsibility and clear guidelines within a shared partnership.

Within the context of this study, it can therefore be surmised that governance may be the key to ensuring that the required quality of education for all children is achieved in any country. Therefore, educational governance should bring about a high level of participation by all stakeholders of education, such as civil society, including parent communities, businesses, professionals, learners and non-governmental organisations(NGOs) in order to partner with government (Aarts, Turnhourt & Van Bommel, 2010).

The theories of governance may thus be viewed as an important aspect of the educational governance system. This is because their purpose is to assist communities with limited capacity to increase their involvement within educational governance and development issues in order to improve the quality of education for all children (Amanchukwu, 2011).

UNESCO (2008, p.1) advocates that, "the right to education can be realised only in a political and economic context" that gives respect to the importance of transparency, participation and accountability processes, as well as a broad-based collaboration in all sectors of government that includes education. UNICEF (2008) states that this can only be achieved through certain important aspects being in place, including a long-term strategic plan and a commitment to provide proper resources that will create strong SGB structures (UNICEF, 2008). Furthermore, according to UNICEF (2008), this will bring together skills and capacity knowledge from all community stakeholders such as parents, non-governmental organisations,

professionals and learners, and form a strong and healthier partnership with government.

### 2.3.2 Theories of governance

In the following section, the researcher briefly discusses the theories of governance. These theories are participatory governance (PG), good governance (GG) and democratic governance (DG), and their importance to the educational governance system is explained.

### 2.3.3 Participatory governance

According to Thompson (2007) and Abers (1996), the word "participatory", can be explained in accordance with an individual perspective, because different people in their various practices can use it in various ways. Therefore, the various definitions of participatory governance are discussed.

#### 2.3.3.1 Defining participatory governance

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2008) defines participatory governance as an approach that outlines human rights activities such as gender sensitivity and promotes the communities' engagement with government. The UNDP (2008) view aligns with that of Edwards (2008) who observes that participatory governance means community engagement, but there should be some guiding principles that will mandate civil society to engage issues of concern with the relevant institutions and how, collectively, decision-making can be pursued at local government level.

Aarts, Turnhout and Bommel (2010) have broadened the meaning of participatory governance as a platform that should be used as a process of plenary, reaching of consensus and collective decision-making between the government and communities. Thompson (2007) points out that the aim of using participatory governance is to increase communities' participation in matters of governance and

development of their communities so as to build strong relationships, and to build trust that will lead to maximum transparency.

This transparency includes the sharing of information to the benefit of stakeholders (Thompson, 2007). Participatory governance can therefore be defined as a tool to educate communities on how to use government facilities to make decisions about issues that affect them as communities (Edwards, 2008).

### 2.3.3.2 Participatory governance within the educational system

The concept of participation is widely employed within communities, and appears to be accepted as a better method of governance, although many people still prefer to experience it as a community (Sayed & Carrim, 2006).Within this context, after 1994 all South African communities were given an opportunity to participate in educational policy formulation and provide input regarding decisions about school governance and educational development matters (Sayed & Carrim, 2006). As a result, participatory governance consists of four different approaches, namely "community, stakeholder, regulation and weighted approach" (Sayed & Carrim, 2006, p. 32). However, this study only discusses community as the basis of participation.

- **Community as the basis of participation**

According to the UNDP (2008),it is advisable to add the notion of participation to educational school governance because it promotes community engagement and increases parental involvement in their children's educational matters (Sayed & Carrim, 2006; Mncube, 2008; Heystek, 2010). With regard to this research, theterm 'community'symbolises common and shared values. For example, a religious community is identified by their religious beliefs, values and practices that its member's share. Communities define the notion of participation in accordance with their context (Sayed & Carrim, 2006). For example, the Ghanaian government has implemented various participatory interventions, and examples of these interventions are discussed below.

Firstly, the government together with the Community School Alliances (CSA) created a supportive system to motivate communities to participate in their school governance structures (USAID, 2003). In addition, the government built capacity in order for the community members to successfully carry out their duties as a school governing body (USAID, 2003). They also implemented a programme called Participation Learning (PAL), which aims to include community members such as chiefs, elders and school management committees, as well as parents, learners, educators and non-educators in the children's learning process (USAID, 2003).

The knowledge acquired by the PAL programme equips all stakeholders to contribute towards developing action plans to improve their local school communities. Therefore, PTAs can ensure that the actions are refined in such a way that the action plan leads to an improvement in the quality of education and that the development plan is implemented within their schools (USAID, 2003).

Furthermore, CSA has successfully implemented the initiative by government which aimed to increase community involvement within the educational system (Grote & Gbikpi, 2002). Communities are now capacitated and can build strong relationships between parents and professional educators because parents are part of strengthening the school management practices (USAID, 2003). The mutual trust in the school system has greatly increased the participation of Ghanaian communities at the basic education level (USAID, 2003; Amissah, Wilmot & Miske, 2001).

In another example, according to USAID (2003), the Government of Uganda established a committee and called for participatory action research (PAR) to be conducted drawing on groups of teachers, community members and learners. The aim of this research was to find ways of promoting good quality education within their schooling system (USAID, 2003).

Teams divided themselves into two groups. The first group looked at the problem of learner absenteeism at schools while the second group was given the task of examining the effectiveness of class time (USAID, 2003). This research has increased community participation within Ugandan communities because they began to work together due to their shared common goals, which in turn led to an improvement in the quality of their children's education (USAID, 2003).

This also contributed to educators and community members developing trust relationships and led to parents becoming more involved in their children's educational challenges (USAID, 2003; Peters, 2005). According to Peters (2005), these parents became more involved in the academic issues by visiting their children's schools more often. Teachers felt supported by the parents because collective decisions were being made about finding ways to improve their children's schooling (USAID, 2003; Peters, 2005).

In Ghana and Uganda, therefore, within the sphere of educational school governance, participatory governance theory was successfully implemented within the governance structures. This is mainly due to it strengthening democratic practices, as well as improving the quality of their children's education (USAID, 2003).

Based on the above argument, this study suggests that the participatory governance theory is an important aspect of governance, which requires adequate planning in order for it to be successfully implemented within communities and all government sectors, including education. Government and all its stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, should therefore increase their efforts towards capacitating communities (Edwards, 2008). This will lead to gaining relevant skills and knowledge regarding what they can do as a community to support their government in developing their communities and improving the quality of their children's education. This in turn will contribute to a nation that shares common principles and values (Edwards, 2008).

### 2.3.4 Good governance theory

According to the UNDP (2008), governance is positive when it encompasses democratic values such as participation, transparency and accountability. It should be used as a tool to promote the rule of law and to ensure the effective and equitable distribution of benefits for all. The OECD (2008) concurs with the UNDP (2008) that government needs to ensure that a suitable platform is created so that all communities can have equitable distribution of resources. Within South Africa, this is especially applicable for those people and communities who were disadvantaged during the apartheid era.

#### 2.3.4.1 Definition of good governance

The World Bank (1992) describes good governance as the manner in which financial resources of a country are managed so as to ensure the equitable distribution of resources within all communities within a country. The aforementioned definition of good governance by the World Bank (1992) and other organisationssuch as UNDP (2008), UNESCO (2008) and OECD (2008), indicates the degree of management the government needs to implement in order to improve the standard of living of previously disadvantaged communities within South Africa.

It should, however, be noted that the empowerment of these citizens through increasing capacity, by improving knowledge and skills, requires both local government and community involvement in decision-making about their communities' governance and development (Amanchukwu, 2011).

#### 2.3.4.2 Good governance within the education system

In recent years, the discussions regarding the relationship between good governance and education have attracted interest from researchers (Amanchukwu, 2011; USAID, 2003). Here, most of the discourse regarding good governance was based on the future plans of nations (USAID, 2003). This included political development

through the basic challenges and values of good governance. However, the most prominent part of the argument with regard to good governance was anti-corruption (USAID, 2003).

Good governance within the education system focuses on various factors. Amanchukwu (2011) and USAID (2003) argue that good governance is different to other theories of governance, because it provides the constitutional and legal framework that supports education for all. This was also supported by Education for All (2003) which is committed to assisting about 106 countries, including the Republic of Ireland, Russia, Philippines, South Africa, Romania and Ukraine to provide a framework that supports education for all and promotes access to quality basic education(USAID, 2003; Bray, 1999).The aforementioned countries have constitutional documents that mandate them to provide the best quality of basic education and further education to their communities (Bray, 1999).

There are various examples of legal changes in countries that support educational access and the quality of education. For example, in South Africa following apartheid, the South African Bill of Rights states that everyone has the right to both basic education and further education (Meyer-Bisch, 1995),while Philippine law regulates free and compulsory education for children between the ages of seven and twelve (Paqueo & Lammert, 1992). A further example is that of Mexico where in 1992 the government passed a law stating that children are allowed to start school between the ages of six and nine, and that it is compulsory for children to attend school (Rugh & Bostert, 1998).

This study argues that good governance requires standards of accountability and transparency for the delivery of public services, such as basic education (USAID, 2003; Mundy & Murphy, 2001). However, good governance practice also encourages the development of civil society partnerships for the purpose of policy dialogue and service delivery; and such partnerships have made meaningful contributions to strengthening basic education access and quality (USAID, 2003; Amanchukwu, 2011; Bray, 1999).

USAID (2003) has supported many civil society organisations to participate in public policy and develop alternative policy forums in large-scale sectors, including education (Riddell, 1997).This includes the Institute of Public Analysis and Research in Kenya that seeks to provide a policy discourse where collective decisions occur via educational forums. Trade unions are, however, the most important civil society organisations that assist educational stakeholders and organisations to build partnerships within organisations (UNESCO, 2000; Torney-Purtha, 1999).

Support from USAID to the American Center for International Labour Solidarity is assisting local communities and organisations to fight against child labour in many countries with one example being Malawi (Reimers, 1995; Mundy & Murphy, 2001). This centre in partnership with the Malawi Confederation of Trade Unions implemented the groundwork for the national campaign to fight child labour and to improve access to basic education (Reimers, 1995; Mundy& Murphy, 2001).

USAID (2003) and Amanchukwu (2011) argue that good governance can be achieved by ensuring the welfare of people, recognising their feelings, and applying the knowledge and skills required to serve as good citizens by representing the community. Amanchukwu (2011) further argues that if leaders lack skills and knowledge, they are likely to fail in some aspects of leadership during their term of duty (Amanchukwu, 2011).

This section of this study concludes that good governance is adding value to the educational governance system and ensures participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law and equity. In addition, effectiveness and efficiency are embedded in all government sectors, including education. Both participatory and good governance theories encompass democratic principles and values, such as active participation, representation of all stakeholders, and accountability to stakeholders (UNESCO, 2008).

### 2.3.5 Democratic governance

Democratic governance is the governance theory that combines the two aforementioned theories, namely good governance and participatory governance. Democratic governance is defined, and its role within the education system explained.

#### 2.3.5.1 Defining democratic governance

Olsen (2007, p. 8) defines democratic governance as the local politics whose norms and rules should become a "trusteeship that is based on a fiduciary arrangement". Furthermore, it should espouse democratic principles and values depending on the properties of its communities and officials. Democratic governance should thus include a spirit of citizenship, whilst the public office should think and act as members of the "political community" (Olsen, 2007, p. 8). It follows the rules and appropriate behaviour that define its community, and does not act "solely as a self-interested individual", but promotes members of a particular interest group that all share common values (Olsen, 2007, p.8).

Democratic governance should encompass features of good and participatory governance. These features, according to Rugh and Bostert (1998, p.1), are:

- Participatory governance, with citizens as part of policy development who share their ideas with government officials during the policy-making processes.
- Consensus-oriented governance that increases community involvement by allowing them to share their views.
- Accountability, where government will be accountable to the people that elected them to positions of authority.
- Transparency, where transparent decisions are based on the allocation and distribution of resources.

The aforementioned features are the building blocks of school government and development, as implemented in 1997 in all public schools, at both primary and secondary levels, by the democratic government of South Africa (Wittenberg, 2003).

Mali (2005) argues that democracy is directly related to the concept of "governance", which means democracy is governance. However, it has to meet the individual's need; therefore this study also defines democracy in relation to governance.

Abdellatif (2003, p.1) defines democracy as a "mode of decision-making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control, and the most democratic arrangement is where all members of the collective enjoy effective equal rights to take part in such decision-making". This means that democracy is a form of government in which all citizens have equal say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Ideally, this includes equal participation of civil society based on development processes and formulating of policies. Democracy includes terms such as citizenship, freedom, equality and participation. Citizens born into a democracy are bestowed the following freedoms: freedom of speech, assembly and conscience (Borowornwathana, 1997). These freedoms were bestowed on all South Africans following the birth of democracy in 1994.

#### 2.3.5.2 Democratic governance within the education system

The study discusses the democratic governance theory as the theoretical framework for educational school governance. This is the governance theory that is applied within most developing and developed countries, such as South Africa (Waldman, 2012). Madison (2005) points out that it is important to construct a broader theoretical understanding of how democratic governance became a theoretical

framework that is commonly used to develop educational school governance policy in different countries.

This study's hypothesis is that democratic governance acts as an instrument for education governance problem-solving (Madison, 2005). This is an essential assumption that requires validation to illustrate how specific theories can be analysed as the basis for a broader theoretical framework for educational governance policy-making (Waldman, 2012).

Waldman (2012, p. 5) argues that it is, "essential for developing nations to remain open-minded to the general policy-making principles of the United Nations and follow the acceptable international norms for educational governance policy". Madison (2005) and Waldman (2012) argue that the democratic governance theory can be used as an instrument to assist policy makers when they develop educational governance policy that will enhance the quality of education for children of both genders.

However, Rousseau (2005) advocates that educational governance policy cannot be perfectly represented by democratic governance theory because any form of governance is not a "social contract". It depends on the public administrators how the government's laws, which sometimes affect the implementation of policies within government institutions, are implemented (Rousseau, 2005).

Waldman (2012) indicates that democratic governance is a theoretical instrument that any type of government can adopt in order to identify policy solutions to challenging social issues. Rousseau (2005) and Waldman (2012) add that democratic governance will also assist when policy formulation includes different stakeholders within an educational governance system. This includes educational governance policies for developing countries such as South Africa, Namibia, Zambia and Senegal (Waldman, 2012). This means countries like South Africa that have several stakeholders within their educational governance, such as parents, community, professionals and learners, could adopt democratic governance within

their system in order to reach solutions. This level of participation is also in line with participatory governance.

The democratic governance theory uses decentralisation policy as the framework that can be adopted by the nations who aim to develop democratic governance policy within their governance sectors, including education. Therefore, democratic governance has been selected as the best foundation for this study because it outlines clearly how democratic government can apply it as the theoretical framework of education governance policy development in most countries, including developing countries like South Africa (Madison, 2005; Waldman, 2012).

The next section discusses how democratic governance uses the decentralisation approach. This is viewed as the best approach for democratisationfor educational governance within government structures in various countries.

### 2.3.6 Decentralisation within governance structures

In most regions of the world, the decentralisation process was adopted, broadened and deepened after the 1990s (Work, 2002). The process first became known in the early 1950s and 1960s when British and French colonial administrators prepared colonies for independence by devolving responsibility for certain programmes to local authorities and their indigenous people (Work, 2002).

In the 1980s and 1990s, most countries started to adopt decentralisation in their governance system. This was mostly influenced by the transition from central planned economies, like Central Europe, when they were emerging from a decade of economic decline(Waldman, 2012).During this period profound change was occurring in various African countries (Work, 2002; Waldman, 2012). The evidence of this change was witnessed in South Africa and led to the country becoming a democracy in 1994(Wittenberg, 2003). The changes influenced all governance structures including changes to the Constitution of South Africa. These changes were far-reaching and included fiscal shifts and the implementation of functional decentralisation structures in the governance system (Wittenberg,

2003).At a later stage, most developed or First World countries and developing countries adopted the goals and ideals of decentralisation into their governance structures (Wittenberg, 2003).

- **Definition of decentralisation**

Decentralisation can be defined as, "the transfer of decision-making authority, responsibility and tasks from higher to lower organisational levels or between the organisation" (Hanson, 1998, p.112). According to Hanson (1998) there are three types of decentralisation, namelydecentralisation, devolution and delegation.

