

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND



**Decentralization of schools in South Africa; a study of two
SGBs**

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DECLARATION

I declare this research report is my unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Master's in Development Theory and Policy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has never been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to analyze the restructuring of the post-apartheid South African education system through the decentralization introduced in the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA). SASA was intended to construct a new education landscape for school governance involving School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and founded on participation and partnership between state, parents, learner, school staff and community. SASA ostensibly bestowed powers upon the SGBs, however this research explores whether the schools used in the study were really empowered by SASA. Two schools were investigated, one in an affluent area and the other in an underprivileged area. The investigation was in context of the impact of decentralisation of service delivery in developing countries, the adoption of SASA and reforms in the education system from apartheid to date. A qualitative methodology was used and analysis of fourteen semi-structured interviews produced four findings. First, the study corroborated others which suggest that neo-liberalism is imbedded in South African public schools and that parents have to pay for quality education. Second, the SGB from the Privileged School executed their projects and tasks well as compared to the Underprivileged School, since its SGB involved parents that were professionals, with financial backing and the know how to fund raise so that the school was able to provide resources for the learners. Third, the minimal use of SASA powers was not the sole reason for inequality in educational provision, the study also looked into the apartheid historical past which also contributed to inequality. Finally the post-apartheid (Bantu) education system was a contributing factor to the Underprivileged School SGB's incapability to utilise all its powers in that 'Bantu education' had failed to equip parents from underprivileged backgrounds with the knowledge to exercise all the powers granted to them by SASA, in particular, most parent/s from the underprivileged school had not been equipped with professional degrees or acquired significant skills to confidently partake in the SGB. The study concludes that SASA seems to have not fully taken cognisance of the realities of SGBs in the Underprivileged School since it seems likely, based on my single case study, that their members would not be able to fully implement all the powers given to them by SASA, indicating the need for state intervention.

Key words: Decentralization, South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA), SASA Powers, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), Neo-liberalism and Parent Participation

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

In the 20 years of democracy in South Africa, there has been a profound restructuring of the South African schooling system (Pampallis, 2002). There is no denying that the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) was intended to construct a new landscape for school governance founded on state, parents, learner, school staff and community participation and partnership (Naidoo, 2005). The substantive provisions of SASA provided the framework around which our current education system is based. This Act introduced decentralization in the education system through School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in public schools nationwide. A decentralization approach in the education system was seen as part of transformation away from the apartheid education model where administrative and planning powers had been vested in central government. SASA proposed a distribution of power with local governments and individual schools, through democratic school governance in the form of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) (Pampallis, 2002). These SGBs were given substantial powers as highlighted in the following chapter. They are comprised of the Principal, elected representatives of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, and learners (in the case of secondary schools) (Naidoo, 2005). However one has to ask whether the move by government to give schools powers was really as empowering as it appeared.

The South African transition to democracy occurred at the height of neoliberal hegemony internationally and it led to the decentralization of public services such as education (Marais, 2001; Pampallis, 2002). During this era, policy-makers in many countries were attracted by notions of the decentralization of state service delivery and market based decision-making in government sectors. However ‘decentralization has not always achieved [all] its aims’ Pampallis (2002). Heller (2001) argued that the introduction of decentralization in most African countries has not produced success stories in the public service sectors. South Africa is no stranger to failure of public service delivery in general and in the education sector in particular (Motala & Pampallis, 2005, Pampallis, 2002). Some analysts have contended that there has been minimal improvement in the South African education system in spite of the large and continually rising budgetary provisions. They have argued that quality and equity to date, within the schooling system, remains largely poor (Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaull, & Armstrong, 2011). This is because the South African schooling system has been confronted with enormous challenges. Some of these challenges are felt especially within the context of school governance where there is a huge gulf between schools

in the urban areas that have a metropolitan feel and those in the poorer parts of the country. As a Modisaotsil, (2012) argues, the majority of SGBs in underprivileged areas of the country are ill equipped to improve the situation or address the education crisis. These are particularly problematic seeing that South African society is striving towards improving human development and capacity beginning with the school system.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to contribute to the literature on decentralization of schools and the role of SGBs by analysing how schools use the powers given to SGBs by SASA. It analyses two SGBs; one, in an affluent school (Privileged School) and the other (Underprivileged School), a school in a poor community. The powers conferred on schools' SGBs, based on the provisions in the SASA, are used as an analytical tool towards understanding the extent to which SGBs are able to effectively carry out their roles within the school system, providing a check list to determine whether or not SGBs use their powers; and whether or not the minimal use of these powers has exacerbated inequality in public schools and contributed negatively or positively to the governance of public schools.

1.1 Problem statement

A large number of schools and students in South Africa are currently not doing as well as expected. South Africa has the third highest proportion of functionally illiterate learners (27%), and the fifth highest proportion of functionally innumerate learners (40%) (Mail & Guardian, 2013). The reasons for poor performance are many and complex. However, some researchers, such as Grant Lewis & Naidoo (2006), Motala & Pampallis (2005), and Spreen & Vally (2006), have suggested that the decentralization of school governance is a significant contributing factor, and have asked whether SGBs were formed to minimise the state's responsibility in schools. Taylor and Yu (2009) went further to ask whether SGBs are trying "... to transform existing patterns of inequality or merely reproduce it."

This question brings to focus the place of these SGBs in relation to enhancing education in South Africa. In the view of the secretary general of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB), Mr Matakanye Matakanye, "80% of SGBs in South Africa are dysfunctional" (Mail & Guardian, 2012). Mr Paul Colditz, chief executive of the Federation of Governing Bodies

of South African Schools estimated that, “Only about 10% [of public schools] are truly functional schools”.

With this issue so apparent, it becomes pertinent to undertake a thorough investigation into the core of these SGBs as regards their roles and obligations in relation to the powers that have been vested on them by SASA. This paper will therefore examine the introduction of decentralization through SGBs, and will investigate the capacity of SGBs to utilize the powers given by SASA to tackle the education crisis.