Paqueo and Lammert (1992, p. 2) states that, "decentralisation involves shifting in management responsibility from the central, to regional or district, so that the centre retains control". The authors further state that delegation occurs when "central authorities lend authority to lower levels of government or even to semi-autonomousorganisations with the understanding that the authority can be withdrawn" (Paqueo & Lammert, 1992, p. 2). Devolution is the "transfer of authority over financial, administrative or pedagogical matters on a permanent basis, and the transfer cannot be revisited on a whim" (Paqueo & Lammert, 1992, p.2).

However, Wittenberg (2003) uses the term decentralisationinterchangeably with decentralised governance. This means that the restructuring of authority in order to establish a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels can be implemented in accordance with "the principle of the subsidiary" (Wittenberg, 2003, p. 3).

In the aforementioned definition, the important relationship between governance and democracy is highlighted. Based on such principles, duties are transferred at the social level when there is capability to complete them. Therefore, decentralisation relates to the role of, and the relationship between, central and sub-national institutions, whether they are public, private or civic (Work, 2002).

This study definesdecentralisation as the transfer of roles and responsibilities such as planning, management and allocation, distribution of resources and provision from central government and its agencies, to field entities. These field entities include government (provincial and district), corporations, functional authorities and community-based organisations.

Decentralisation, also viewed as a "counterpart to globalisation", often dis-empowers, removing decisions from the local and national levels to the "global sphere of multi-nations or non-national interests" (Work, 2002, p. 4). However, Wittenberg, (2003) argues that decentralisationof empowerment brings decision-making back to "sub-national and grassroots levels".

This study also advocates that decentralisation involves new communication and information dissemination between each geographical area, societal action and social sector. Therefore, decentralisation involves the roles and relationships of all societal actors, and includes governmental institutions, private or civil society (Wittenberg, 2003).

Wittenberg (2003) advocates that decentralisation is adopted by many countries simply because it seems to be the "ingredient" for helping developing countries to create their own development policies. However, Bardhan (2002) argues that although different people have their own definition ofdecentralisation, the most widely accepted definition is to, "bring government closer to the people" (cited in Wittenberg, 2003, p.4).

Many scholars and researchers, such as Madison (2005), Sayed and Carrim (2006), Mncube (2008) and Waldman (2012) hold the view that decentralisation can be used as a tool to make government more accountable to the nation. This is the view that has been adopted by this study.

- **Countries that adopted decentralisation**

In this section of the review, examples of decentralisationas adopted by various countries are discussed, and include Jordan, Tanzania, Columbia, Brazil, the Philippines and South Africa.

- **Jordan**

The purpose of decentralisation in Jordan in the 1980s was to stimulate and increase economic growth by reducing the role of the public sector and increasing the role of the private sector through an active participatory and engagement process (Work, 2002). It also aimed to increase committee involvement, including the roles and responsibilities of advertising, recruiting and hiring civil service employees in their districts. Lastly, the Ministry of Finance capacitated local level communities to make decisions that would make them more responsive to meeting their obligations through participatory budgeting practices (Work, 2002).

- **Tanzania**

The Government of Tanzania adopted a number of decentralisation strategies in order to promote rural and urban development (Wittenberg, 2003). The central government administrative structures improved through using decentralisation strategies where the participation of rural and urban communities was recognised (Wittenberg, 2003).All levels of government adopted the division of power, where power was shared through local level democratic institutions.

- **Colombia, Brazil, Philippines and South Africa**

The aforementioned countries were considered politically decentralised after they elected a democratic government, which allowed them to share powers with the local officials and councils. According to Work (2002), they are able to approve their own annual budget. However, Colombia has tax-rate setting autonomy where their local authorities have defined formulas for local government and assigned expenditure responsibilities (Work, 2002).

Based on the above discussions, various countries adopted decentralised reform. This is the same framework that South African's democratic government adopted after 1994.It is therefore important to know and understand the underlying factors that influenced South Africa to adoptdecentralisation after its first democratic election in 1994.

It is for this reason that in South Africa in 1996 the new governance and development policy allowed for all three levels of government (national, provincial and local) to share equal powers of control in the distribution of resources to all communities of South Africa. This study has adopteddecentralisationas the basis of this research which aims to investigate the challenges faced by the SGB at one secondary school in Gauteng (Soweto) which have resulted from a decentralisedgovernance framework.

- **Theoretical framework for South African school governance**

There are two landmark documents in South Africa that provide for decentralisation within the education system as being potentially an important factor for policy makers (DoE, 1996). The Ministerial Review Committee (2003) and the Education White Paper 2 (1996) promoted the change in the schooling system of South Africa after the country elected a democratic government (RSA DoE, 1996). However, Chapman, Froumin and Aspin (1995) suggest that policies and actions should be objective and not arbitrary, and that the will of the majority should not prevail against the rights of minorities, but should be preserved and respected.

South Africa and other countries have committed themselves to adopting the decentralisation policy system. Here, the policy approach enforces the change in their constitution documents, so that they can implement the principles and values of democracy within their governance structures. As a result, the South African education system in 1996 formulated a new school governance and development framework policy.

The policy includes a school governance policy known as the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA). Based on this Act, all the schools were mandated to implement the new democratic governance structure in 1997, known as School Governing Bodies (SGBs) (SASA, 1996).

South African's SGB is a democratic structure that is entrusted with the responsibility to formulate and adopt school policy on a large scale, while addressing issues such as school uniforms, school budgets, developmental priorities and the endorsement of the code of conduct for learners, staff and parents (Mncube, 2006; 2008; Sithole, 1995).

The role of the new democratic governance structures was to create and enable an environment that allows for the participation, engagement and/or consultation of all the stakeholders in education (Sayed & Carrim, 2006). This includes communities and professionals, and allows them to develop a sense of ownership of the school while taking responsibility and accountability for their decision-making about issues relating to their school (Mncube, 2008).

With regard to schools, this means that power and responsibilities should be distributed among all the stakeholders. This is in accordance with the rule of law which states that policies should be formulated after a collective decision has been made by all parties involved (Mncube, 2008; SASA, 1996).

Giddens (1984) points out that school governance should be viewed as a political activity because it deals with the allocation and distribution of resources, as well as involving the parent-community together with the educational professions. The power relations, however, remain central to any understanding of the practices and processes of school governance, irrespective of the cultural context in which they function (Mncube, 2006; 2008).

Section 16 of the South African Schools Act (1996) advocates that the day–to–day professional management of the school should be the responsibility of the senior

management team (SMT) whiles governance and development issues should be the responsibility of the SGB. However, findings by researchers like Chaka (2008), Xaba (2011), Heystek (2010) and Sayed and Carrim (2006) indicates that in practice, the parent governors are not all participating fully, since many of them lack the necessary skills to perform the duties assigned to them. Therefore, principals continue to perform these functions which were supposed to be the responsibility of the parent SGB members at schools (Mncube, 2006; 2008).

This has led Sayed and Carrim (2006) and Mncube (2008) to argue that school governance has become a "complex issue", because some of the functions outlined in the SASA(1996) demand a certain level of competence(see Annexure G, paragraph 5). This has resulted in educational professionals (principals) making decisions that were supposed to be collectively made by members of the SGB (Sayed & Carrim, 2006; Mncube, 2008).

Mncube (2008, p.86) explains that the policy was supposed to allow for a "genuine handing over", where equal sharing of power and collective decision-making that includes accountability and responsibility should be practiced, as opposed to a "shifting of accountability and responsibility as most commentators suggest". Thus, it is within this context that the present study is undertaken. The study therefore determines if the SGB under investigation has the necessary skills, competence and capacity knowledge to perform as mandated within the South African Schools Act (No. 81) of 1996.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

The above discussion indicates that governance and governance theories such as participatory, good and democratic governance could be the key to ensuring that the required quality of education for all children is achieved in any country, including South Africa. It is also clear that the democratic governance structure

encompasses features of both the participatory and good governance theories. This means that any democratic governance structures, such as SGBs, in order for them to function effectively and efficiently, need to apply adequate planning so that they can successfully achieve their major role, which is to enhance quality education for all children. This is referred to as participatory governance. They also need to include good governance features such as participation, transparency, representatives, accountability and rule of law equity.

For the purposes of this study, democratic governance is defined as the theoretical framework of the democratic school governance policy in South Africa, which adopted the decentralisation policy as the framework. The democratic school governance policy (SASA, 1996) creates the platform for all stakeholders of education, including professionals and the parent community, to share and transfer their decision-making in order to meet the legislative requirements of improving the quality of education. This is premised on the notion that stakeholders are in the best position to know, understand and meet the learners' needs.

However, Sayed and Carrim (2008) and Mncube (2008) argue that school governance is faced with challenges due to limited capacity of the parent governors which has led to professionals making decisions about governance and development issues in their schools. This study hypothesises that all stakeholders of education should be afforded equal opportunity to make decisions about governance and development issues of the school community but it seems that the SGBs are still faced with challenges, and for this reason the study was undertaken to investigate the challenges faced by one secondary school in Soweto (Meadowlands).

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review addressed the research questions regarding South Africa's democratic school governance system and the challenges it is facing. To conduct this research, the researcher had to select and apply a research methodology and design followed by other researchers who have studied similar topics. This study aims to address the research questions by applying the required research methodology and design.

This chapter provides information about the research methodology. The section begins with an introduction to research methodology followed by an overview of the two approaches, namely quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative approach that was applied to this study is further examined. This is followed by the research design, data collection methods and the analysis of data. Lastly, the study's trustworthiness, limitations and ethical considerations are discussed, followed by the conclusion.

## 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.2.1 Introduction to research methodology

Phil (1998, p. 8) defines research methodology as "a logical style used by the researcher to solve the research problem". He further states that, "research methodology is the process that one should understand and interpret as a science of investigating the research problem that the researcher may adopt in order to get answers of the phenomenon" (Phil, 1998, p. 8). According to Pilot and Hunger (2004, p. 233), "Methodology, is the logical process of obtaining, organising and analysing data". Burns and Grove (2003, p. 488) suggests that methodology includes, "the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, data collection and analysis techniques in an investigation". In addition, methodology uses multiple methods that support each other and that have strength to produce data and findings that will reflect the research question and support the research aims

(Henning, 2004). Therefore, research methodology decisions depend on the nature of the research problem and its questions.

In this study, the methodology used encompasses the aforementioned approaches in line with the nature of the research problem. Research methodology is divided into two spheres, namely qualitative and quantitative research. These two research methodologies are further discussed below, together with the approach that was selected for this study.

### 3.2.2 Comparative overview of quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative research methodology suggests that the world is made up of observable, measurable facts. Researchers who prefer this methodology use numbers and statistics to analyseand interpret collected data and are supported by the positivist paradigm (Golafshani, 2003). Furthermore, quantitative data findings are presented and analysed by researchers using graphs and charts to explain and understand social phenomena (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). This research methodology is applied in all areas of research where statistical data is available for analysis.

In contrast to the quantitative approach, qualitative research methodology is the investigation particularly oriented towards exploration, discovery and inductive systematic claims (Patton, 2002). McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 391) stated that when conducting qualitative research, "the researcher collects data by interacting with selected persons in their settings and by obtaining relevant documents". Patton (2002) further explains that qualitative methods provide depth and detail through direct quotations and careful description of situations, events, people, interactions and observed behaviours. O'Sullivan and Rassel (1999, p. 36) points out that the qualitative research approach produces data that is not "quantifiable into numbers", but is about the understanding of a social problem and how participants react to the situation and events in their real settings. This methodology is applied in areas of research where depth and detail based on interviews and observations are the outcomes, as opposed to statistical findings.

Based on the two brief descriptions, quantitative research methodology is not applicable to a study of a more social nature where observations and inductive systematic claims are required. It is more suitable to studies where statistical analysis of data is required.

Based on this, qualitative methodology was applied to this study because the researcher's purpose was to investigate a social challenge faced by the school governance at the school. This required the researcher to interact, obtain relevant documents, conduct interviews and observe the research participants in their natural environment at the secondary school. The following section further explains the selected research approach, and the reasons for selection.

### 3.2.3 Qualitative research methodology

Qualitative research believes that the world is socially constructed, complex and constantly changing and is supported by an interpretive paradigm that requires in-depth and detailed information about the participants' actions, beliefs and perceptions of their world (Golafshani, 2003). The ontological studies describe "interpretive paradigm as a method, which is depending on the social realities constructed by the participants' in their real social settings" (Eisher, 1991, p.132).

May (1997, p. 8) supports ontological studies and states that "social sciences theories challenge our interpretation of the social world" and the way the researchers uses qualitative research systematic process. Therefore, qualitative research has strength to provide information about an individual's view of a problem, for example, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and the ability to identify intangible factors such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles and ethnicity of the participants.

To achieve this, the researcher needs, "to be directly involved or becomes a part of the setting, interacts with participants, and becomes the primary data collection instrument" (Delport & Fouche, 2002, p. 359). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Bell

(2003) further emphasise that qualitative research depends on the building of the close relationship between the researcher and the participants. In other words, the researcher will have a better understanding of an individual's or group's actions and how they interpret their surroundings when the researcher becomes part of them. Eisher (1991, p. 32), further states that the main focus of qualitative research is "field work".

This study supports the methodology of conducting qualitative research in the form of field work within the participants' natural setting, while gaining insight into their actions, beliefs and perceptions of their world. The researcher needs to conduct research interviews within the participants' environment, build a rapport and then develop observational notes about the school.

Even though the researcher needs to develop relationships with participants of the study and needs to be open to opportunities to develop new ideas, theories for in-depth and longitudinal explorations, a detailed approach is required. Patton (2002, p.14) points out that qualitative researchers need to facilitate the investigation process in a detailed manner so that the process will not be influenced by any "predetermined categories of the analysis of data".

Flick (2002, p. 279) adds that qualitative research is the research method that uses "multi-sources in nature to collect relevant information and to find in–depth meaning and understanding" of the phenomena being studied. Qualitative research is thus a methodology based on the researcher's ability to interact with participants about their perceptions of a problem while ensuring a detailed approach, as applied in this research.

Mabasa and Themane (2002), Heystek (2004), Chaka (2008) and Xaba (2011) have found that quantitative methods are insufficient to explain the phenomenon of school governance of public schools in South Africa. As a result, qualitative research has gained momentum as a research method of enquiry and there has also been increased recognition of the strengths of the qualitative inquiry generally.

Shank (2002, p. 5) characterizes qualitative research as, "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning". By 'systematic' is meant "planned, ordered and public", following rules agreed upon by members of the qualitative research community. The term 'empirical' refers to a type of inquiry grounded in the world of experiences. The phrase 'inquiry into meaning' refers to researchers trying to understand how others make sense of their experience. The researcher applied this methodology, while ensuring it was conducted in a planned, ordered and transparent manner in addition to making sense of the participants' experiences.

The advantages of adapting qualitative research to examine the challenges experienced in school governance is that a qualitative research approach brings the flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during the investigation and explore the process effectively. In addition, it has sensitivity to contextual factors but gives researchers the ability to study symbolic dimensions and social meaning.

Authors such as Conger (1998), Bryman, Bresnen, Breadsworth and Keil (1988)suggest that another advantage of applying the qualitative research methodology is that it gives the researcher the opportunity to develop new ideas and theories for in-depth and longitudinal explorations about the phenomenon. The researcher applied these advantages while conducting the study and this added depth to the information gathered.

In order to gather the abovementioned information, a research design was required, and this is discussed in the next section.

## 3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This section explains the qualitative research design that was applied to this research study. Included in this discussion is the application of the case study, data collection methods and sampling.

The selection of the appropriate research design to be applied to a study is critical. McMillan and Schumacher (1996, p. 33) uses the research design as the "master plan" that the researcher should follow in order to collect, analyse and interpret data. There are four major types of qualitative research design, namely phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case study. Case study was adopted as the qualitative research design of this investigation.

Robson (1993, p. 146) defines a case study as a "strategy for doing research, which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence". Yin (1994, p. 13) describes case study as the "empirical study that investigates a contemporary problem within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". This means that the case study relies on the multiple sources of evidence.