1.2 Research Questions and Aim

The aim of this study is thus to explore the role of policies and decentralization in the schooling system in South Africa through the use of school governing bodies and to investigate the effectiveness of the SGBs in using the powers given to them by SASA

However, the research questions that this study aims to answer are the following:

- 1. Are the SGBs equipped with the capacity or support that is required to use the SASA powers so that they function well?*
- 2. How are the SGBs in two schools (located in underprivileged and privileged locations) using the powers given by SASA?*
- 3 If the SGBs are not doing well, should the state intervene by taking on the responsibilities of the SGBs?*
- 4 Has the minimal use of the SASA powers bestowed upon SGBs increased inequality in educational provision in the public schools selected for this research report?*
- 5 The study will try comment one of the account statements raised by Pampallis (2005) who states that the South African government promoted the ideology of markets and consumer choice to reduce the financial regional burden of central government by sharing it with parents.*

The SASA Powers which will be used to identify if the two SGBs can handle their powers are the following:

- (4) Adopt a code of conduct after consultation [SASA subsec. 8(1)];
- (5) Suspend learners [SASA subsec. 9(1)];
- (10) Administer and control school property [SASA subsec. 20(1)(g)];
- (13) Give permission for the use of school facilities, including the charging of a fee [SASA subsec. 20(2)];
- (14) Take reasonable measures to supplement the resources of the school [SASA subsec. 36(1)];
- (15) Establish a school fund [SASA subsec. 37(1)];
- (16) Open and maintain a bank account [SASA subsec. 37(3)];
- (17) Prepare an annual budget for parent approval [SASA subsec. 38(1)];
- (18) Implement resolutions passed by parents' meetings [SASA subsec. 38(3)];
- (19) Enforce the payment of school fees (SASA sec. 41);
- (20) Keep financial records [SASA subsec. 42(a)];
- (21) Draw up an annual financial statement [SASA subsec. 42(b)];
- 22) Appoint a registered auditor [SASA subsec. 43(1)].)

1.3 Structure of the research report

In order to achieve the objectives outlined for this study, the rest of the paper is organized as follows:

Chapters two and three present an overview of the literature; Chapter two in terms of decentralization of service delivery in developing countries, and Chapter three in terms of the reforms in the education system in South Africa and the adoption of SASA. Chapter three traces the history of education system from the apartheid period to the recent era, and discusses in detail the important issues concerning decentralization and SGBs. The fourth chapter discusses the qualitative methodology, data collection and the methods of gathering data. Chapter five proceeds with an assessment of the SGBs at the Underprivileged School and the Privileged School drawing from the interviews conducted in both schools with special focus on areas such as Finance, Discipline, Training, and power. The final chapter – chapter six – provides concluding remarks to

the discussion and proffers recommendations moving forward. It will endeavour to answer the research questions; and finally conclude

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE DECENTRALIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a detailed definition of decentralization and the outcomes of decentralization in the education system in South Africa. This chapter will also, discuss the decentralization of service delivery globally and touch on the collapse of communists era and the debt that most African countries were plagued with which resulted in the influence of the West upon African countries. The loans which came with conditions such as good governance and democratic politics will also be discussed. In the South African context the ANC government will also be discussed. Moreover, the neo-classical economists argument will be highlighted as well as the critique of decentralization as well as how decentralization contributes to inequality in the education system. This chapter discusses the role of democracy in the context of decentralization and how the adoption of decentralization contributed to service delivery especially in the public education sector.

2.1 What is decentralization?

There is no common definition or understanding of decentralization (see Yuliani (2004); UNDP (1999)). Winkler (undated) defines decentralization as a transferral of decision-making authority closer to the consumer or beneficiary; it could also be the transfer of power and resources away from the central government. Quoting Gregersen, Contreras-Hermosilla, White and Phillips, Yuliani (2004) states that decentralization involves the following:

- Political decentralization: Groups at different levels of government – central, meso and local – are empowered to make decisions related to what affects them.
- Administrative decentralization: Different levels of government administer resources and matters that have been delegated to them, generally through a constitution. In terms of decentralization as a process of change, and according to the level of transfer of responsibilities, it is useful to distinguish between deconcentration, delegation and devolution.
- Fiscal decentralization: In this case, previously concentrated powers to tax and generate revenues are dispersed to other levels of government, e.g., local governments are given the power to raise and retain financial resources to fulfill their responsibilities.

- Market decentralization: Government privatizes or deregulates private functions (Yuliani 2004: no page number)

However, in the context of this research, Winkler's understanding of the concept has been adopted to suit the aims of the study. In other words, this view of decentralisation in terms of the transfer of decision making mechanisms and authority to lower levels of an organisation – de-concentration or administrative decentralisation – is apparently more fitting for this research.

Heystek (2011) also points out that decentralization of decision making can be closely associated with a neoliberal approach because neo-liberalism emphasizes decentralization of decision making, and less direct influence of central government at local level settings. Public services like the education sector have less direct influence of central government due to the decentralization of service delivery, the following section will attempt to explain the formation of the decentralization of service delivery in detail .

2.2. Decentralization of service delivery

Decentralization of service delivery is a global phenomenon as it has been around since the 1980s and it has been introduced in many developing countries including South Africa (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2005a).¹ The drive towards decentralization within economies can be linked to disenchantment with the problems associated with large centralized bureaucracies, especially in relation to dealing with rapidly transforming market conditions. When the Soviet Union collapsed, faith in centralized states were weakened and pressure increased for democratization (Edward 1996). The collapse of communism and the debt that most African countries were plagued with poverty which led to African states to ask for loans from the West, the loans came with conditions such as good governance and democratic politics. Oya and Pons-Vignon (2010) express that good governance was associated with the World Bank and this meant that the West could attach political conditions to aid in order to promote democracy. These conditions were promoted by Western governments from the late 1980s. The loans also led to the introduction and influence of structural adjustment lending and the resurrection of neo-liberalism by the West as well as the rise of pro-democracy movements in the developing world and in other countries (Leftwich 1993).

¹ Armenia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, China, El Salvador, Georgia, India, Mexico, Uganda and Uzbekistan

The main goal of the structural adjustment was to minimize dominant post war, state led development paradigm and overcome the problems of developmental stagnation by encouraging open and free competitive market economies, with minimal state intervention. The main focus of the structural adjustment programs was to push forward the neo-liberal agenda which advocated for the cut of public expenditure followed by transforming economic structures and institutions through deregulation, privatization, reducing large number public bureaucracies and reducing subsidies, corruption and inefficiency. In the third world, the state was often characterized as parasitic and an impediment to both democracy and development ((Leftwich 1993), (Motala and Pampallis 2005).

Rondinelli *et al.* (1984) state that many developing countries that were politically, economically, and ideologically diverse began decentralizing some development planning and management functions during the 1970s and early 1980s. They chose this path because of dissatisfaction with the results of national planning and administration, and because the underlying rationale of international development strategies changed during the 1970s. The goal of development policies in most countries was to distribute the benefits of economic growth more equitably to increase the productivity and income of all segments of society, and to raise the living standards of the poor. However, due to policymakers finding it difficult to formulate and implement these strategies entirely from the centre, they sought new ways of eliciting greater participation in development planning and administration through decentralization. Rondinelli *et al.* (1984) suggests that in some countries decentralization was seen as a way of mobilizing support for national development policies by making them better known at the local level. However, this presumption by Rondinelli *et al.* has been met with criticism because most of the developing world/ Third World could not emulate the way the West decentralized. Heller (2001) argues that the blueprints developed in the West are hardly appropriate to Third World contexts of uneven economic development, pervasive social inequalities, cultural heterogeneity, large-scale social exclusion, the resilience of pre-democratic forms of authority, and weak state capacity.

Decentralization has had mixed results and has been subject to much critique. In some countries decentralization led to greater participation in development activities, more effective and efficient administration of local and rural development programs, and expanded administrative capacity

outside of the national capital (Rondinelli, Nellis, and Shabbir Cheema 1984). However, Rondinelli, Nellis, and Shabbir Cheema (1984) argue that the majority of countries where governments have attempted to decentralize have faced serious problems of implementation. The lack of central and bureaucratic support were major factors to the failure of decentralization as well as inappropriate decentralization policies and programs (Rondinelli, Nellis, and Shabbir Cheema 1984). One drawback with a decentralized system is that local governments will neglect benefits going to other districts and thus local public goods will be underprovided and the trickle-down effect does not take place (Besley and Coate 2003).

Coming to power in the context of a highly globalized world, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) government had to carefully negotiate the formulation of economic and social policy in light of globalisation imperatives that presented challenges and ‘opportunities’. Thus South Africa under the government of the ANC had to grapple with demands of neo-liberalism. This context had serious implications for South Africa’s economic and social policy. Harris & Lauderdale, (2002) argued that there is a complex relationship between local decision making structures; people centred development, democracy and external constraints imposed by the global economy.

Heller (2001) postulated that unlike other developing/ African countries, South Africa was not subjected to a formal structural adjustment program, and its relatively low level of external debt, high levels of domestic investment capital, significant foreign currency reserves, diversified manufacturing base, and natural resource endowments made it much less dependent on global financial and commodity markets than most developing economies.

However, Marais (2001) and Lehulere (1997) argued that in the early 1990s South Africa’s economy was in crisis and characterised by a major balance of payment deficit, large outflows of capital, financial sanctions, low foreign direct investment, an unskilled labour force, rampant poverty and major unemployment. Marais (2001) and Lehulere (1997) further noted that between 1989 and late 1993, the South African economy had sunk into its longest-ever recession, registering negative real economic growth of -11percent. Some scholars have argued that this economic crisis was compounded by political instability as fiscal spending soared as the apartheid government sought to maintain power. Lehulere (1997) pointed out that responding to this economic crisis the transitional government (including the African National Congress) approached

the IMF for a loan of \$850 million. So in the early 1990s the transitional government started introducing decentralization and implementing neo-liberal policies as it acceded to the conditions imposed by the loaning international financial institutions. One of many sectors that were decentralized was the education sector.

2.3. Decentralization and the education sector

The decentralization of education was arguably implemented to pursue better quality education which does not only involve physical input (i.e. classrooms, teachers, and textbooks) but also instruction of learning. When dealing with the education sector, decentralization was assumed to yield considerable efficiencies in the management and that included two particular expectations:

- 1) that greater decentralization would mobilize and generate resources that were not available under centralized conditions
- 2) that a decentralized system could utilize available resources more efficiently (Weiler, 1990)

Pampallis (2005) suggested that the reasons that may have led the South African government to decentralize education included: Increase in political legitimacy of the government by giving rights to the previously excluded groups to partake in the running of their schools, ensure that local conflict remained local as much as possible, promote the ideology of markets and consumer choice and reduce the regional financial burden on central government by sharing it with regional and local authority or parents (Pampallis, 2005).

Neo-classical economists such as Barrera-Osorio et al. (2009) further elaborated Pampallis, (2005) suggestion, by arguing that the education system places burdens on the state due to demands of managerial technical, and financial capacity of governments; thus, education as a service is too multifaceted to be produced and distributed efficiently in a centralized approach. The World Bank suggested that the majority of the incentives that affect learning outcomes are institutional. It classified the following incentives:

- I. choice and competition,
- II. school autonomy, and
- III. school accountability (Barrera-Osorio et al. 2009)

Barrera-Osorio et al. (2009) argued that the idea behind choice and competition is that parents who are interested in maximizing their children's learning outcomes are able to choose to send their children to the most productive schools, specifically for good academic results. This demand-side pressure will give all schools an incentive to improve their performance if they want to compete for students. Similarly, local decision making and fiscal decentralization can have positive effects on outcomes such as test scores or matric pass rates by holding the schools accountable for the "output" they produce. The proponents of decentralization hold the school accountable for good quality education and suggest that "good quality and timely service provision can be ensured if service providers can be held accountable to their *"clients" who are the parents and learners* (Barrera-Osorio et al. 2009; World Bank 2011). The argument went on to claim that decentralization of schools has the following advantages: transparency, reduction of corruption and it offers parents and stake holders opportunities to improve their skills and training in decision making and management skills. The schools that are decentralized also have the mandate to raise funds and the World Bank supports the idea by purporting that the education system demands ever-increasing financial input (Barrera-Osorio et al. 2009).

Barrera-Osorio et al. (2009) argument was criticised by Galiani et al. (2005) arguing that the decentralization of schools was a good example of the failure of decentralization in developing countries. In a study conducted in Argentina, they suggested that decentralization might help but could also harm public services in poorly administered communities and have a negative effect in schools in poor areas (Galiani et al., 2005).

South Africa like most developing countries that adopted decentralization, also had to adopt democracy (Brosio 2000). South Africa became a democratic country in 1994 and much was expected from the South African government. The state was expected to establish a sound and vibrant relationship with its citizens and organizations in and out of civil society. This led the post-apartheid government to begin the process of education transformation in 1990s which included decentralization, which was introduced in 1996 through SASA (Sayed 1997).