This study adopted the case study approach as the research design because this approach allows the researcher to choose a topic and decide on the boundaries of the topic depending on the extent of the research topic (Robson, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Hopkins (1993) adds that the case study methods used are flexible. In other words, multiple methods of data collection are likely to be adopted, depending on how the researcher views reality so that the reality can be easily revealed.

The advantages of using case study are as follows:

- There is no fixed end-point in data collection, which means that the procedure for data collection is also flexible as are the methods used as the technique to collect data (Descombe, 2003).
- It can be conducted as an independent study or as an element in a large-scale research design (Simons, 1998).

- Although the nature of the case study research can be both qualitative and quantitative research, it often falls into the qualitative paradigm (Robson, 1993).
- Instead of creating a controlled environment as experimental research, it provides events that are taking place in a natural setting (Descombe, 2003).
- It is usually investigating a "contemporary phenomenon in human society" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Therefore, this study uses the case study approach as the research design method.

Hancock (1998, p. 6) notes that case study is a qualitative research design that has the ability to provide "in-depth analysis of a single or small number of units" such as a person, an organisation or institution. The author further argues that case study claims to offer a richness and depth of information not usually provided by other methods and employs different strategies in collecting data.

In addition, the case study approach is also known as "triangulation research strategy" because it raises issues of ethical considerations in order to "confirm validity and reliability" of the study (Yin 1994, p. 13). In this case, the researcher purposely selected one secondary school in Meadowlands, Soweto because this study focuses on in-depth analysis about the challenges faced by the school governance of a township school. It also allows for ethical considerations to be taken into account given the history of education and school governance in South Africa.

Burns (2000) notes two important points about triangulation, which is that it contributes to (1) the verification, and (2) the validation of the qualitative analysis. This is achieved by checking the consistency of findings generated by various data collection methods and the different data sources within the same method. In this study, the researcher made use of multiple sources to collect data by involving different stakeholders in education such as the principal, educators and parent members of the SGB. Data collection strategies included interviews and examining

relevant documents from the Gauteng Department of Education. This served as an assessment of the adequacy of the data and to verify the findings.

### 3.3.1 Data collection methods

Various data collection methods were applied within this study. Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary data collection technique in conjunction with observational field notes. Analysis of written documents was the secondary data collection tool. The following sub-sections discuss the approaches of the researcher in collecting data to answer the research questions.

#### 3.3.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview is a verbal exchange of information between two persons for the primary purpose of one person gathering information from the other (Pole and Lampard, 2002). The researcher selected and employed the semi-structured interview as the main tool because it offered participants latitude to express their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and views regarding how they addressed factors affecting their morale (Lauer, 2006).

Descombe (2003, p.113) confirms that semi-structured interviews allow interviewees to "speak their minds" and to "lend themselves to in-depth investigations", particularly with regard to personal accounts of experiences and feelings. Since the researcher's aim was not to generalise the empirical research findings, semi-structured interviews assisted in achieving an in-depth understanding and insight of the phenomenon, particularly the way in which participants viewed their challenges (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

This technique of data collection was applied when gathering information from the participants. Having prepared questions in advance, the technique was most appropriate in the sense that all participants were asked similar questions though not necessarily in the same order. Horton, Macve and Struyven (2004) notes that this approach reduced interview effect and bias. It also allowed the participants to

use their own words and in some cases used non-verbal communication cues like tone of voice and facial expressions (Horton
,Macve & Struyven, 2004).

The technique's flexibility and adaptability allowed for follow-up questions regarding interesting ideas or points that were made and relevant responses probed (Horton, Macve & Struyven, 2004). In addition, certain motives and feelings that influenced the motivation of principals were also further investigated. Consequently, it provided participants with opportunities to elaborate on their initial responses.

Overall, the semi-structured interview methodology contributed to a more complete and in-depth data collection. Furthermore, the strategy enabled the researcher to modify the sequence of questions, change wording, and gave some clarity where participants were experiencing challenges in understanding certain questions (Horton, Macve & Struyven, 2004). This provided for a more conducive and relaxed environment for the participants.

#### 3.3.1.2 Preparations for interview sessions

The researcher developed and applied a standard interview schedule, listing all semi-structured interviews. The interview schedule questions (Annexure D), included all the factors impacting on the school governance at the school. Themes were derived from the literature review and related to what was discussed in Chapter Two. Before the researcher met with the participants at the school, appointments were made personally with each of the six participants. Each appointment was made with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, the purpose of the interview and the assurance of their confidentiality and anonymity as participants (Byrne, 2006). The participants in the sample were asked to set a time and date that was convenient for them.

#### 3.3.1.3 Conducting interviews

All the interviews were held at the school and one-on-one interviews were conducted to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The researcher and participants ensured that the interview area was quiet and free from distractions (Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein, 2000). In most interview sessions, questions were addressed in the order of the interview questionnaire (Annexure D). Follow-up questions were posed to ascertain the real perceptions, feelings, views and opinions of participants. In that way, the researcher was able to prompt participants to provide essential and relevant information about the questions under investigation (Stewards and Cash, 2008).

The participants were therefore given an opportunity to share their interpretation of the world in which they live from their own point of view (Cohen, Marion & Marrison, 2007). Throughout the process, interview data was accurately tape-recorded, observational field notes were taken, and written documents analysed (Descombe, 2003; Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). At the end of each interview session, the researcher gave each SGB member the opportunity to listen to the recorded interview and to make any additional comments.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p. 453), "the researcher should remain open minded to new concepts and ideas during the interview process". This means that no new ideas or information should be discarded during the interview process. Lastly, each participant was thanked for participating in the study and was reassured of anonymity and confidentiality. Each interview session lasted approximately two hours.

### 3.3.1.4 Observational field notes

Observational field notes were employed as a data collection technique in order to note things such as contextual variables and non-verbal information, which could not be recorded by tape recorder (Horton, Macve & Struyven, 2004). In the course of the interviews, non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, gestures and tone of voice of the participants were noted and this facilitated the data analysis (Creswell, 2003).

In addition, other contextual variables were recorded in detail, such as the displaying of the school's vision statements, level of discipline (order) at schools, and the degree of tidiness of the physical facilities. During data analysis, such data confirmed and augmented the verbal responses provided by participants and further facilitated data analysis (Cohen, Marion &Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2003; Maxwell, 2005). The researcher therefore applied this information to augment the semi-structured interview findings.

### 3.3.1.5 Analysis of written documents

Documents used to further validate interviews and observation notes are discussed. Two sets of written documents were analysed, namely the school documents and secondary documents. This third data collection technique required the researcher to examined written documents. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.451), written documents could take the "form of minutes of meetings, memoranda, working papers and draft proposals".

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) described documents analysis as a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data, with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participant. This suggests that document analysis provides the researcher with the extra benefit of interacting with more direct data. The content of these documents therefore assists the researcher to substantiate the interview responses during data analysis (Cohen, Marion & Morrison, 2007;

Maxwell, 2005). In summary, the analysed written documents serve as additional evidence and validation for other qualitative findings.

- **School Documents**

The documents that were analysedincluded the school's vision statements, strategic plans, operational plans, instructional plans, control journals, school policies, registers and assessment schedules, as well as learners' portfolios. The analysis provided the researcher with the added advantage of interacting with findings of the semi-structured interviews in a more objective and authentic manner.

- **Secondary Documents**

Birley and Moreland (1998, p. 53) defines secondary documents as being, "written sometime after the event". They involve commentaries on situations and events. A number of secondary documents relevant to the study were identified and further supplemented other data collected. Strydom and Venter (2002, p. 321) notes that it is, "good to scrutinise any relevant documents and/or written material that contains information about the problem under investigation". Therefore, the researcher requested the SGB to make available specific documentation such as the Constitution of the SGB, school policies such as Code of Conduct and the minutes of previous SGB meetings.

### 3.3.2 Sampling

Hancock (1998, p.10) defines purposive sampling, "as a strategy that divides group participants according to pre-selected criteria relevant to a particular research question", and this approach was used by the researcher. The six participants selected represented different constituencies of the SGB such as parents, principal or school management, educators and non-educators. Unfortunately, the learners were not represented in the sample, even though they are part of the SGB according to legislation. The SGBs still fail to include learners in all their meetings or SGB activities. (The reason for this omission is addressed in Chapter Four, under Sampling).

For the purpose of this study, all members were invited voluntarily to participate during the study. However, Christensen and Johnson (2004) argues that if individuals in a sample of volunteers are available, the procedure is viewed as convenience sampling.

## 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

In analysing data, the researcher segmented and inductively coded the data that comprised the transcribed interviews, observational field notes and written documents, in order to become familiar with the responses. This segmentation and inductive coding assisted in the development of themes, categories and sub-categories (Suter, 2006; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003; Thorne, 2000). This was done when reading and analysing interview transcripts, field notes, and written documents for the first time in order to identify the data in pure form (Suter, 2006). In doing this, significant comments were identified and grouped into categories and units of meaning were put into these major categories (Thomas, 2003). After applying this methodology, the researcher listed themes.

The themes identified were as follows:

- Theme One: The role of the SGB component;
- Theme Two: The effective functions of the SGB; and
- Theme three: The competency of the SGB.

Having listed the themes, categories and their respective sub-categories were identified and analysed. These themes, categories and sub-categories are further discussed in Chapter Four where the researcher provides more information on how the abovementioned themes were developed by the researcher.

## 3.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Most qualitative researchers concur that ensuring the trustworthiness of the study enhances the empirical research findings (Creswell, 2003; Golafshani, 2003). To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher applied strategies to establish rapport, clarify the role of the researcher and to ensure validity and reliability.

### 3.5.1 Establishing rapport

Before the start of each interview session, the researcher spent some time with participants in order to establish a positive rapport and to set them at ease (Keats, 2000; Steward& Cash, 2008). This included showing the participants the approval letter from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the study.

The purpose of the study was clearly explained, procedures outlined, the time needed to complete the interview explained, and how the results would be used. The researcher then sought consent from the participants by first explaining the consent form. Following this, participants were requested to read and sign the form. Establishing a positive rapport by explaining the research and interview process together with the consent form enabled the researcher to reassure participants of the confidentiality and anonymity of the study (Keats, 2000; Pedroni & Pimple, 2001).

### 3.5.2 The role of the researcher

In controlling the subjectivity and biasness, the researcher plays the role of an outsider (Johnson, 2008). In playing that role, the researcher embraced an attitude of "epoche", which according to Hatch (2002) and Schram (2003) is an ability to suspend, distance oneself and bracket one's judgment while the interview is in progress. In complying with the said principles, the researcher became attentive, tolerant, sympathetic, disciplined and acted with integrity towards the participants throughout the interview.

In describing this role, Wellington (2000, p. 72) uses the phrase, "acting like a sponge", which means that throughout the interview the researcher was expected to

minimise the talking and maximise the hearing, which the researcher did to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. To ensure that participants felt free and at ease, the researcher talked very little and ensured that there was no interruption to the participants' responses during interview sessions.

### 3.5.3 Validity and reliability

#### 3.5.3.1 Validity

According to Wiersma (2000, p. 239), validity is "the trustworthiness of research results, in which the researcher intervenes in people's lives and the results are trusted to the extent that there has been some accountability for their validity and reliability". There are two kinds of validity: internal and external validity.

- **Internal validity**

Internal validity is used as "an equivalent to credibility" (McMillan &Schumacher, 1993, p. 39). In this study, the participants interviewed were encouraged to express their views in their own words and if possible, to use their mother tongue. This meant that the interviews were conducted in a language that the interviewees were comfortable using, and were later translated into English.

The field research using interviews was conducted at a convenient place for the participants, where there was no time and space restrictions or any disturbances and where a controlled situation could be maintained. Therefore, internal validity is viewed as a strength of qualitative research, because people communicate freely about their experiences and "present a holistic interpretation to the researcher in an atmosphere of trust and comprehension of what is happening" (Merriam, 1998, p. 203).

- **External Validity**

Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 277) states that, "external validity refers to the applicability or generalisation which can be drawn from qualitative data in relation to another setting where similar conditions to study may exist". Stead and Struwig (2001, p. 145) agrees that data can be generalised within groups (internal validity) or across different groups (external validity). In order to attain external validity, this study used a purposive sampling method in the selection of participants and settings.

In the generalisation of the qualitative data, the qualitative researcher should follow key principles. Firstly, the data collected should offer a rich source of evidence that the qualitative researcher is able to use. Secondly, the qualitative researcher should identify range and diversity to understand various behaviours, perspectives and needs in the sample (Hawkins, 2008).

- **Reliability**

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the uniformity of the researcher in facilitating a process of conducting research which requires a researcher to have a certain style of recording, analysing and interpreting meaning from the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Patton (2002, p. 46) states that, "triangulation is a strategy that the qualitative researcher can use to improve the validity and reliability of a study or evaluation of findings".

In this study, the researcher collected, analysed and interpreted data and the same researcher ensured that what was recorded was exactly the same as what was expressed when the researcher conducted the study. Furthermore, the researcher focused on remaining neutral and objective throughout the investigation.

## 3.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges of school governance of a secondary school located in District 12, Johannesburg, Gauteng. The limitation of this study is that only one secondary school was selected as a case study for this

research. While conducting research in more than one school appeared to be advantageous, it was impractical given the time and financial constraints the researcher experienced while completing this degree. It is therefore not possible to state unequivocally that the challenges recorded in this research are experienced by all other SGBs in Gauteng where schools are underperforming. This would be specifically in relation to executing their duties in accordance with the SASA (1996).

## 3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher had to take cognisance of certain ethical considerations and procedures that needed to be applied when conducting research. These are informed consent, deception, confidentiality and anonymity together with accessibility to research information.

### 3.7.1 Informed consent

Participants were given a written statement that explained all the aspects of a study. They were required to formally consent to participate before the commencement of the study by signing the consent form.

### 3.7.2 Deception

Participants were given the choice of whether they were willing to participate before engaging in the study. The researcher did not mislead or coerce any of the participants into participating. Such transparency encouraged support from the participants during the study.

### 3.7.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher used letters of the alphabet to name participants and/or their role names within the SGB, such as Parent[C]. Information obtained about the participants was also held confidentially. This ensured that no-one had access to individual information or the names of the

participants except the researcher (Keats, 2000; Pedroni & Pimple, 2001). In addition, participants were assured that their personal information, including their names and addresses, would not be revealed in any way without their permission.

### 3.7.4 Accessibility of research findings

Participating principals, their circuit managers, as well as the District Director had access to research results after the completion of the study. This was done by giving each participant a copy of the research report for perusal. This assured the participants of their anonymity and access to the research results.

## 3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the research problem. During the research methodology investigation process, case study was selected as the main design, which was implemented through purposive sampling, particularly in identifying information-rich participants. A semi-structured interview method was employed as the main data collection technique, which was confirmed, corroborated and augmented by observational field notes and document analysis, particularly during data analysis.

The researcher used various systematic methods to collect both primary and secondary data. For primary data, this study drew on semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis of official documents; for secondary data, documents from the school were used, such as the SGB Constitution, minutes of previous meetings and school policies.

The research procedures and processes were followed by the researcher in order to establish truthfulness, where value of the study, validity and reliability of the study was demonstrated by the use of multiple sources of data collection. Ethical considerations were outlined throughout the investigation.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# DATA PRESENTATION

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained in Chapter One, democracy in South Africa brought about changes to the education system that necessitated the establishment of a SGB at schools in accordance with the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1997). This shift requires SGB members to effectively and efficiently perform their required governing functions with the aim of ensuring a well-performing school, together with quality education being provided to learners. This shift, though positive, brought many challenges to those who held roles within the SGB, including those at the selected school.

In this section of the study, the research data will be presented. The findings were obtained from the analysis of data from the three data collection techniques, namely semi-structured interviews, observational field notes and analysed written documents. The empirical research findings are discussed as guided by the theoretical framework and the purpose of the research (see section 3.3), and the research questions (see section 1.6).