Davies, Harber, and Dzimadzi (2003) claimed that in the early 1990s, decentralization in the education system was used to protect the privileged position of all-white schools by giving them some independence to protect their resources and admission policies before the 1994 democratic

election. This was achieved through negotiations between the ANC and the National Party (NP) leading to section 247 of the interim constitution (Spreen and Vally 2006). Educational decentralization in South Africa was accepted because the ANC based its approach on earlier calls for community control of schools: in the late 1980s National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC), a structure associated with the ANC, had advocated for dual power for the governance of South African schools. In addition there was the birth of nationwide network of Parent, Teacher and Student Association (PTSA) in 1980s and early 1990s, which aimed to drive democratic school governance (Sayed, 1997).

However, ironically NECC and PTSA were weakened in the South African Schools Act in the following two ways:

- i) By making community participation in educational governance structures conditional on the agreement of the school governing body
- ii) By reducing participation to an instrumental search for representatives who could lend expertise to but exercise no voting power on the school governing bodies ((Sayed 1997))

One could argue that the decision to decentralize the management of all public schools in South Africa had financial advantages for the central government, but that the primary reason for introducing governing bodies was the political drive towards democratic participation of parents. However, the introduction of decentralization and the introduction of democracy in public schools had its risks in that a large number of parents might not participate in SGB meetings while others might feel excluded from the SGBs so that their democratic right to vote might not be exercised and this could arguably breed inequality in schools.

It has been argued that decentralization can degrade service provision in local governments with weak technical capabilities or poor communities that are not vocally amplified to indicate their preferences. Galiani, et al (2005) reported that on average decentralization had a positive impact on the performance of students. However, its effect was negative in schools located in poor areas in provinces with weak technical capabilities. Thus decentralization could worsen inequalities. The deficiencies of decentralization in some contexts has seen researchers like Pampallis (2005), argue that where decentralization produces inequalities, the role of centralization should not be completely disregarded since government can maintain control when it is being threatened, promote greater equity in an unequal society, lower costs and speedup policy implementation,

compensate for a shortage of skilled or experienced managers at lower levels and avoid or monitor corruption. Furthermore, Pampallis (2005) argued that the assumption that decentralization can promote greater participation is not always true. Sayed (1997) presented educational decentralization as an attempt by the state to operate at a distance and by the same token simultaneously portray itself as both being with the people and existing at the very point where the policies are implemented. That decentralization is not a guarantee of democracy is evident in South African schools where a common obstacle to democratic functioning of SGBs is the lack of capacity among many SGB members with minimal skills, education and insufficient knowledge of legal requirements and rights of SGBs (Pampallis, 2005). *As a result decentralization can help the good get better and the already disadvantaged worse off (Galiani, et al 2005)[Emphasis mine].*

The next chapter will discuss what is already known about the effects of decentralization in South African schools, by firstly giving some background of the South African education system and then delving into the importance of parent participation seeing that parents are considered essential to the execution of SGB powers.

CHAPTER THREE: SOUTH AFRICA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.0 Background of South African education

The South African education system has had a long history of various forms of inequality and discrimination based on ethnicity, race and colour, culminating in the ideology of apartheid. . Past institutions of governance and administration in the old bantustans or so-called “independent” homelands -Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei (TBVC states)-, all of whom had racially-based education departments. Prior to 1994, significant elements of the education system were centralized more specifically the central control over money (Pampallis, 2005). The Cabinet of the South African government made the decisions about educational expenditure for the country as a whole and determined the grants to the TBVC states. These financial allocations were influenced by the pre-existing and extremely unequal patterns of expenditure. Policy in areas such as teacher training and employment, curricula, examinations, school organisation and construction was centralised. There were no local or district governance structures, or any power given or shared with local constituencies. Schools were not granted significant power to make real decisions (Pampallis, 2005).

Towards the end of the apartheid era, the National Party government began to welcome decentralization in the white schools. When the liberation movement was unbanned in 1990 there was pressure on white schools to integrate people of colour into public schools. As a result of slow economic growth of the eighties and early nineties the apartheid government became increasingly unable to provide the same level of financial support to white schools as before, while the political transformation insisted that government move to greater equality in spending on black and white education (Pampallis, 2005). Consequently, the National Party government became aware that white schools would have to contribute considerably in order to maintain their standards (Sayed, 1997). According to Sayed, the minority government advocated for education decentralization because it allowed greater control of schooling for those who paid for it and that it would enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the nation's schools. However, the ANC supported educational decentralization as it was rooted in anti-apartheid resistance politics that called for community control of schools (Sayed, 1997). In 1996, the new African National Congress (ANC) government adopted the Constitution, with its Bill of Rights which, among other things, defined citizens' rights to education. The new government began to allocate powers to provinces, in most of which the schools were also assigned powers through the major education decentralisation

initiative of the South African Schools Act of 1996. The Act provides for the establishment at all public schools of governing bodies with considerable powers (Pampallis, 2005).

3.1 The South African Schools Act and School Governing Bodies

The South African Schools Act of 1996 was an attempt to reform school governance in post-apartheid South Africa. It sought to promote access, quality without discrimination, democratic governance in the schooling system and compulsory schooling for children aged 7 to 14. SASA provided for two types of schools: independent schools and public schools. It provided a significant decentralization of power at the school level through the establishment of SGBs in all public schools. These were given considerable powers (Sayed et al. 2007). The powers granted to SGBs could make them seem to be the heart of decentralization in South African schools. SGBs operate within a provincial school governance structure headed by the Minister of Education. Figure 1 shows where a school governing body fits into the provincial school governance structure.