## 4.2 SAMPLE SIZE

The details of the participants in this research are presented in this section. For this study, data was collected from six participants comprising staff members, the principal and parents, using the three data collection techniques. The initial sample size of eight was adjusted to six, because two allocated spaces were reserved for learner representatives. However, learner representatives do not form part of the SGB at the school in question (Creswell, 2003; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

The sample participants were drawn from one secondary school in Meadowlands Soweto, in the Gauteng Province. All participants, from whom data was collected, were members who have served close to three years as members on the SGB. The participants are identified by code names, namely Support Staff Member, Parent [C], Educator, Chairperson (Parent A), Secretary (Parent B) and Principal (ex-officio). Participants are referred to by code names in order to meet the need for privacy and confidentiality outside of the sample (see section 3.7.3). In addition, the code names allow for fluent discussion of the data. The sample information, together with the use of code names, has been tabulated and serves as a reference regarding the profiles of participants. The information is illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 Profiles of sample participants**

| No | SGB Member Title | Executive vs. Non-Executive Role |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Chairperson (Parent A) | Executive |
| 2. | Secretary (Parent B) | Executive |
| 3. | Principal (ex-officio) | Executive |
| 4. | Support Staff Member | Non-Executive |
| 5. | Parent (C) | Non-Executive |
| 6. | Educator | Non-Executive |

## 4.3 EXECUTIVE VERSUS NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

According to SASA(1996, Section 24), all the school governing bodies of a public school should be elected in their first meeting and all members should elect office bearers that consist of four members, namely chairperson, deputy chairperson, treasurer and secretary (RSA DoE, 1996). These are executive positions held by the school's non-management team or persons not directly affiliated to the day-to-day running of the school. Therefore, the principal, learner representatives and staff members, including educators and support staff, cannot be elected as chairperson or deputy chairperson in the SGB.

However, according to the same legislation, the principal automatically holds an ex-officio position at an executive level due to his or her management position at the school. The role of executives is to plan for school activities such as fundraising, staff appointments, and coordinating meetings of both the SGB and the broader parent community. Their term of office is no longer than one year, but they can be reinstated if they still qualify to be members of the SGB to a maximum term of three years (RSA DoE, 1996). These participants had at the time of the research all been part of the SGB for close to three years. The non-executive members' role is to support the initiatives of the executive committee members and to participate equally in decision-making about school activities together with the executive committee members during the SGB meetings (RSA DoE, 1997). These non-executive roles are assigned to the support staff, educators and parents.

## 4.4 SAMPLE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The six participants were interviewed using a flexible interview schedule and a semi-structured interview questionnaire (Annexure D). The interviews were conducted in accordance with the research requirements (see 3.3.3.1). The interview schedule is tabulated in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Interview schedule**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Interview 1 | 06 November 2012 | Support Staff Member |
| Interview 2 | 07 November 2012 | Parent [C] |
| Interview 3 | 08 November 2012 | Educator |
| **INTERVIEWS** | **DATE** | **EXECUTIVE MEMBERS** |
| Interview 4 | 09 November 2012 | Parent[A], Chairperson |
| Interview 5 | 12 November 2012 | Parent[B], Secretary |
| Interview 6 | 13 November 2012 | Principal [ex- officio] |

After conducting the study, the data was used to develop research themes and categories as described in the next section.

## 4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH THEMES AND CATEGORIES

This section discusses the development of themes and categories for the data that was collected. The common trends that were depicted in the raw data from interviews, observational field notes and written records emerge into themes and categories.

The development of these themes, categories and sub-categories from data was based on the theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter 3 (see section 3.4). The main research aim, which is to identify the challenges experienced by SGBs, forms the framework of the themes and categories used to manage and arrange raw data accordingly. The categorisations of raw data made it possible for the researcher to discuss the findings of this study as indicated in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: Data themes and categories**

| **THEME 1: THE ROLE OF THE SGB COMPONENT** | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **SGB Member Role** |
| Category 1 | Executive members |
| Sub-category 1<br>Sub-category 2<br>Sub-category 3 | a. Ex-officio<br>b. Chairperson<br>c. Secretary |
| Category 2 | Non-executive members |
| Sub-category 1<br>Sub-category 2<br>Sub-category 3 | a. Parents<br>b. Educators<br>c. Support staff |
| **THEME 2: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SGB** | |
| Category1 | Quality of support from the School Governing Body (SGB) |
| Sub -category 2<br>Sub- category 3<br>Sub- category 4 | a. Mitigating strategies for parents SGB<br>b. Mitigating strategies for parent community<br>c. Mitigating strategies for educators |
| Category 2 | Quality of support from the professionals (educators) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Sub- category 1<br>Sub-category 2<br>Sub-category 3<br>Sub-category 4 | a. Planning<br>b. Policy development: Formulation and implementation<br>c. Communication and transparency<br>d. Support and trust |
| **THEME 3: COMPETENCY OF THE SGB** | |
| Category 1 | Literacy level of the parent SGB |
| Sub-category 1<br>Sub-category 2<br>Sub-category 3<br>Sub-category 4 | a. Chairperson<br>b. Secretary<br>c. Parent[C]<br>d. Support staff |
| Category 2 | Training of SGB |

As reflected in Table 4.3 above, challenges of school governance were influenced by three main variables (themes) and both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. For each variable, some influential factors (categories and sub-categories) emerged. Such themes, their categories and sub-categories, represented major empirical findings of the research, and are discussed in detail in the following section.

## 4.6 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

As illustrated in Table 4.3, the results obtained from the data were organised into themes, categories and sub-categories which served as main headings and sub-headings as shown in the discussions below. The semi-structured interview guide (refer to Annexure D) questions are used as a reference to discuss the findings where applicable. In the course of the discussions, verbatim quotes extracted from the raw data were utilised to illustrate important findings.

### 4.6.1 The role of the SGB component

In the interview questionnaire, the question of role was only specifically assigned to each of the six SGB members filling the role. However, due to the qualitative and semi-structured nature of the research approach, responses regarding this role

were received from other SGB members who did not hold the role. These responses are included where applicable.

This theme comprises the categories of the role of executive members and the role of non-executive members. The executive members in the sample comprised the Principal [ex-officio], Chairperson and Secretary, while non-executive participants were represented by a Parent [C], an Educator and a Support Staff Member. The responses from there two groupings to the role of the various SGB members are discussed in turn, as applicable.

#### 4.6.1.1 What is the role of the Principal (ex-officio) in the SGB?

**a. Executive Responses**

The Principal responded to the question referring to the SASA (1996). It was mentioned that the Principal of the school should not be elected as a member of the SGB, but should be an official member (ex-officio). The Principal also indicated that he was a member of the executive committee with no power to vote as a member in the SGB.

He further elaborated on his role by stating, "*I am representing the Department of Education in the SGB of the school and report to the SGB about the daily running of the school, including the challenges regarding teaching and learning activities".*

The Chairperson said: *"The Principal is part and parcel of the SGB, [uyena okumele asihlanganise kanye ne SMTs]"* which means, the principal was responsible for bringing SGB members together with the senior management team (SMT) at the school (see Annexure C).

The Secretary indicated that the role of the Principal as SGB member was to manage the school and he was responsible and accountable for management of the day–to–day functioning of the school together with members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) (see Annexure G).

**b. Non-executive Responses**

The Educator commented that the, "*SGB trusted the principal to give reports about academic challenges that affect teaching and learning of their children and teachers"*.

The Support Staff Member indicated: *"The principal is responsible for finance so when we are recycling paper, all this money should be submitted to principal because principal is accountable for the school finances"* Respondent (support staff) also added that the principal held the role of, "*as accounting officer"*.

Parent [C] also viewed the principal as the manager of the school; therefore the principal should give detailed information about all the school improvements, facilities and maintenance of buildings and grounds as well as appointment of educators and other activities concerning changes from the Department of Education (DoE).

In summary, the views and responses from the participants clearly view the role of the principal as that of a manager (see Annexure G) with additional powers. This gives the principal more powers than other members of the SGB.

**4.6.1.2 What is the role of the Chairperson in the SGB?**

**a. Executive Responses**

The Chairperson stated that, "I *am chairperson of the SGB and executive committee member*." This means the chairperson is the mouthpiece of parents and other members of the SGB at the school. It was added that the chairperson's role is to work closely with the principal in taking decisions based on challenges at the school. However, if the problems are unsolvable, the chairperson would then call for a meeting with other members of the SGB.

The Chairperson added that, *"The principal and chairperson need to solve problems",* meaning the principal and chairperson should not hide issues, but address them. In conclusion, the main role of the chairperson was, "*arranging meetings, to chair the meeting, to follow the agenda, to control the meetings and maintain order in the SGB meetings".*

The Secretary added that the role of the chairperson was to, "*solve problems at the school",* but both the SGB and the chairperson must work together in solving the problems at the school. He illustrated his meaning as follows: *"We should not hide problems, but we should face them and try to find ways to overcome them"*.

The Principal concluded that, "*the role of the chairperson was to work closely with me in taking decisions that need urgent attention"* but the chairperson needs to ensure that the whole school is managed properly. The principal gave an example by stating that the, "*school resources are distributed according to budget plan, maintenance of the equipment, buying of resources and the cleanness of the school".*

**b. Non–executive Responses**

The Educator commented that the role of the SGB was to, "*chair SGB and general meetings and to represents parents' concerns in the SGB meetings"* and give feedback about decisions taken about those parents' concerns to parents during the general meetings.

The Parent[C] indicated that the chairperson should liaise with the principal to ensure that decisions taken by SGB members are implemented as agreed in the SGB meeting.

The Support Staff Member concluded that the chairperson should make sure all the members of the SGB are being called to SGB meetings, especially where there is a

problem at school that needs their attention before they hear things from the community outside the school.

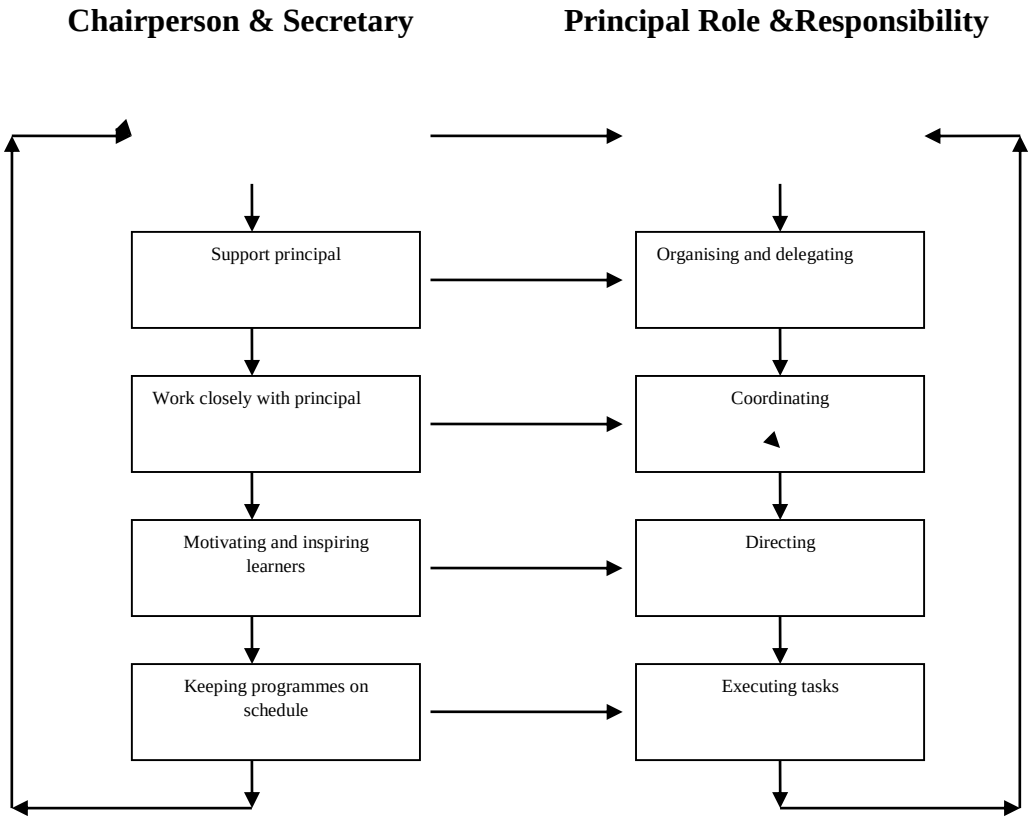
#### 4.6.1.3 What is the role of the Secretary in the SGB?

**a. Executive Responses**

The Secretary responded, *"My role in the SGB…I am Secretary of the executive committee representing the parent community in the SGB. I am taking minutes during meetings both SGB and general meetings with parents. Before the SGB meets again, I am supposed to send all the minutes from previous meeting and reading minutes for previous meetings for adoption or concerns within the minutes"*.

In conclusion, the role of the principal, chairperson and secretary within the SGB as viewed by the principal (ex-officio) and other SBG members in school governance roles can be diagrammatically summarised as indicated in Figure 4.1below.

**Figure 4.1: Roles of SGB Chairperson, Secretary and Principal**




Source: Department of Education (1996)

### 4.6.1.4 What is the role of the Parent in the SGB?

### a. Non-executive Responses

The Parent [C] SGB responded by stating, *"I am elected as a parent component of the SGB, representing the parent concerns and to participate during the SGB meetings to take decisions about children's education".* In addition, the parent role was to encourage the parent community to participate in all school activities that aim to develop and improve the quality of education of their children. The Secretary, Chairperson and Principal mentioned in a similar manner that the main role of the parent component was to represent parent concerns and be the advocate of educators during the general meetings with parents. In other words, the parent

SGB members by law have a right to engage with parents whose children are at the school regarding challenges that affecting their children's education.

#### 4.6.1.5 What is the role of the Educator in the SGB?

**a. Non-executive Responses**

The Educator indicated; *"I am an educator component, representing teachers in the SGB and means I am reporting back to the educators about the decisions taken at SGB meetings and taking forward teacher's concerns to the SGB".* The Educator added that the role included providing guidance to parent governors on how they could support educators and also to highlight challenges that affect educator's day–to–day functioning and their needs, with the aim of improving the culture of teaching and learning at the school.

Parent[C] pointed out that the role of the educator as the SGB component was used as the two–way communication channel between educators and SGB members so that the SGB at the school could function effectively.

The Support Staff Member concluded that the role of educator as the member of the SGB was to give feedback to the SGB meeting about the problems, such asthe cleaning of the school premises and give better ideas about new strategies that can be employed to improve the school's cleanliness.

**b. Executive Responses**

The Chairperson indicated that the educator component was an important role in the SGB because educators as governors were meant to support the SGB so that the school could function effectively and efficiently.

The Secretary also commented that the educator's role in the SGB was to help SGB members to understand clearly about the challenges that the educators are faced with in their day-to-day functioning of the school.

#### 4.6.1.6 What is the role of the support staff member in the SGB?

**a. Non-executive Responses**

The Support Staff Member mentioned, *"I am working as non-educator and the school governing body member at the school. My role as non-educator component is to represent non-teaching staff about the decisions taken at SGB meetings as well as to report the non-teaching staff problems to the SGB".*

The Support Staff Member added that their role at the school was the following:*" I am making sure that the school grounds and equipment are maintained and cleanness of the school classroom windows all fixed".*

In conclusion to the non-executive members' roles in the SGB, all members were able to define their role as a component of the SGB at the school and they have managed to give the meaning of their role by defining according to their context, but not deviating from SASA (1996) as the framework that governs their role at the school. All six participants' roles indicated that good governance will enhance a good learning atmosphere for learners who deserved a brighter future. This is characterised by being a responsible adult and fulfilling their roles in accordance with the roles outlined by SASA (1996).

### 4.6.2 The effectiveness of the SGB

The effectiveness of the SGB comprises many components. This includes quality of support by professional SGB members, together with support amongst SGB members and stakeholders, such as parents. These categories are discussed in turn.

#### 4.6.2.1 Quality of support from the SGB

Executive and Non-Executive SGB members responded differently regarding how the SGB can start supporting the school and how it could improve the role and functions of the parent SGB members as governors at the school. The following observations were made.

**a. Executive Members**

The Principal pointed out:
*"…supporting educator's controls the learners coming late to school."*
*"…helping educators control the learners who are using drugs and vandalising the school buildings."*

The Secretary commented:
"*Address learners with the purpose of improving the culture of learning and teaching at the school".*
*"…sharing educators concerns during general meeting with parent community…members must belong to every committee at school...encouraging community participation at school".*

The Chairperson recommended:
*"....functioning according to the plan...building good relationships and trust with the principal and educators."*

**b. Non–Executive Members**

The Support staff indicated:
*"Executive members must support the school."*
*"…encouraging parents, educators, learners and staff to keep the school clean and grounds maintained."*

The Educator added:
*"….enforcing code of conduct to both parents and learners."*

The Parent[C] concluded:
*"…focusing more on developing the school policies such as LTSM, school development and improvement plans and Code of Conduct".*

The school did have written documents such as the Code of Conduct and LTSM policy but these were old outdated documents from the Department of Education. The LTSM policy was not in place in order to control issuing of books to learners. Every year the school bought books because no-one knows how to monitor the issuing and collecting of books.

The researcher attended a meeting on 14th November 2012 at the School. The purpose of the meeting was to report back about tasks that were allocated to certain members. The minutes indicated that the Parent [C] was given the function to draft the LTSM policy of the school. This main aim of "*developing this policy was to control the issuing and receiving of books and recording of the assets"* of the school as pointed out by Parent[C] and the issue remained unresolved and a standing agenda item by the end of the meeting.

#### 4.6.2.2 Mitigating strategies for the Parent SGB

Mitigation strategies of this study refers to what the parent SGB members can do to support to the school and areas of improvement that will add to the effective functioning at the school.

The Parent [B], who holds the position of Secretary, indicated that parent SGB members should come to school and motivate learners. He gave as an example, *"learners should understand that both the parents and the educators are speaking in one voice".* Parent [B] holds the view that there should be unity between the educators and parents. *"Educators are always saying, 'we as teachers', but now it's*

*the time for parents to say, 'we parents and educators'. "* He concluded that the parent SGB members should also encourage the parent community to support educators by making sure that, *"…learners should be the first to arrive at the school in the morning. We have 900 learners; we want to see a morning stampede inasmuch as we do see it in the afternoon at the gate as learners jostle to be the first to go home."* This way, teaching and learning can start on time and educators will have enough time to teach and help learners with difficulties in their subjects.

Data from interviews revealed that the availability of strategies to mitigate and instil in educators a commitment to teaching processes had a significant impact on the parent SGB members' involvement at the school. During the interviews, participants concurred that improving the role and functions of the SGB at the school can be used as a strategy to improve the effective functioning of the SGB at the school.

#### 4.6.2.3 Mitigating strategies for the parent community

Data from interviews revealed that the availability of strategies to mitigate poor parental support enhanced a deeper sense of focus, enthusiasm and commitment on principals. Participants shared a consensus that the strategy of regular meetings, monthly, quarterly or annually, to give parents progress reports was highly recommended. One respondent [Chairperson] confirmed this by stating, *"Encourage the parent community to support the school through fundraising so that the money can be used to appoint educators who could help our children during the weekends especially in subjects such as Physical Science and Mathematics*".

The Principal concluded that to encourage parents' participation at the school would help them to understand how the school funds were being used and managed.

Furthermore, participants like Parent [C] concluded that, *"parent SGB members are the representatives of the school and the community. It is our role to encourage the*

*community to protect the school…the community should take charge of their school".*

Interview data revealed that the quality of support that the SGB received from parents played a critical role in influencing their leadership. All the participants felt unsupported by parents, especially in areas like attending parental meetings, assisting children with their school work, and also financially contributing to school activities.

### 4.6.3 Quality of support provided by professionals (Educators)

This section focuses on the quality of support provided by professionals, specifically findings that arose during the semi-structured interviews and document analysis that dealt with planning, policy development and communication and transparency.

#### 4.6.3.1 Planning

Parent [A], also known as the Chairperson, indicated that, "*we need to start to develop a school development and improvement plan so that we can work effectively, but the principal needs to guide us".* Therefore the principal and educators needed to lead and guide the planning process at the school.

The data collected from written documents such school policies, SGB constitution, development and improvement plan documents and SGB minutes indicated that the school has documents, but the information was not being developed or designed by the SGB at the school. There are guiding documents from the DoE that are supposed to be used as a framework in developing improvement plans.

#### 4.6.3.2 Policy development: Formulation and implementation

The Principal indicated that parent SGB members did not form part of developing school policies and plans. Normally the Principal and members of the SMT at the

school ensure that all the policies and plans required by the Department of Education are available, but without being adopted by all the stakeholders of the school.

The participating Parent[C]felt strongly that the SGB should develop the school policies in order to guide and shape the direction of their school. Parent[C], a non-executive member, pointed out that he has started to develop a LTSM (Learning Teaching Sources Material) policy as a guiding principle that will be followed by educators and learners at the school. The parent was quoted as saying, *"We will be demanding answers from teachers who do not submit needs on time".* Therefore, policies need to be implemented for good school governance and management (see Annexure G).

The Secretary concluded that the SGB should form part of the LTSM committee together with the educators.

The data collected from school policies at the school such as the vision and mission statement, constitution of the SGB and LTSM policy indicated the following:

- The school has a vision and mission statement and this is in line with the current leadership and all stakeholder's goals and objectives about the school.
- The SGB has a constitution, but this was not adopted by the current SGB members. It was developed by the Principal and other members of the SMT because the DoE needed the school to submit their improvement plan.
- Code of Conduct: the school uses the Department of Education framework, but it was not customised according to the school's need.
- LTSM: the school did not have any LTSM policy before, but now Parent[C] was given an opportunity to facilitate the process of consulting with stakeholders in order for the SGB members to start developing the policy for the school.

#### 4.6.3.3 Communication and transparency

There were various issues raised around the lack of communication and transparency. The Support Staff Member observed that parent SGB members are accountable to the parent community and have to be more transparent about the financial status of the school. In addition, the Principal as an accounting officer needed to communicate openly about how school funds were being used, when they are used and what was intended to be achieved. The Principal should therefore assist the SGB in ensuring that the school finances are managed efficiently.

The Chairperson concluded that the SGB was elected to perform its functions in terms of the SASA (1996) on behalf of the school and for the benefit of the school community. Therefore, the SGB occupies a position of trust regarding the school and they were expected to act in good faith, to carry out all their roles and responsibilities on behalf of the school and to be accountable for their actions (see Annexure G). The Educator also felt strongly that the principal should report regularly to the SGB about day-to-day functioning at the school so that the lack of communication and transparency between the principal and SGB members can be improved (see Annexure G).

Data collected from the minutes of previous minutes indicated the gaps of missing and relevant information from the Principal as the ex–officio member as well as an accounting officer. The data also indicated that the Chairperson and Treasurer were always dependent on the Principal to explain any financial decisions taken. There was an absence of effective communication and transparency between SGB members at the school.

The information above reveals that parent SGB members have acknowledged the critical role professionals play as part of the SGB. They realised that there are some functions that require a certain level of education and expertise, which means that they are based on educational and management acumen; therefore they believe that

the professionals could assist them in carrying out those duties as part of the SGB. The data further indicates that effective communication channels should be implemented at the school so that issues of transparency and accountability can be improved. This will allow their roles and functions at the school to be more effective and also to promote the best interests of the school, with emphasis on the learners.

#### 4.6.3.4 Support and trust

Support and trust amongst SGB members is critical for its effectiveness. The research findings showed that support and trust is the cornerstone of these relationships. The SGB members' responses are discussed.

The Principal indicted that SGB members should support one another and strive to build good relationships and trust. The Chairperson added that good relationships and trust can only be achieved when the SGB members have a sense of belonging and ownership of their school. "*Principals need to have a good relationship with SGB members because it is very important for the school to function effectively.* It was further elaborated that the Principal, as an ex-officio member should co-ordinate activities that will build good relationships and trust between parents and educators. This would promote the best interest of the school and enhance the quality of education.

Parent[C] indicted that during the SGB meetings, members should take ownership by participating in collective decision-making regardingtheir children's education.

From the above responses it was clear that the SGB members are ready to improve the state of their role at the school and community. They also pointed out that the parent SGB members should start participating in all activities of the school and they will encourage the broader parent community to support the school.

Participants also indicated that they should start planning properly, drafting policies and building good relationships and trust, but that they need to support each other.

There was consensus that the principal has to improve communication so that the SGB members have a clear understanding about the day-to-day functioning of the school and they are able to support the principal and staff.

### 4.6.4 The competency of the SGB members

This section discusses the competency of the SGB members. First, the literacy levels of SGB members are examined, followed by a discussion on the training provided to its members.

#### 4.6.4.1 Literacy level of the Parent SGB members

Data indicated that there are two parent members on the SGB who have Grade Twelve and one parent governor who has a tertiary education. The literacy and education levels are presented in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: Parent SGB literacy and education levels**

| Parent – SGB | English Literacy (speak, read & write) | Secondary Education | Tertiary Education |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No – Grade Twelve | None |
| Secretary | Yes | Grade Twelve | Yes |
| Parent | Yes | No – Grade Twelve | None |
| Non – educator | Yes | Grade Twelve | None |

#### 4.6.4.2 Training of the SGB

Due to the varied degrees of the literacy level and educational background of parent SGB members, together with the demands of their roles, training becomes paramount for the effective functioning of the SGB. The provision of training, together with training that has already been provided, is discussed.

The Principal indicated that the Department of Education made provision for training for all members of the SGB, especially when the SGB assumed their duties. The Principal complained that, *"the training was not efficient, it took only eight days to train these people"* and when they came back, the principal was supposed to, *"babysit them and they accused him of being dominant".*

The Educator noted that the training parent SGB members received was efficient because, "*parents were trained in an informal way and using comfortable language",* so that each member understood their roles and responsibilities of the SGB at the school.

The Chairperson indicated that it was essential that every parent member of the SGB receives training before they resume their roles and responsibilities as SGB members at the school. She pointed out, however, that, *"Training was not enough especially when you are elected as "treasurer", you have never trained to use money, and training takes only eight days, it does not mean the treasurer is well equipped to carry out duties".*

The Chairperson attended two training sessions in 2009 and 2010. The first workshop was aimed at equipping them with *"the role and functions of the School Governing Bodies at the school."* The participant acknowledged that after attending the workshop, they received a learner's guide and she always referred to the guide when confronted with role challenges.

The material was presented in English and she did not have a problem reading the information. The Chairperson shared the guide with the researcher. The second workshop was based on financial management and included planning, spending, managing and fundraising for the school.

The Chairperson concluded that if the Department of Education could provide further training, she would be keen to attend because it was unsettling that *"…after 23 years since the school was established, there was no improvement".*

The Secretary also attended two training sessions. The Secretary responded that the training assisted with their development as SGB members, including what was expected from the secretary role. The first was based on the role and tasks of School Governing Bodies, which included how to draft a policy and school development and improvement plan in 2009. In 2010 the training occurred in the form of a workshop on financial management, where the main focus was on how to manage and control school funds. The Secretary was also comfortable speaking, writing and reading in English.

Parent[C] also attended two training sessions. The participant commented that the training did build capacity with regard to relevant knowledge, based on how to perform SGB duties. The training occurred as workshops in 2009 on the role and tasks of School Governing Bodies and in 2010 on financial management.

This respondent added that as the Parent representative, the role allowed for involvement in various projects based on the development of governance in public schools and working with other governance structures such as the Governing Body Foundation. The training therefore provided knowledge and understanding about the role and functions of the SGB. Parent [C] concluded that, "*future training should include computer skills, management skills, filing and typing so that SGB parent component would not depend to the educators as well as giving time to educators to perform their duties efficiently".*

Parent[C] responded that an invitation was received from the Department of Education in 2009 and 2010 to attend training. At the workshop they learnt about, *"role and responsibilities of the SGB, conducting general meetings, and what is happening at the school and how to handle school funds".* The facilitators used the language that the parents could understand.

In conclusion, the data collected from the participating parents indicated that all parents serving as the SGB members have attended two training sessions over a period of two years in 2009 and 2010. The content shared a lot of information in a very short period of time. The data collected indicated the content of the training received. The content of the first training is presented in Table 4.4 below.

**Table4.5: SGB Training Content**

| **Topic** | **Focus Areas** |
|---|---|
| **a) School Governing Bodies** | • Role and responsibilities<br>• Differences between SGB role and<br>• Principal role |
| **b) Planning** | • Designing school development and improvement plan |
| **c) Recruitment and selection** | • Process for Department of Education posts<br>• Process for SGB posts |
| **d) Policy development** | • Policy formulation |
| **e) Meetings** | • Different types of SGB meetings<br>• Conducting meetings |

The second training was based on financial management which included the responsibilities of the SGB and principal in dealing with school funds. The content of the training focused on financial planning and management including budgeting, income and expenditure, fundraising and how to keep records of all donors. The literacy level indicated that only two parent SGB members completed Grade Twelve and one had a tertiary qualification.

## 4.7 CONCLUSION

Data from semi-structured interviews, observational field notes and analysis of documents revealed many challenges that contribute towards the ineffectiveness of the SGB at the school. This ranged from a lack of parental involvement to a lack of communication and transparency within the SGB. Participants have realised that parental involvement, which included parent SGB members and the broader parent community in supporting the principal, educators, learners and staff at the school, was essential in order to make the parental representative body (SGB) stronger.

Data also indicated that the broader parent community of the school did not provide enough support to their SGB. This was demonstrated through various behaviours such as not attending general meetings, and not helping the SGB to raise funds. However, the lack of parental SGB training and skills was in the forefront of the findings. The lack of capacity, knowledge and necessary skills on the part of the parent SGB members is a contributing factor that impacts negatively on the effective functioning of the SGB and the school as a whole.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two the review stated that governance is the key issue that ensures the quality of education in any country (see section2.3.1). This is because educational governance requires the participation of all stakeholders of education, such as civil society, and includes parent communities, businesses, educational professionals, learners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to partner with government (Aarts, Turnhourt& Van Bommel, 2010).

The theories of governance may be viewed as an important aspect of the educational governance system. This is because their purpose is to help civil societies or communities by capacitating them to increase their involvement within educational governance and development issues in order for schools to improve quality for all children (Amanchukwu, 2011).

However, UNESCO (2008, p. 1) advocates that "the right to education can be realised only in a political and economic context", that gives respect to the importance of transparency, participation and accountability processes". In addition, it speaks to broad-based collaboration in all sectors of government regarding education (UNESCO, 2008).

UNICEF (2008), on the other hand, believes that this can only be achieved with long-term strategic planning and commitment to provide proper resources that will create strong SGB structures. These structures bring together skills, capacity and knowledge from all community stakeholders such as parents, non-governmental organisations, professionals and learners, and form a strong and healthy partnership with government.

Based on the above argument, this study agrees that the participatory governance theory is an important aspect of governance, which should be adequately planned and implemented within communities and all government sectors, including education (see section 2.3.2.1). Government and all its stakeholders, which include non-governmental organisations, should put greater effort into capacitating communities (see section 2.3.2.1).

This will lead to gaining relevant skills and knowledge about what they can do as a community to support their government in developing their communities and to add value to the standard of education received by their children. This, in turn, will contribute to one nation that shares common principles and values (USAID, 2003). Good governance requires adding values to the educational governance system and ensures participation, transparency, accountability, and rule of law, equity, effectiveness and efficiency (USAID, 2003).

As stated in the literature review, participatory governance can be defined as a platform that should be used as a process of plenary, reaching of the consensus and collective decision–making between the state and community (Aarts, Turnhourt& Van Bommel, 2010). However, Amanchukwu (2011) believes that good governance is about communities making decisions about their communities' governance and development.

Both participatory and good governance theories encompass democratic principles and values, such as participation in active and responsible roles, being representative of all stakeholders and accountable to stakeholders who are given tasks to perform (UNESCO, 2008). This has led this study selecting democratic governance (DG) as the theoretical framework and applying it as the guiding principle to interpret and analyse the findings in Chapter Four.

As stated in the review, Olsen (2007) defines democratic governance as a spirit of citizenship and suggests that public officials should think and act as members of the

“political community”. This follows the rules and appropriate behaviour that define the community, and officials should not act ‘solely as a self-interested individual’, but become members of a particular interest group that all share common values.