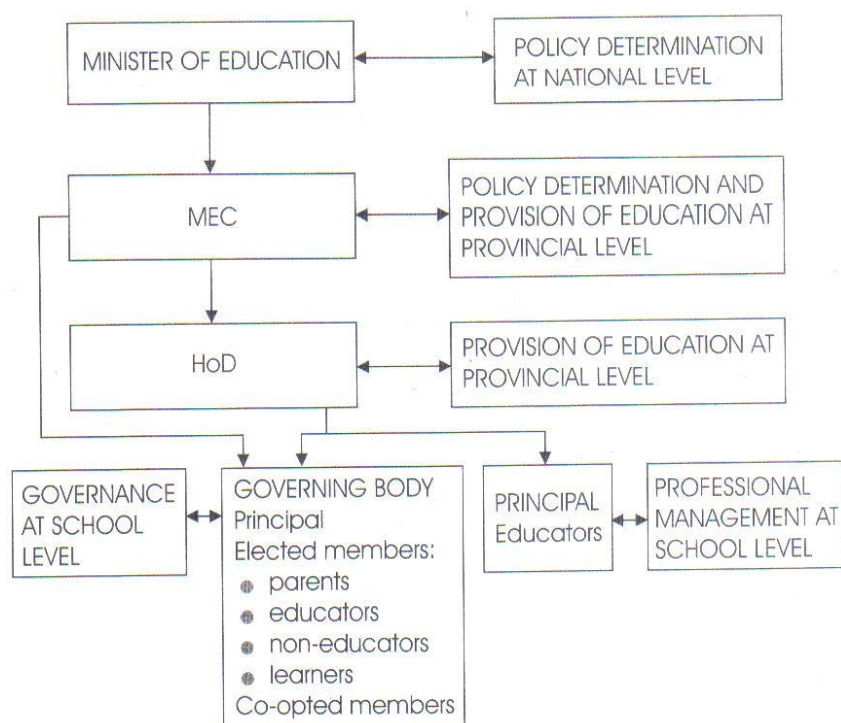


Figure 1: Shows SGBs Position in School Governance

Source: Understanding the SA Schools Act (1997; 15)

In public schools the principals and the governing body have separate roles and powers. The Principal is in charge of professional management under the authority of the Department of Basic Education's Head of Department (HoD). The Principal is responsible for the following:

- 1) Perform and carry out professional (management) functions
- 2) Day-to-day administration and organisation of teaching and learning at the school
- 3) Perform the departmental responsibilities prescribed by law
- 4) Organise all the activities which support teaching and learning
- 5) Manage personnel and finances
- 6) Decide on the intra-mural curriculum, that is all the activities to assist with teaching and learning during school hours
- 7) Decide on textbooks, educational material and equipment to be bought

School Governing bodies hold significant power. They are expected to do the following:

- (1) Determine the school admissions policy [SASA subsec. 5(5)];
- (2) Determine the language policy [SASA subsec. 6(2)];
- (3) Issue rules regarding religious observance at school (SASA sec. 7);
- (4) Adopt a code of conduct after consultation [SASA subsec. 8(1)];
- (5) Suspend learners [SASA subsec. 9(1)];
- (6) Function in terms of a constitution (SASA sec. 18);
- (7) Adopt a constitution [SASA subsec. 20(1)(b)];
- (8) Develop a mission statement [SASA subsec. 20(1)(c)];
- (9) Determine times of the school day [SASA subsec. 20(1)(f)];
- (10) Administer and control school property [SASA subsec. 20(1)(g)];
- (11) Recommend the appointment of educators [SASA subsec. 20(1)(i)];
- (12) Recommend the appointment of non-educator staff [SASA subsec. 20(1)(j)];
- (13) Give permission for the use of school facilities, including the charging of a fee [SASA subsec. 20(2)];
- (14) Take reasonable measures to supplement the resources of the school [SASA subsec. 36(1)];
- (15) Establish a school fund [SASA subsec. 37(1)];
- (16) Open and maintain a bank account [SASA subsec. 37(3)];
- (17) Prepare an annual budget for parent approval [SASA subsec. 38(1)];
- (18) Implement resolutions passed by parents' meetings [SASA subsec. 38(3)];

- (19) Enforce the payment of school fees (SASA sec. 41);
 - (20) Keep financial records [SASA subsec. 42(a)];
 - (21) Draw up an annual financial statement [SASA subsec. 42(b)];
 - 22) Appoint a registered auditor [SASA subsec. 43(1)].)
- (South African Schools Act, 1996)

In this research the powers numbered 4, 5, 10, 11, and 13-22 above were used as a check list to discover how the two SGBs studied used their powers.

3.2 Invisible hand of the Market in South African Schools

The South African public education system is arguably market orientated. Naidoo point (2005) pointed out that South African SGBs are also expected to “supplement the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners” through school fees and other forms of fund-raising (RSA President’s Office, 1996b in Naidoo 2005). However, the commodification of education has been met with displeasure by critics who argue that if the state does not intervene and reduce some of the schools’ burdens of being under resourced and ill equipped with minimal management skills, then equity in education effectively will not be redressed (Naidoo 2005) .

Naidoo (2005) further argued that decentralization continued to breed inequality. He showed that decentralization had created a two-tier system of public schooling where one tier was well-resourced schools and the second tier was disregarded and reliant on the state. This had seen a rise in underprivileged state public schools which served a majority of Africans, Coloureds and Indians - specifically in the townships and rural areas. These schools were unable to match the quality of education and level of management that privileged state-aided schools which served whites and the black middle class where wealthier parents were able to pay more for their children’s education.

When dealing with decentralization the issue of funds, more specifically school fees, has to be addressed as it is argued to determine the quality of education a learner receives in South Africa. One has to ask whether the neo-liberal influence in the South African education system has caused unfair advantage through unequal quality of education. Seekings and Nattrass (2002) noted that public schools that charge fees have the privilege to appoint educators with advanced level degrees

and great experience, while underprivileged state public schools are plagued with teachers that are inadequately qualified and often poorly motivated, amongst many other factors.

According to Van der Berg (2007), private funding allowed richer schools to have options to supplement teaching resources from school fees, resulting in improved pass rates. He found that between the years 1996 and 2000 state-paid teachers decreased by 23,642 while SGB-paid teachers increased by 19,000. According to Spreen and Vally (2006) there was also a trend of teachers favouring schools that were able to levy higher school fees.

Ironically, given the emphasis on redress and equity, the Department of Education in its 2003 paper on Quality Education acknowledged that the provisions of the South African Schools Act appeared to have benefited public schools supported by the middle-class and wealthy parents. Privileged parent bodies participated in vigorous fundraising which included commercial sponsorships and fee income (Department of Education 2003). However, poorer underprivileged schools still had to catch up as they had minimal or no resources, yet the school teachers and learners in poor schools were expected to achieve the same levels of learning and teaching as their counterparts, while there were vast current disproportions in the personal income of learners' parents (Department of Education 2003).