Thus, this study of democratic governance, according to Rugh and Bostert (1998), should encompass the following features of good and participatory governance (see section 2.3.3.3.1). The aforementioned features are the building blocks of the school governance and development. It was implemented in 1997 in all public schools, both primary and secondary, by the democratic government of South Africa post-1994 (Wittenberg, 2003).

The literature review examined the democratic school governance system. Here, as stated by Mncube (2006, 2008) and Sithole (1994), in South Africa school governance refers to the democratic institutional structure that is entrusted with the responsibility to formulate and adopt school policy on a large scale, while addressing issues such as school uniforms; school budgets; developmental priorities; and endorsement of the code of conduct for learners, staff and parents.

In addition, Sayed and Carrim (2006) mentions that the role of the new democratic governance structures was to create and enable an environment that allows for the participation and engagement and/or consultation of all the stakeholders of education. This includes communities and professionals and allows them to develop a sense of ownership of the school and take responsibility and accountability for their decision-making about the issues relating to their school (Mncube, 2008).

In Chapter Two, Chapman, Froumin and Aspin (1995) provides a useful list of features for the democratic institutions as a theoretical framework for school governance. The authors suggest that policies and actions should be collaborative decisions and not arbitrary actions. In addition, it was noted by the authors that the majority should not prevail against the rights of minorities, but that these should be preserved and respected.

In the case of schools, this means that power and responsibilities should be distributed amongst all the school stakeholders. This is in accordance with the rule of law (see sections 2.3.2.2 and 2.3.3.3) which states that policies should be formulated after all parties have made a collective decision (Mncube, 2008; SASA, 1996).

Therefore, as stated in Section 2.3.3.3 (South Africa: education system), Section 16 of the South African Schools Act (1996) advocates that the day–to–day professional management of the school should be the responsibility of the senior management team (SMT), and governance and development issues should be the responsibility of the SGB.

However, as stated, research findings by Sayed and Carrim (2006), Chaka (2008), Xaba (2011) and Heystek (2010) indicate that, in practice, the parent governors are not all participating fully, since many of them lack the necessary skills to perform the duties assigned to them. Principals therefore continue to perform the functions which were intended to be the responsibility of the SGBs at school (Mncube, 2006, 2008).

The study's findings that were presented in Chapter Four are interpreted and analysed below. The analysis and interpretation is supported by the literature review as the primary research question (see 1.6.1) and secondary research questions (see 1.6.2) are addressed. This chapter comprises three sections of analysis and interpretation. Firstly, the qualitative findings in Chapter Four that respond to the challenges and factors affecting SGBs within the South African Schools Act (No. 84) of 1996 are discussed. Secondly, interpretation and analysis of findings are presented. Thirdly, factors impacting on the challenges of the SGB are discussed.

## 5.2 SECTION A: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

This section deals with the findings in the previous chapter regarding the challenges and factors affecting the SGB at the selected school. The themes and categories (see Table 3.4) that were used to structure the presentation of results are once again applied.

### 5.2.1 Theme 1: The role of the SGB component

- **Category 1 & 2: Executive and Non-Executive Members**

From the data collected using semi–structured interviews (see paragraph 3.3.1), it is clear that all six participants (executive and non-executive members) understood their roles as the representatives of each component of the SGB and performed in accordance with the regulation laid down by the government (see Annexure G).

The Principal explained: "*I am representing the Department of Education in the SGB of the school and report to the SGB about daily running of the school including the challenges regarding teaching and learning activities".*

The Chairperson indicated: "…*arranging meetings, to chair the meeting, to follow the agenda, to control the meetings and maintain order in the SGB meetings".*

The Secretary responded: "*I am taking minutes during meetings both SGB and general meetings with parents".*

Parent[C] indicated: *"I am elected as a parent component of the SGB, representing the parent concerns and participate during the SGB meetings to take decisions about children's education".*

The Educator indicated:*" I am an educator component, representing teachers in the SGB means I am reporting back to the educators about the decisions taken at SGB meetings and taking forward teacher's concerns to the SGB".*

Support staff mentioned: *"My role as non-educator component is to represent non- teaching staff about the decisions taken at SGB meetings as well as to report the non-teaching staff problems to the SGB".*

Overall, SGB members had a good understanding of other members' roles and responsibilities. However, this clarity in understanding roles and responsibilities was less clear in relation to other members of the SGB understanding the role of the Principal. Findings (see section 4.5.1.1 – 4.5.1.6) indicate that the Principal as an ex-officio SGB member still plays a significant role in decision-making.

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| The Educator commented that the, "*SGB trusted the principal to give reports about academic challenges that affect teaching and learning of their children and teachers*". **[manager]**<br>The Support Staff Member indicated: *"The principal is responsible for finance to give feedback about available funds, expenditure and to prepare a budget"* **[accounting officer].** |

Karlsson (2002) and Sayed and Carrim (2006) argue that the SGB is responsible to the broader parent community to give feedback about school financial management and school development and improvement plans, not only the principal. However, this study revealed that parent SGB members believe that the principal should play a significant role in making decisions about financial matters and the development of the school.

Xaba (2011) agrees that the role of the principal as member of the SGB has a tendency to position the principal above other SGB members instead of all members having an equal role in governing the school. For this reason, this study concludes that although decentralisation (see section 2.3.3.3.3) allows the broader parent community to participate at a level in which they can have directly impact on the function of the SGB, there is an imbalance of power which exists between the principal and other SGB members (Karlsson, 2002).

The Educational White Paper 2 (RSA, 1996) indicates that the SASA (1996) was formulated with the aim of inclusivity. The Act gives the parent communities the opportunity and responsibility of being involved with school governance by promoting the best interests of the school, while ensuring the development of

quality education for all its learners. However, findings indicate that the principal has assumed responsibilities that should either be shared or reside with SGB parents.

The parents' view that contradicts the legislature can be more clearly understood when viewing South Africa's past (see section 1.2.4) in Chapter One. It clearly states that during the apartheid era from 1948 school governance structures consisted of school committees and school boards. During this period, parent governors did not have any significant decision-making powers concerning governance issues of their school and they had little clarity regarding their role and responsibilities (Seroto, 2004). Following the introduction of democratic school governance structures, PTSAs and SGBs, parent members are experiencing similar challenges and are not playing a prominent role as key stakeholders in decision-making (Karlsson, 2002; Sithole, 1994; Seroto, 2004)

### 5.2.2 Theme 2: The Effectiveness of the SGB

The findings that were presented in Chapter Four regarding the effectiveness of the SGB are analysed and discussed. The two categories, together with their sub-categories are discussed in turn.

- **Category 1: Quality of Support from the SGB**

The six participants all expressed a need for quality support from the SGB; especially parent SGB members (see section 4.5.2.1). SASA (1996) states clearly that one of two major roles of the SGB is to support the principal, educators and staff in the performance of their professional functions (Annexure G).

Mitigation, according to the following sub-categories a, b and c (see Table 4.3), shows that participants were focusing on the effectiveness of the parent SGB and the parent community in helping the school to improve the quality of education for all learners.

- **Sub-category a: Mitigating Strategies for Parents SGB**

Data from interviews revealed that the availability of strategies to mitigate and instil educators' commitment to teaching processes had a significant impact on the parent SGB members' involvement at the school. During the interviews, participants concurred that improving the role and functions of the SGB at the school can be applied as a strategy to improve the effective functioning of the school. The Secretary felt very strongly about increasing the parental involvement at the school. The view was that parent SGB members working together with educators at the school can make a difference to improve quality of education, so that overall performance of the school could improve.

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| Parent [B], the SGB's Secretary, stated,*" Educators are always saying, 'we as teachers', but now it's the time for parents to say, 'we parents and educators'."* |

In the past, parents from previously disadvantaged black communities, due to the inequities of apartheid, did not have a voice or decision-making powers about the quality of education their children received (see Annexure G). After 1994, the democratic government implemented the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, with the aim of correcting the educational injustices of the past (see Annexure G) In the new governance framework, parents from disadvantaged communities are given powers to decide on the issues regarding school governance and education development (see Annexure G) that they may not be skilled to do.

The function of parent SGB members includes shaping the strategy of their school (governance), whereas the professionals were given more powers to manage day-to-day functioning of their schools (management) (see Annexure G). In the composition of the SGBs, parents are given majority representative over other components of the SGB so that the parents have power to influence the decisions taken concerning their children's education.

The findings indicated that parent SGB members are not participating fully in promoting the best interests of the school, while ensuring the development of quality education for all its learners. This was demonstrated by various behaviours the Principal pointed out, such as the parent SGB members' absence in most school activities, and not participating in the development of the school development planning and development of policies (see section 4.5.2.3).

In conclusion, parent SGB participation in decision-making regarding the school policies development, planning and budget is lacking. The parent SGB members and broader parent community largely do not add value to the education of their children because the Principal and management team develop school policies that govern the school and plans for the school activities. Therefore, SGB parents are faced with serious challenges as key stakeholders when not participating as policy-makers and decision-makers as required of them under the South African Schools Act (No. 84) 1996, Section 20.

- **Sub-category b: Mitigating Strategies for Parent Community**

Findings of this study (see section 4.5.2.3) of the broader parent community show that they are not supporting the school as required. The broader parent community did not attend general meetings, and failed to support an initiative by parent SGB members, which was to fundraise towards their children's education.

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| One respondent [Chairperson] confirmed this by stating, *"...encourage the parent community to support the school through fundraising".*<br>The Educator added: *"the community should take charge of their school".*<br>The Principal concluded: *"...encouraging parents' participation at the school would help them to understand how the school funds were being used and managed".* |

SASA (1996) is the framework that provides guidance on the roles and functions of the SGBs at the schools and clearly states that the role of the school governing bodies at the school is to promote democracy in schools and the broader South

African communities (RSA, 1996). In other words, the purpose of democratic school governance is to create an opportunity for the school community (educators, parents, learners, non-educators and broader community representatives) to develop a sense of ownership of their school and take responsibility for the performance of their community's school.

An example of the parent community not participating is evident in SASA (1996) (see Annexure G and Annexure E) was provided by Parent[C] who stated, *"We were not even supposed to put a fence because community members are there to support and protect buildings and all the assets of the school"*(see section 4.5.2.3).

The effective functioning of the SGB depends on understanding the role of democratic school governance in accordance with democratic core values and principles. For this reason, the SGB at the secondary school in Meadowlands, Gauteng encounters challenges caused by the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of their role and responsibilities within the SGB structure.

- **Sub-category c: Mitigating Strategies for Educators**

The findings strongly indicate that the parent SGB members at the school are willing to support educators in performing their professional functions, even though there have some challenges based on their low level of literacy and lack of skills. The results also indicated that educator professionals want assistance from parent SGB members:

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| The Principal observed: *"...supporting educators controls the learners coming late to school."*<br>The Chairman commented: "*We need to start to develop a school development and improvement plan so that we can able to work effectively, but the principal needs to guide us".*<br>The Educator added: *"....enforcing code of conduct to both parents and learners."* |

The SASA(1996, Section 20) states the role and responsibilities of the SGB is to develop school policies that will govern the school and plans that will support the principal and management to create a good learning environment and to improve the quality of education at the school (see Annexure G ).

The amendment of SASA (1996) indicates that the Provincial Head of Department will demand answers to the SGBs whose schools are failing to produce quality education (RSA DoE, 1997). It is the role of the parent SGB members to support the principal and staff in performing their professional duties. Therefore, the Department of Education (1997) and Employment of Education Act of 1998 (Section, 16(a)) states that the Head of Department will take action against the SGB whose school is underperforming if the principal and educators are failing to produce their improvement plan of their performances at school (DoE, 1997b; RSA,1998).

Chaka (2008) argues that few parent SGB members are able to read and/or interpret the legislation at the required level of understanding (Annexure G). This study revealed that the participants are not aware of those amendments that were made in 2007 by the Provincial Head of Department and in the amended SASA (1996), which is a good indication that parent SGB members are unable to interpret legislation and it needs to be taught and explained to them comprehensively so that they can apply it in accordance with the school's needs.

From the aforementioned information regarding quality support for educators, the school and Department of Education needs quality of support from the parent SGB members. However, at this particular secondary school, parent SGB members could write or read in English (see paragraph 4.5.3.1 and Annexure G).

This does not mean that they are able to interpret legislation to their full understanding (Chaka, 2008; Themane & Mabasa, 2002). For this reason this study concludes that the Act (1996) has unintentionally disempowered most of the parent SGB members, especially those who cannot read or write. They cannot understand

any changes to the policy document until a professional consultant or trainer is able to assist them in understanding all the changes and how this impacts on their role.

**Category 2: Quality of support from the professionals (educators)**

In this category four sub-categories were identified that pertain to the quality of support from educational professionals.

- **Sub-category a: Planning**

The data collected from the documents analysed (see section 3.3.1) is defined by McMillian and Schumacher (2006) as written documents used to assist the researcher to corroborate the interview responses during data analysis, such as school policies, SGB constitution, development and improvement plan documents and SGB minutes.

Findings indicate that the school had received these documents from the Department of Education to use as a framework, but had not developed any of their own policies. These documents are supposed to be used as a framework in developing school policies and school development and improvement plans in accordance with the school's needs.

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| Parent [A], also known as the Chairperson, indicated that, "*we need to start to develop a school development and improvement plan so that we can work effectively, but the principal needs to guide us".* |

The SGB is expected to represent all stakeholders and to consult with them when they are developing policy and plans (Karlsson, 2002; Sayed & Carrim, 2006). They should oversee the implementation of government policies and work together to solve problems, but this study revealed that the SGB are not developing any policies. However, it remains one of their functions (see section 4.5.2.4).

Planning as a quality support to professionals shows that SGBs are faced with challenges developing plans that will impact the school's functioning and performance, because the planning process requires technical skills and knowledge. The data collected indicates that the ineffectiveness of the SGB was caused by the poor planning, insufficient knowledge and lack of skills on the part of both parent SGB members and the SGB management of the school. This has impacted negatively on the effective functioning and overall performance of the school.

- **Sub-category b: Policy Development: Formulation and Implementation**

The research findings indicate that the school has policies from the Department of Education, which were supposed to be used as the guideline that the SGB should follow in order to develop their school policies and plans that will govern the school and ensure quality education for the learners at the school (see section 4.5.2.4).

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| Parent[C] felt strongly that the SGB should develop the school policies in order to guide and shape the direction of their school. The parent was quoted as stated, *"We will be demanding answers from teachers who do not submit needs on time".* |

According to Joubert (2011),Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008), the prescribed role and functions (see paragraph 2.6 and Table 3.1) have been listed in order for them to execute their roles in accordance with the South African Schools Act (No. 84) of 1996. Parent SGB members have to have a formal education and/or development as outlined in Table 3.1 of Annexure G. However, these skills require augmentation.

In addition, both the Education White Paper 2 (1996) and Karlsson (2002) stated that the implementation of democratic structures in public schools was based on the inclusivity of all the members of the communities of South Africa. In other words, the SGB was implemented so that members will consult all the stakeholders of the school. Each stakeholder will come with their expertise, especially where technical skills are needed, such as development of school policies and plans. This study

revealed that while the SGBs are responsible for developing policies, the aim was to give all members of the parent community an opportunity to participate.

This study concludes that the SGB at the school is lacking the required skills and relevant knowledge of functions that demands technical skills such as developing policies, plans and financial management. The SGB is also faced with challenges in interpreting the South African Schools Act (No. 84) of 1996in order to apply it effectively to meet the school needs.

- **Sub-category c: Communication and Transparency**

The data indicates that effective communication channels should be implemented at the school so that issues of transparency and accountability can be improved. This will allow their roles and functions at the school to be more effective and also promote the best interests of the school and enhance the quality of education of all the learners.

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| The Support Staff Member observed that parent SGB members are accountable to the parent community and should be more transparent about the financial status of the school.<br>The Chairperson concluded that the SGB was elected to perform its functions in terms of the SASA (1996), on behalf of the school and for the benefit of the school community.<br>The Educator felt strongly that the principal should report regularly to the SGB about day-to-day functioning of the school so that the lack of communication and transparency between the principal and SGB members can be reduced. |

According to the World Bank (2008) report on secondary governance structures of Sub-Saharan countries like Kenya, Zambia; Senegal and South Africa (see section 1.2.2), most of these countries' governance structures are ineffective because parent SGB members, together with the principal, do not communicate or liaise with each other openly and efficiently. In other words, the lack of communication among all

the school governors led to conflict about the Principal not being transparent about the use of financial resources.

This study has revealed that the SGB at the school realised that their effectiveness at the school will depend on the effective communication of the Principal and his transparency about the school funds. This extends to the development of the school so that parent SGB members can share the information with the broader parent community.

It is clear that the Principal is the key role-player in ensuring the success of the SGB. Therefore, this study will conclude that the new governance structure still has the element of depriving parents of the ability to participate in their children's education as required by legislation. This is similar to that pertaining during the apartheid era where parent governors were lacking in the knowledge and the necessary skills to make decisions during education policy formulation (see Annexure G).

It is for this reason that the study suggests that the SGB at the school lacks clear communication and transparency. This is primarily because the Principal believes that the parent SGB members do not have the required capacity or skills to understand educational and governance principles. Thus, the Principal does not see the need to communicate everything to the SGB members, because they cannot understand some of the principles.

- **Sub-category d: Support and trust**

Although the data collected indicates that the SGB members realised that some of the members are lacking knowledge and the necessary skills required to perform their function effectively, they will always need each other as a team.

The Principal responded that they should support one another and strive to build a good relationship and trust.
The Chairperson responded: "*Principal needs to have a good relationship with SGB members because it is very important [yonke into ingahambakahle]".* This means that the school can function effectively.

The findings show that the principal needs support from the SGB and the SGB needs support from professionals. Therefore, if both failed to build the required relationships, the school will, in turn, not achieve its goal which is to improve the overall performance and effectiveness of the school. Both the Chairperson and the Principal felt strongly that good relationships and trust will improve the functioning of the school, educators, learners, staff and the community and this will positively contribute to the effectiveness of the SGB at the school.

### 5.2.3 Theme 3: The competency of the SGB

This theme deals with the literacy levels of parent SGB members and the training they have received. These findings have informed the analysis and interpretation of data in this chapter. It is clear that this theme affects many factors of the SGB function and the extent of the findings and the implications are discussed below.

#### 5.2.3.1 Literacy levels of the Parent SGB members

Table 4.4 provides an overview of the literacy levels of the parent SGB members. In summary, half of the members do not have a Grade Twelve certificate and only one member has tertiary education.

These literacy levels indicate that some of the parent SGB members encounter challenges due to a lack of formal education that will impede their participation should no assistance be provided. Heystek and Paquette (1999) indicate that the prescribed role and responsibilities in the SASA (1996) was created for only SGB members who have technical skills and knowledge of various field of study (see

Annexure G). This poses a challenge to the efficient and effective functioning of the SGB.

#### 5.2.3.2 Training of the SGB

Given the aforementioned challenge of the parent SGB not all having the required technical skills and knowledge, the need for training and development becomes critical. The findings indicate that the DoE provided training; however it failed to capacitate the parent SGB members competently. The duration of the workshop was only eight days. This was not enough time to capacitate a person who has not completed secondary or tertiary education to gain relevant knowledge, especially functions that required technical skills, such as financial management skills, planning, policy development and personnel. The findings of Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008) shows that the training failed to capacitate the SGB members with the necessary skills and knowledge because training was developed for those individuals who already possess certain skills and expertise in the field of education and governance(see section 4.5.3).

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| The Chairperson noted that: *"Training was not enough especially when you are elected as "treasurer", you have never trained to use money, and training takes only eight days, it does not mean the treasurer is well equipped to carry out duties".*<br>The Principal observed: *"the training was not efficient; it took only eight days to train these people"*. When they came back, the Principal was supposed to, *"babysit them and they accused him of being dominant".* |

Heystek and Paquette (1999) concur with the Education White Paper 2 (1996) that capacity training is targeted at the SGB members who possess certain knowledge, but not in the field of education. Thus capacity building training programmes are aimed at adding value to the already existing knowledge and skills base, such as administrative expertise and resources for effective governance, which has been already been acquired by SGB members. Based on these findings, the study argues

that the parent SGB members should receive formal training aligned to their needs before they can be elected as members of the SGB.

The consequences of not applying this approach would be that the parent SGB members would continue relying on the skills and knowledge of the Principal and SGB Educator at the school, which has already negatively impacted on the effectiveness of the school's functioning

This study concurs that the capacity building programmes attended by the parent SGB members were used as induction training that could provide relevant knowledge and skills to the newly educated members who did not have any background about the educational system (Annexure G; Table 3.1). However, it also indicated that the functions allocated in Section 20, 21, 36 and 37 require certain skills and knowledge that SGB members should possess.

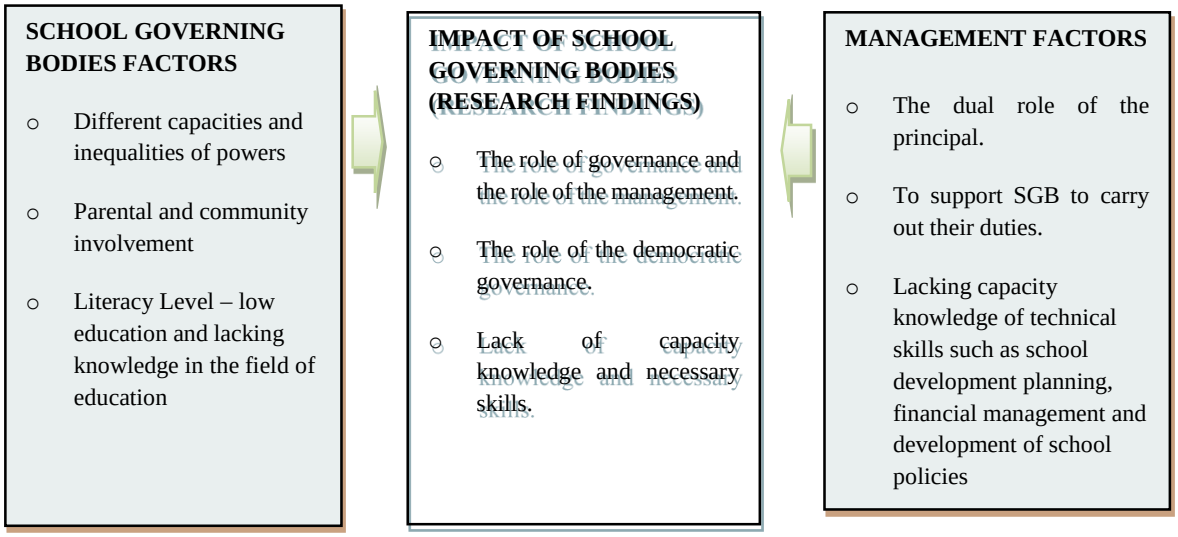
It is within this context that the study argues that the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 as a guiding principle did not clarify clearly the minimum level of literacy that is required from the elected members of the SGB, therefore the elections should be guided by certain criteria in order to prevent people being elected without the relevant knowledge and necessary skills to carry out their duties as the school governors. The findings also demonstrated that the policy makers have failed to prescribe functions that would accommodate both illiterate and literate SGB members so that both types of SGB members can share their experiences during the decision-making process.

In addition, this study argues that even the professionals (principal and educators) do not have the variety of skills required from the prescribed functions in the SASA (1996) (see Annexure G), which means that the professionals at the school do not have all the necessary knowledge required to execute roles and responsibilities as the elected members of the SGB.

## 5.3 CONCLUSION

Figure 5.1 below summaries the most salient points regarding the three influential factors and their impact on school governance.

**Figure 5.1: Factors impacting on the challenges of the SGB**




Source: Pintrich and Schunk (2002): Motivation in Education Theory and Application

Figure 5.1 above indicates that there are three challenges faced by the school governance of a secondary school in Meadowlands, Soweto, Gauteng. The first challenge is caused by the allocation of the prescribed role and functions within the SASA (1996). Secondly, there is misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the role of democratic school governance at the school. Thirdly, there is a lack of capacity, knowledge and the necessary skills to execute the duties of the SGB at the school.

With regard to the first challenge, the problem is caused by the different capacities and inequalities of power allocated to the role and functions of the SGB members at the school, which contributed to the lack of effective communication, trust and transparency.

The second challenge is as a result of SGB members having failed to carry out their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the democratic core values and principles, such as consultation, collective decision-making, tolerance, participation and representation. This has contributed to the lack of parental involvement in making decisions about their children's education.

The third challenge is caused by the literacy level of the parent SGB members and lack of the technical skill that is required in order to execute some of the prescribed functions within the SASA (1996).

# CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This case study was conducted to research school governance challenges at a secondary school in Meadowlands, Soweto, Gauteng. The study aimed to examine the challenges and the factors that affect effective and efficient school governance within the South African democratic schooling system. The general theoretical literature on this subject, together with the international and Sub-Saharan African school governance trends, was essential in contextualising the local challenges to a paradigm that was still fairly new to the South African schooling system. The study sought to answer the following primary and secondary research questions:

**Primary Research Question:**

What challenges does the school governing body face within the South Africa Schools Act (No 81) of 1996?

**Secondary Research Questions:**

- What are the factors affecting the governing body at the school?
- What are the school governance trends internationally and locally?
- What are the new school governance strategies for consideration?

## 6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions were drawn from both the literature and the empirical study. They serve as the basis for the recommendations in the form of guidelines and principles related to SGBs in the Gauteng Province and across South Africa. These recommendations are made with the aim of improving SGB roles, responsibilities and opportunities and the overall performance and effectiveness of a school.

### 6.2.1 Literature review

The review aimed to address the research questions and began by providing an overview of governance and theories of governance.

In Chapter Two, the review stated that governance ensures the quality of education in any country. This is because educational governance requires significant participation of all stakeholders of education, such as civil society, and requires parent communities, businesses, educational professionals, learners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to partner with government.

The theories of governance can be viewed as an important aspect of the educational governance system. This is because their purpose is to help civil societies or communities by capacitating them to increase their involvement within educational governance and development issues for schools to improve quality for all children. However, theories of governance, namely, participatory, good and democratic governance, are about equality for all citizens or stakeholders in decision-making, while holding significant decision-making powers.

There is a critical need to promote an effective public sector, including education. In terms of this research, the shareholder's best interest equates to the best interests of the learners and the quality of their education. However, before democracy was achieved in South Africa, the non-democratic system of apartheid had a critical impact on the lack of school governance and the poor quality of education for all black learners.

### 6.2.2 Research methodology

In pursuing the aim of the study, a qualitative paradigm was applied as it was shown to favour the nature of this research. This led to the selection of the case study method, the selection of the research sites and the identification of participants through purposive sampling. The argument for applying the case study approach was provided.

The research design that led to the selection of the sample that comprised six participants was purposively sampled. Data was collected through three techniques: semi-structured interviews, observational field notes, and document analysis. Throughout the data collection process, the researcher complied with principles of research ethics, particularly the informed consent principle. Furthermore, there was research compliance regarding trustworthiness of the research findings, establishing rapport, the role of the researcher, direct contact at the site and triangulation of data.

### 6.2.3 Presentation of data

In Chapter Four, raw data was segmented and inductively coded into three main themes, categories and several sub-categories. This was informed by the conceptual framework of the study that represented the major findings of the study.

Furthermore, the ethical principle of confidentiality and anonymity was also employed. Hence, participants received code names in line with their role as SGB members, together with an assigned letter of the alphabet if required, i.e. Principal, Chairperson / Parent [A], Secretary / Parent [B], Parent[C], Educator and Support Staff. The detailed conclusions for each theme, category and sub-category were presented.

6.2.4 Interpretation and analysis of data

In Chapter Five, findings of this study indicate that there are three challenges faced by the school governance at the research site. The first challenge is caused by the allocation of the prescribed role and functions within the SASA (1996). Secondly, there is a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the role and responsibilities of and by SGB members. The last challenge identified is the lack of capacity, knowledge and necessary skills by SGB members to efficiently and effectively execute their roles and responsibilities.

## 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of analysingand interpreting the research findings, the conclusions from the study, literature and empirical study, the researcher derived several recommendations, as presented below.

### 6.3.1 South Africa and the SGB function

The policy-makers of the South African Schools Act (No 84) of 1996 should review the role of the management versus the role of governance at the school as the study indicates severe imbalances between the role of the principal and other SGB members. This has contributed to principals overruling the parent SGB members instead of supporting them in their role and responsibilities according to the Department of Education mandate.

#### 6.3.1.1 Gauteng Province and the SGB

Stronger support measures from HOD are needed so that the SGBs can carry out their duties as prescribed in the SASA 1996 (RSA DoE, 1997). The establishment of support structures will also assist all the members of the school community such as professionals, support staff, parents, learners, community and the DoE to fulfil their roles as prescribed in Sections 20 and 21 in the SASA (1996).

#### 6.3.1.2 SGBs at the school

**(a) Mutual Trust**

Good relationships and effective communication and transparency between the parent SGB members, the broader parent community and the principal as well as the SMTs is the key. This will allow for the successful governance and management of the school in order to effect change and innovation and to meet the needs of the learners and the school.

**a. Visibility**

The visibility at the school premises of the parents serving on the SGB is important in order to increase parental involvement at the school. Being visible means the parent SGB members must be involved at the school on a daily basis. Parent SGB members who are unemployed, or not employed on a full–time basis, should play a more active role in this regard, because of the time they have at their disposal.

**b. Policy development**

The role of democratic governance is to promote participation and be representative of the school community, which includes businesses, parents, learners, educators and support staff who can bring their experiences and knowledge to improve the culture of learning and teaching at the school.

**c. Educators support**

Educators should know that they can depend on the support of the SGB in their efforts to maintain good levels of learner discipline. This will allow them to feel more confident and secure in fulfilling their day–to–day educator functions at the school.

**d. Commitment**

SGBs should make use of flyers and notices at local businesses, shopping centres, community centresand similar to announce the dates and times of meetings or consult with all the school community members about the upcoming and current challenges that need to be addressed at meetings. This should be properly planned and well managed in advance so that parents attend and have a voice in the effective functioning of the school and the quality of the learners' education.

### 6.3.2 Sub-Saharan Africa and the SGB

The school governance framework of all African countries must clearly explain the roles and responsibilities of the management (principal) versus the governance (SGB) in order to avoid any overlapping of roles. This overlap has contributed to conflict between educators, statutory bodies and parents at the schools.

#### 6.3.2.1 Global community

Global communities must take ownership of their schools, which means parents have the right to be part of all educational activities of their children. This includes the school's operations, curriculum and to ensure that development at the school promotes quality education of all learners at the school. This study concludes that all countries, both developing and under-developed countries, should have these components in their governance structures:

**(a) Leadership**

School governors must have strong leadership within their governance structures. Sometimes democratic values can be compromised, but it is the duty of an individual to stand firm in what he/she believes without showing aggressive power or control.

### (b) Visibility

School governors must support professionals (educators) and support staff by being visible in all activities that take place at the school.

### (c) Participation

School governors must encourage parents, educators, learners and the community to participate in decision-making based on democratic principles and add value to all development issues. This will allow for the broader parent community to have a voice in all changes that involve governance and development at the school.

### (d) Screening of educational background

Screening of the education background of the elected SGB members will help developers of training manuals to design capacity building training based on the community's needs and an individual's level of competency and their literacy level. Training can consist of various modules and learners will attend the modules that are applicable to their level.

### (e) Support and trust

The school management must support their school governors in their role and functions at the schools so that strong relationships and trust can be built. This will foster co-operation, teamwork and effective communication will occur in school governance structures.

## 6.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In the course of the literature review analysis as well as the empirical investigation, a number of further research possibilities emerged. These include:

- The competence levels of the principals (who are responsible for supporting the SGB) in the understanding of their role in order to execute their role and functions in accordance with SASA (1996) and other applicable legislation.
- A comparative study about the monitoring tools and techniques used to monitor the effectiveness of the SGB at schools in Soweto.
- Determine strategies to boost and maintain learner motivation and control. This would assist in generating and sustaining motivated behaviour necessary for improved learner achievement. To date, the control of learner's theory failed to state exact strategies to sustain motivated behaviour, except having indicated numerous benefits for principals and their schools. Therefore this area needs to be explored in detail.