The South African Government is fully aware of the inequalities in the education system. Thus, the Parliamentary Committee inserted a clause (DoE 1996b: section 39.4) in the SASA document that states that the Minister would, after consultation, set 'equitable criteria for the total, partial, or conditional exemption of parents unable to pay school fees' (Department of Basic Education 2013). Sayed (2009) argued that this clause was inserted in the SASA policy, to curb the possible excess of the market in public schools. It could also be aimed at preventing widening the gulf between the rich and the poor. Sayed (2009) pointed out that education can transform parents into consumers, as the parent-consumer is constituted on the basis of the fees which he/she pays to provide additional finances for school provision beyond the state subsidy. Thus the role of the market in education produces the "consumer citizen" who is a self-interested, utility-maximising and rational individual.

3.3 Unequal educational provision and outcomes in South Africa

The post-apartheid South African public education system cannot be said to have achieved great results, even though access has improved. Equity and quality have not improved (World Bank 2011). According to the Global Competitiveness Report, South Africa is ranked 125th on the Quality of Basic Education, 130th on the Quality of the Educational System (World Bank 2011). Further, the provision of education in South Africa varies dramatically across the country. Van der Berg (2007) argued that malfunctioning schools may be the dominant cause of inequality within the education system. He noted that South African schools generally perform at a lower level than other African countries, even though South Africa has better resources. Post-apartheid improvement in the education system has been very minimal. The pass rates in more affluent schools are uniformly high whilst predominantly black schools often perform poorly (Van der Berg 2007). Seekings and Nattrass (2002) suggested that the issue of inequality in the education system may be caused by differences in the quality of schooling as well as factors relating to the family background of pupils. Quoting the Department of Education, Seekings and Nattrass (2002) summarised the causes of poor performance and inequality in schools as follows:

The poor educational background of parents, poor conditions of teaching and learning, inappropriate teaching and learning methods, lack of access to reading and other educational materials and libraries, poor school management, a lack of order and discipline among both teachers and pupils (which often results in the loss of time for teaching and learning) and the low morale of principals and teachers (RSA 2000:40- 44 in Seekings and Nattrass 2002).

However, there are numerous other reasons for lack of improvement in the South African education system. Motala and Pampallis (2005) highlighted that decentralization of schools in South Africa and the role of SGBs have contributed to inequality in public schools.

3.4 School funds for the underprivileged

In the year 2000 the Department of Education implemented the *School Funding Norms*, which created a national system for providing non-personnel non-capital (NPNC) school allocations now known as the Norms and Standards for School Funding. Under this system, 60% of the Department of Basic Education budget should go to the schools with the poorest 40% of learners. The policy

has been argued to be a key tool in the move towards the adequate funding of all poor schools (Department of Education 2003:15). In 2002 the allocation of funds to the underprivileged provincial quintile of learners varied from around R60 per learner for North West and Limpopo to about R450 per learner for the Northern Cape and Gauteng (Department of Education 2003).

In terms of Section 21 of SASA about 22% of schools in the country have spending functions transferred to them. These are called section 21 schools based on an evaluation of their management capacity. Section 21 schools have their school allocations/monies transferred into their schools bank accounts whereas in non-section 21 schools the allocation is held in trust by the Provincial Education Department. Non Personnel Non Capital (NPNC) costs covers consumable items such as: exercise books, pens, electricity, furniture and photocopiers (Department of Education 2003). During the year 2000, given the overall budget of provinces, the Department of Education arrived at an amount of approximately R500 for the average learner (Department of Education 2003). Even though parents have the responsibility to "take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources provided by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school" (SASA section 36), the SGBs are not compelled to charge school fees (Department of Education 2003).

Previously all schools had to complement the state school allocation by collecting fees. In current policy, a fee charging school can apply to the Provincial Education Department (PED) to be declared a no-fees school. Should it qualify, this would permit the school to have an increased allocation by the state to offset revenues previously generated through school fees. The list of no-fees schools are determined provincially by the PED by utilizing the standard national procedure and each school is assigned a poverty score using data from the community in which the school is located. The indicators that are used to measure how much a school will be allocated are; income, unemployment rate and level of education of the community.

Furthermore, the Provincial Education Department divides schools into five groups, or 'quintiles', from poorest to least poor, where each quintile has an equal number of learners.

	2013	2014*	2015*
NQ1	R 1,010	R 1,059	R 1,108
NQ2	R 1,010	R 1,059	R 1,108
NQ3	R 1,010	R 1, 059	R 1,108
NQ4	R 505	R 530	R 554
NQ5	R 174	R 183	R 191
Overall	R 742	R 778	R 1, 108
No fee threshold	R 926	R 1, 059	R 1, 108
Small schools: National fixed amount	R 23, 373	R 24, 519	R 26, 646

**Indicative-CPI inflation rate adjusted*

[2014 and 2015 figures inflation adjusted-CPI inflation-National Treasury: Budget Review]

Source: National Norms and Standards for School Funding (Department of Basic Education 2013)

Table 1: Indicates schools allocations in the national quintile from 2013-15

The government would want to see equally poor learners funded at the same level across the country. Towards mid-2000 it began to use national quintiles and the national poverty distribution table used by the Provincial Departments of Education to allocate funds to schools, for example in 2013-15 the school allocation in each quintile in the manner as indicated in Table 1. In 2013 the Department of Basic Education Minister stated in a Government Gazette that in order to address the issues of poverty in South African schools, the government targets are the same for all learners, regardless of where they are located. The national poverty distribution table is used by provincial Departments of Education to allocate funds to schools (Department of Basic Education 2013). The Minister went further to state that if there is a availability of funds she permits the Provincial Education Department to offer Q4 and Q5 schools no fee status at least at the threshold level of R960 voluntarily for each learner. When fee charging schools are given no-fee status the Provincial Education Department needs to ensure that are informed from 1 January 2013 and that these schools have informed parents of the change.

3.5. The Exemption Policy

The South African Schools Act stipulates that learners should not be excluded if they cannot pay fees and instead particular learners can receive exemption. The exemption policy specifies the conditions and process for both parents and schools to follow in the event of a learner being unable to afford the school fees. However, the exemption policy does not prevent schools from excluding learners that are unable to pay fees. This has allowed unscrupulous individuals to apply for exemption by manipulating the system to their advantage (Department of Education 2003).

Individual exemption only applies to fee-charging schools For a learner to qualify, he or she has to meet the following criteria:

The first is an automatic exemption for two categories of learners; orphans or abandoned children, and those receiving a poverty-linked state social grant. Parents in this group qualify for a full exemption. The second class of criteria is not automatic and parents may be granted a full or partial exemption based on parental income in relation to school fees. The proportion of parental income to school fees is determined by a set formula which schools need to utilise, upon receiving a written application from a parent. Exemptions in theory permit even the poor to attend rich or fee charging schools (Sayed 2009:18).

3.7 The role of parents, democracy and criticism of the decentralization of public services

In the coming of a new democratic South Africa and the implementation of decentralization in schools, democratic governance was also introduced into the South African education system and the state hoped that schools would easily adopt these principles through the introduction of School Governing Bodies. However, democracy in public schools has been a serious challenge.

The SASA policy document associated democracy in education with community participation in the form of School Governing Bodies. However, SGBs which were created to embed democracy in school have by and large not succeeded because many SGBs members, more specifically parents, face marginalization and are not given a platform exercise their democratic right to participate during SGB meetings. Furthermore, democracy in schools has not been implemented to its full potential, as most South African schools operate in an undemocratic environment due to

ill administrated SGBs with minimal attendance of parents, over-crowded class rooms with few teachers, lack of resources and continued violence which is overlooked though it threatens democracy and governance of schools (Mncube 2009). Furthermore, Mncube (2009) questions whether parental participation in matters like voting on budgets and school fees amount to substantive participation.

In a presentation at UNISA, Mncube claimed that “SGBs are fraught with contestations and contradictions.” In a study conducted on *School democratisation of education in South Africa*, Mncube found that while governing bodies in South Africa operated according to the general intentions of the South African Schools’ Act, this varied between individual schools. It was evident that SGBs contributed to democracy in schools by forging racial integration, tolerance, rational discussion, and collective decision-making. However, most SGB meetings had low participation by parents for the following reasons: unequal power relations, socio-economic status, race, gender, poor communication of information, the rural-urban divide, lack of governor training, different cultural expectations of diverse communities (Mncube 2009).

Mncube was concerned that a large number of parents did not participate the way they were expected to, and were not yet playing their full role as governors mandated by legislation. He pointed out that parent participation is imperative in education (Mncube 2009). He highlighted Epstein’s model of parental involvement which required that home or school communication should be a two-way communication that reflected a co-equal partnership between families and schools. Epstein had also argued that parents who collaborate with educators assist teachers to understand their learners better and thus make the learner’s and educator’s experience in the classroom much more pleasant. When parents are involved in their children’s education career, this has been linked with a variety of positive academic outcomes such as; higher school marks, lower dropout rates, improvement in numeracy and literacy (Epstein in Mncube (2009).

However, some scholars have questioned the feasibility of home or school partnerships (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski and Apostoleris 1997 in Mncube (2009). They have argued that the adoption of such a policy is not beneficial for learners of lower socioeconomic status (SES) and that the involvement of parents does not diminish the gap in between learners of different socioeconomic status groups (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski and Apostoleris 1997 in Mncube (2009)

Most parents would find understanding the SASA document to be a challenge and this becomes a problem when SASA distributes powers and among all stakeholders in the school. Section 16 of the Act states that while the day-to-day professional management of the school should be the responsibility of the principal, the governance of the school remains the responsibility of the SGBs. In practice this division cannot be realised as members of the SGB specifically parents do not have the required skills to perform their responsibilities or duties assigned to them. This situation has resulted in the principal performing tasks that are the responsibility of the SGBs (Mncube 2009).

Confusion over responsibilities and incapacity of the SGB could lead to school governance functions such as the appointment of staff, language policy and decisions about school fees not being attended to. Mncube (2009) argued that the South African era of inequality had not ended instead SGBs tended to exacerbate it. This was evident from the functioning of SGBs which varied from school to school, operating more effectively in former white-run schools than in others while there were also other vast differences between urban and township schools.

Mncube recommended that parent participation could increase if the following steps were introduced:

- Parents who are SGB members are paid;
- Co-opting and electing parents with relevant skills;
- Establishing regulatory mechanisms to discipline lazy or uncooperative members;
- The appreciation of active governor-parents; and
- Effective and on-going training of SGB members (Mncube 2009).

Naidoo (2005) argued that the South African state unfortunately assumed that the decentralization of public services, more specifically the education system, and the introduction of democracy and governance would increase communities' responsibilities and be easily embraced with full participation from communities. However, there was little reason to believe that decentralization necessarily improved the education system in South Africa seeing that the government - initiated plans for decentralizing school governance often focused on procedure and structural arrangements while ignoring issues of power, contestation and economic class struggles.

This chapter discussed the education decentralisation initiative embodied in the South African Schools Act of 1996. The Act provided for the establishment at all public schools of governing bodies with considerable powers. The Act and especially the powers and responsibilities of SGBs and Principals. The role played by the invisible hand of the market in South African public schools was engaged with, as well as attempts by the state to limit that role. The roles of decentralization and funding in exacerbated inequality in public schools was introduced. The chapter also analysed parent participation and how minimal parent participation in SGBs could hinder the implementation of powers that SASA bestowed upon these bodies.

The problems discussed in this chapter remain unresolved. SGBs in poor communities continue to struggle to implement the powers bestowed upon them by SASA, whilst their privileged counterparts are implementing their powers with ease, thus exacerbating inequality and limiting educational provision in most South African public schools. The topic of decentralization in the education sector remains relevant and there is a need to unpack more of the major debates on the impact of educational decentralization whilst providing as much evidence as possible to find a solution to the public school education problems.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Research Approach and Method

This research employed a qualitative research methodology. It involved a case study of two schools. My data collection technique involved observations and interviews with willing participants. The interviews were semi-structured, a technique referred by Babbie et al (2001) as essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent. These authors argued that qualitative in-depth interviews allow the object of the study to speak for him or herself and also allow for probing for further specific information and thus generating new revealing data on a subject. In this study interviews were conducted with SGB members and non-SGB members. Altogether, 14 interviews were conducted with participants from two SGBs— one in the *Privileged High School* and the other in the *Underprivileged High School* . The responses were compared with the aim of ascertaining the nature of the powers at these SGBs disposal and how these powers were exercised within these two different environments.