## 6.5 LIMITATIONS

As shown in Chapter Five, particularly Figure 5.1, the purpose of the research (section 1.5) as well as the assumptions of the research was realised. However, the following limitations were acknowledged:

- The study investigated challenges of school governance within one province of South Africa, namely Gauteng Province, at a Secondary School. The research findings were therefore geographically limited.
- The Gauteng Province is primarily an urban area and the findings therefore were limited to an urban area.
- Research findings served only to have reached a deeper understanding of the studied phenomenon. Generalization of these finding is therefore not possible.
- Research findings provide only a limited view of the challenges of school governance at a particular point in time; that is, the period in which the study was conducted. It cannot be known how the situation will change over time.

- The research was confined to public schools. A comparative study of SGB structures at public versus private schools could prove to offer solutions to better SGB strategies across the board.

## 6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the synopsis of the research. It also presented critical conclusions and recommendations of the research. Finally, it presented recommendations for further studies together with limitations which the researcher experienced during the study.

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http://www.gbf.org.za . Governing Body Foundation.

http://www.mgslg.org.za. Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership Governance.

# ANNEXURES

## ANNEXURE A: ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

*Faculty of Commerce, Law & Management*
**UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG**

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21 September 2012

**Miss G Mpanza**
**970 Brunei Street**
**Cosmo City**
**Ext 8**
**2118**

**Student Number: 535778**
**Ethics Number: BPADM/3082**

Dear Miss Mpanza,

I have pleasure in informing you that the **P&DM Post Graduate Degrees Committee** has approved the following title for your Research / Project Report:

Challenges of school governance at Kelokitso High School

Furthermore the committee has appointed the following supervisor: **Prof M Metcalfe,** with whom you should maintain regular contact. Please ensure that the title on the bound copies of your research report is the same as that approved by the Post Graduate Committee.

**You will be required to submit to the Faculty Office on submission of the report:**

- Three spiral bound copies of the Research Report
- one copy of the abstract
- one copy of the title page
- an electronic copy in PDF format (clearly labelled)
- supervisor's clearance form
- title agrees with proposal title ratified
- overall supervisor evaluation
- submission form
- sign all copies of the report
- complete the "M" form (personal information form) available from the Faculty Office
- fees clearance
- defence panel status

**Please note that you need to be registered every year until your graduation.**

**Please note: After confirmation of the final Research Report mark, you will be required to submit two unbound final corrected copies signed and dated, an electronic copy (in PDF format), a signed library clearance form and have completed the full ETD form.**

We wish you success with your research.

Kind Regards

**Ms Jenny Mgolodela**
**Faculty Officer**
**Faculty of Commerce, Law & Management**

**Cc: Prof M Metcalfe**

# ANNEXURE B: LETTER AMENDED FOR THE TOPIC

**18 March 2013**

Dear Gugu,

Title was approved at the PG with a small adjustment.

**CHALLENGES OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GAUTENG**

**Amended as per below**

**CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GAUTENG**

Regards

**Jenny Mgolodela**
**Faculty Officer**
**Faculty of Commerce Law and Management**
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*Postgraduate page:*

http://www.wits.ac.za/prospective/postgraduate/applications/11580/applications.html

# ANNEXURE C: APPLICATION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ONE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL GAUTENG

**LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL**

9070 Brunei Street
Cosmo City Ext 8
Randburg
2118
OCTOBER 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

**PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

I am a student at the Graduate School of Public Development and Management at the University of Witwatersrand doing a Master Degree in Public Development Management (P&DM), conducting a research on "Challenges of the school governance".

I wish to request your permission to involve you, selected members of the school governing body; chairperson, educator, non - educator, and learner as participants for the purpose of this study during the month of November 2012.

Permission has been granted by the district manager.

I trust that my request will receive a favourable response. Ethical structures are in place and your child's name will not be mentioned anywhere.
I thank you in anticipation.

Yours in education

……
MISS G. MPANZA

**ANNEXURE C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

9070 Brunei Street
CosmoCityExt8
Randburg
2118
OCTOBER 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

**PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY**

I am a student at the Graduate School of Public Development and Management at the University of Witwatersrand doing a Master Degree in Public Development Management (P&DM), conducting a research on "Challenges of the school governance".

I wish to request your permission to involve you, to participate in this study during interview session that will be conducted in the month of November 2012.

I trust that my request will receive a favourable response. Ethical structures are in place and your child's name will not be mentioned anywhere.

I thank you in anticipation of your support for my research.

Yours Faithfully

**……**
MISS G. MPANZA

# ANNEXURE D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH EACH PARTICIPANT (SGB) GUIDELINES

**The following explanation was provided to all six participants before each interview started:**

In 1997, all public schools in South Africa were given the opportunity to implement the new democratic governance structure known as the school governing bodies (SGBs) as outlined in the South African School Act No.84 of 1996. The purpose was to increase parental involvement in the schooling system of South African communities. It is in this context this study investigates what could be the challenges faced by the SGB at this particular secondary school in Gauteng?

1. The main aim of this study is to investigate challenges faced by the SGB at this school with regard to their role and responsibilities as outlined in the SASA (1996).
2. This study forms part of my research project for a Master's Degree at the University of Witwatersrand.
3. In answering to the questions it is not compulsory but your willingness to respond fully will be appreciated and contributes towards the validity of this study.
4. School and participant names will not be mentioned in any part of this study.
5. Your honesty in answering to the questions will be highly appreciated.

**ONLY THREE KEY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WERE ASKED. EACH TIME THE PARTICIPANTS WERE ALSO REQUESTED TO ELABORATE ON THEIR ANSWERS OR TO PROVIDE REASONS FOR THEIR ANSWERS.**

**Time allocation: 1 hour per participant**

**1. School governing body**

**What component are you representing in the SGB? And what is your role?**

_____

_____

**2. Functions**

**a. What are the functions of the SGB that proves that you are promoting the best of the school?**

_____

_____

_____

**b. What can you do to improve your role and functions as the SGB at the school?**

_____

_____

_____

**3. Training and development**

**a. How would you describe the training and development that you have received?**

_____

_____

_____

**b. Why the SGB training satisfies you?**

_____

_____

**c. Why the SGB training does not satisfies you?**

_____

_____

**QUESTIONNAIRE WAS GIVEN TO SGB MEMBERS ONLY SERVES CHECKLIST OF THE PARENT SGB LITERACY LEVEL:**

1. Highest grade (standard) passed:

_____

_____

2. Highest tertiary qualification:

_____

_____

3. Any skills training received (specific training for your work):

_____

_____

_____

4. If yes, please state kind of training received.

---

5. Currently employed or unemployed: _____

6. Place of employment (government, semi government, private sector or self-employed)

_____

Any training regarding SGB activities received while serving on the SGB

_____

7. How many training courses already attended?

_____

8. Specify on which aspects of school governance (e.g. finance, discipline, etc.) you received training?

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Please list topics where follow-up training was received after first course:

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Language in which course was presented:

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What language would you prefer to receive training in?

_____

12. Did you serve on any SGB before serving on this one?

_____

_____

13. Outside of the SGB environment, did you acquire any skill that can contribute towards the effective functioning of the SGB?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I would like to thank you for your participating in this investigation. At the same time, I want to acknowledge the important part played by you because of your willingness to share this information with me. I would also like to assure you that your contributions are valuable in that they can assist in improving the way that SGB function at the school.

**END OF THE INTERVIEW**

# ANNEXURE E: CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVATIONAL FIELD NOTES

**ASSESSMENT COMPONENT COMMENT**

**1.** School profile (no. of learners, educators, support staff and SGB members)

2. Security (fencing security, employees)
3. Availability and tidiness of physical facilities:
    - Administration offices
    - Classroom
    - Specification classrooms (library, laboratories, hall)

4. Computers and duplication machines
5. Trophies and Certificates
6. Tidiness of schoolyard
    - Littering
    - Flower garden
    - Vegetable garden
7. Discipline at school
    - Educators

Learners

8. Emotional state of the SGB members during the interviews
    - Facial expression (eye contact, smiling, laughing)
    - Gestures ( nervousness, talking using hands, enthusiasm)
    - The tone of voice ( high or low)
    - Body movement ( relaxed or tense, confident)

9. SGB members executing their roles during SGB meeting
10. SGB members following the meeting procedures

# ANNEXURE F: CHECKLIST FOR ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN RECORDS

**RECORDS TO BE ANALYSED COMMENT**

1. Vision and mission statement of the school
2. Strategic plans of the school
    - School development plan
    - School improvement plan
3. School policies
    - SGB Constitution
    - Code of conduct of learners
    - LTSM policy
4. Minutes of the SGB meetings

# ANNEXURE G: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILIITIES OF SGB OF PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT NO.84 OF 1996

**According to SASA (1996):**

**1. School governing bodies**

One of the most important aspects of the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996) is the law relating to school governing bodies. At the heart of this is the idea of a partnership between all people with an interest in education. Schools will be improved only through the joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, members of their local communities and various education departments.

**2. Public Schools**

Public schools are designed to be more inclusive, because the fees they charge are much lower.

Nevertheless, in countries with high levels of poverty, such as South Africa, even state school fees are often much higher than parents can actually afford, because they have little to no income. As a result, the necessity of paying school fees is one of the greatest obstacles preventing children from attending school.

Public Schools can be further categorised as "Section 20 or Section 21" Schools. This refers to the section in the Schools Act which allows for the establishment of the Schools Governing Body.

**3. Structure of the School Governing Body**

SASA (1996) made a clear provision for parents to have a majority representative in the composition of the SGBs within public schools with an aim to increase parental involvement so that parents dominate decisions regarding the development and quality of their children's education. According to the SASA (1996, Section 21), the school governing body must comprise the following members (DoE, 1996):

(a). The principal of the school;

(b). Elected members:

- Parents of learners at the school;
- Educator at the school;
- Members of staff at the school who are not educators;
- Learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school; and,

(c). Co-opted members who do not have right to vote (community members).

## 4. Functions of the School Governing Body

SASA (1996) outlines the role and responsibility of the SGB and school management. SASA (1996) defines SGB as "the representative of the community within the school, which has to create a vision, mission statement, to formulate policies, rules of the school and take decisions about the improvement of the school". While management's responsibility is the day–to–day running of the school, to make sure that teaching and learning is effective and efficient and ensure that the SGB the plans are implemented within the guidelines of policies and rules (Mncube, 2008).

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998, p. 21) argues that "governance and management cannot be separated because both are aiming to provide efficient and effective functioning of the school and to enhance the culture of teaching and learning". In other words, the quality of education will be achieved when all stakeholders are involved, namely, educators, parents; learners and members of the communities such as businesses. This approach is more aligned with developed countries system of SGBs as opposed to the Sub-Saharan countries system.

There are two specific functions in Section 20 (1) of SASA (1996) that governs the role of the SGB in order to improve the quality of education which are:

- To promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school.

- Support the principal, educators, and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

The above mentioned prescribed functions for SGB do not clarify in detailed how to support and promote the best interests of the school. However, the amendments to SASA (2007) indicates that the Provincial Head of Department must take action against principals, educators and governing bodies, if the quality of education in a Gauteng school has been declared as underperforming schools ( RSA DoE, 1996).

Section 16(a) of Employment of Educators Act of 1998 also stipulates that principals from underperforming schools must provide the SGB with a report on the situation as well as the plan for school improvement (RSA, 1998).

The SGBs are required to follow the action taken by the HOD in terms of Section 16(a) of the Employment of Educators Act of 1998 in addressing the incapacity of an educator (including a principal), who is failing to carry out his or her duties effectively.

The amendments also states that HOD must take action against a SGB even though they are not directly involved in the professional management of the school. With this, parent SGB members are held accountable for the quality of education of their children and they have to deepen their involvement in the professional activities of the school.

However, not all parent SGB members will recognize the amendment in their roles and responsibilities. Few members will be able to read and interpret the legislation effectively enough to apply it within their role. The legislation may therefore unintentionally lead to the disempowerment of the most SGB member in public schools.

The functions performed by the SGB are rather extensive. Karlsson (2002, p.48) has added to the aforementioned functions of SGB of the public school in Annexure G. In summary, it is viewed as follows:

a) Providing for the democratic participation of all stakeholders in the running of the school;
b) Mediating the interests of the various parts in the parts in the school to ensure that different interests do not lead to the development of destructive conflicts;
c) Helping to create an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

There is however certain functions and/or roles of the SGB (as included in Annexure G) that should also be noted (Karlsson, 2002; Chaka, 2008; Xaba, 2008; Sayed & Carrim, 2002; Naidoo, 2002):

- Elected to represent and bring together the principal, educators, parents and learners in the common task of building a better school.
- Represent all stakeholders to consult with them when they are developing policy and plans.
- Oversee the implementation of government policies and by working together to solve problems.
- Support learning and teaching by working with the principal and school management team.
- Report to parent SGBs on progress, budgets and finances.
- Promote the best interest of the school and develop a plan for its development in line with good governance.
- Play a paramount role is police development.
- Raise funds and develop a budget for the school.
- Control the school facilities and recommendation on the employment of staff and educators.
- Therefore, SGB is responsible for governance, which means "making the rules and plans" and setting the framework for how the school operations.

## 5. SGB Members Level of Competency

Joubert (2011) indicated that SGB members need certain competencies before they can govern their schools effectively. This led to the Department of Education establishing programmes for SGB members in order to develop and improve their capacity knowledge about educational governance at schools. The Head of Department in each province is required to provide the introductory training to newly elected SGBs until they are able to perform their duties effectively.

Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008, p. 387) argue that SASA (1996) represents a complicated form of democratic school governance and it can only be achieved when school governors have gained competences that is required to fulfill their roles. Tsotetsi (2008) believes that the successes of governors to govern their school depend on the skills and knowledge that includes financial and decision-making skills. The following table of the summarises the functions of the SGB and outlines the necessary skills needed as stated in the South African School Act of No.84 of 1996(Section 20, 21; 36 and 37) of public schools (RSA DoE, 1996):

**Table 3.1: Skills required by SGB members**

| Section | Category | Function | Skill required |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | **School Policy** | Adopt a constitution | **Policy Formulation & Implementation** |
| | **School Policy** | Develop the mission statement of the school | **Strategic Planning** |
| | **School Policy** | Adopt a code of conduct | **Policy Formulation** |
| | **Leadership Development** | Support the principal, educators and other staff to perform their professional duties | **Coaching and Mentoring** |
| | **School Policy** | Determine times of the school day | **Policy Formulation** |
| | **School Policy** | Administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds | **Policy Formulation** |
| | **Managing people and organisation** | Encourage parents, learners, educators to | **Motivation** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | render voluntary service of the school | |
| | **Human Resources Management** | Recommend educators and non-educators to the HOD for appointment | **Recruitment** |
| | **School Policy** | Encourage members of school community to partner with school | **Community Liaison** |
| 21 | **Operations** | Maintain and improve the school's property, building and grounds | **Operational** |
| | **School Policy** | Determine the extra- mural curriculum | **Policy Formulation** |
| | **Education Policy** | Determine the choice of subject in terms of curriculum policy | **Policy Analysis** |
| | **Operations** | Purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment | **Operational** |
| | **Admin** | Pay services | **Administration** |
| 36 | **Operations** | To supplement the resources supplied by the State(textbooks, materials, equipment) | **Resource Management** |
| 37 | **Finance** | Establish a school fund and administer it | **Financial** |
| | **Finance** | Administer all money received by a public school | **Financial** |
| | **Finance** | Financial Planning and Management | **Financial** |

**South African School Act No.84 of 1996**

The need for training and development of SGB members stems primarily from the legacy of Bantu Education (1958), where parents and educators in black communities did not have much experience in participatory decision-making (Heystek and Paquette, 1999, p. 191).

In addition, Bantu Education (1958) provided black learners, who are now black parents, with a mediocre form of education, where skills like finance, resource management, operations and policy formulation and analysis could be sorely lacking.

Heystek (2004) substantiates this view, by indicating that these abilities required by governors depend on these skills, including an acceptable level of literacy. Therefore, training that is provided by the HOD in each province becomes of primarily importance for SGBs effectiveness and success.