One of the goals of the study was to assess the roles of SGB members as well as explore their skills and capacity to contribute to the governance of their school. Observation was intrinsic to the generation of data for this study, so the researcher sat-in on one SGB meeting at each school to observe the different SGB members' specific roles and to ascertain whether the SGBs were using their key selected powers effectively. I also examined documents which gave clarity on how the schools operated and the differences between the roles of the SGBs and the Principals.

Using the data generated from interviews and observation, I analysed whether or not the chosen schools used their powers effectively and in particular whether the SGBs contributed (either) positively or negatively to the school governance. This comparison of the roles and functioning of these two SGBs, provided a basis for exploring the validity of decentralising school governance. The likelihood of the decentralisation process failing could then be explored given the shortcomings of decentralisation itself, as documented in development studies literature.

The criterion used to select the two schools was not that they represented the totality of schools in South Africa or in a specific province but that they had the attributes to reveal the roles and capacity of the SGBs in different schools. In fact, the Privileged Schools and the Underprivileged School

were chosen because of differences in their geographical location, their level of resources and their different positioning with regards to school governance. I decided to use Purposive Sampling for this research because the researcher does not simply study whoever is available, the units/people that are investigated are based on the judgement of the researcher (Babbie et al, 2007). In the case of this research I chose participants that are SGB members that had different roles to contribute to the SGB and school. I assumed that the SGB members knew the policies and that they were part of the SGB to promote improvement of the school. The interviews were conducted in two SGBs one in an underprivileged school and the other in the privilege school. Interviews were conducted with school principals, chairpersons or vice-chairperson of SGBs, parent representatives, non-teaching staff and teacher representatives of the SGBs. The school principals and chairpersons of SGBs were interviewed because of their leadership positions, as heads of the School Management Teams (SMTs) and SGBs respectively. Parents and teachers in the SGBs were interviewed as stakeholder representatives in the SGBs. The profiles of the schools are presented below:

4.2 Underprivileged High School

Underprivileged High School is a public school situated in Pimville, a township in Soweto. The Principal has been at the school for 14 years. There has been much improvement in Pimville as some sections boast of grand homes. However, when walking towards the school, numerous homes still have shacks in their backyards and there are unpaved roads. Some houses are child headed households. The houses, house more than 20 people, despite being structured to house a lesser number of people. The unemployment rate is quite high among the youth. The school is a non-fee paying school under Quantile 1 of National Norms and Standards for School Funding. For the year 2014, the school received budget allocation R1.4 million from government. They have ill-equipped laboratories, computer labs and sports facilities. The school is under-resourced financially as they are finding it difficult to raise funds, through their fundraising projects. Their security mechanisms are not up to standard as criminals have been stealing pupils' furniture. Over the years, the matric pass rate has averaged 80%. The school has introduced Saturday classes for grade 12 pupils so that they can improve their exam results. This school is in a community where the educational levels of parents, and household levels of income, are relatively low. Most of the parents of the pupils are part of the working class for example, Security Guards and Safety Control operators.

There are 37 teachers and a total of 1331 pupils - 658 male and 673 female. All the students are African (Black), and large number of the pupils live very close to the school. The 14 SGB members consist of the following: 1 Principal, 3 LRC representatives, 7 parents, 2 teachers and 1 Non-teacher.

4.3 Privileged High School

The Privileged School is located in an affluent suburb, called Parktown in Johannesburg. The unemployment rate is very low, majority of the pupils are from middle class or wealthy families, with an exception of domestic workers' children who receive fees exemption from the school. The Principal has been with the school for 17 years. The school boasts 100% pass rate for 12 years since the year 2000. Its University exemption average has never been lower than 94% in the past 12 years. The pupils' parents' education levels and household income levels are high while the school itself has been argued to have a strong SGB that comprises of elite parents that are professionals in their fields for example: Lecturers/Professors of Law, Accountants, Consultants and Marketing expert/Media personality.

There are 1100 pupils, 69 educators that are mostly White South Africans. Some of the teachers are paid by the state and the rest by the school. The school is well resourced as it possesses ample classrooms; it has well-equipped and functioning computer/technology centre, dance studio, media centre, two sports fields that are well maintained, tennis and netball court and a swimming pool. A number of students reside close to the school and the rest - black Africans, Coloureds and Indians – reside as far 30 Kilometers away from the school and they use public transport or a private school bus (that picks them up in the morning and drops them at home after school). In the year 2013 they received R26 731 150.00, and in the year 2014 they were estimated to receive R29 985 652.00. The Department of Basic education in the year 2014 gave the school R294 680.00 instead of R 589 890.00 they were expecting. The school also has a trust which exempts students from paying fees, although the parents of the pupils that apply for exemption have to justify why they cannot pay fees. The 21 SGB members consist of the following: 1 Principal, 3 LRC representatives, 12 parents, 3 Educators, 3 Observers and 1 Non- teacher.

4.4 Selected interviewees

Privileged School				
Parent Name	Ethnicity	Job/Profession	Number of Years in SGB	Role and Responsibility
Lilli*	Caucasian	Trained lawyer and legal academic	4.5	Chairperson
Rajesh*	Indian	Media Personality/Marketing expert	2	Marketing
Mpho*	Black	Consultant	0.3	Secretary
Teacher Name				
Verna*	Caucasian	Mathematics Teacher	12	Teacher representative & Marketing
Lezlie*	Caucasian	Accounting Teacher	6	Teacher representative
Principal Name				
Mary*	Caucasian	Principal	17	Management of the school
Non-educator				
Sipho*	Black	Maintenance	3	Maintenance Staff
Underprivileged School				
Parent Name	Ethnicity	Job/Profession	Years in SGB	Role and Responsibility
Zamani*	Black	Currently Unemployed former Safety Control operator	3	Deputy Chairperson
Nokutula*	Black	Teacher	3	Curriculum planning
Lerato*	Black	Security Guard	2	Safety and Security
Teachers Name				

Lefa*	Black	Teacher	3	Teacher representative
Sophia*	Black	Teacher	3	Teacher representative
Principal Name				
Tinkino*	Black	Principal	17	Management of the school
Non-educator				
Veli*	Black	Maintenance	3	Maintenance Staff

* Dummy names were used in this study to preserve anonymity.

Table 2: Selected Interviewees

4.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research report derives from two key concepts namely: decentralization and neoliberalism. I aimed to identify whether decentralization was related to marketization in South African schools, and how the two schools, the Privileged school and Underprivileged school—were able to cope with marketization. In other words, the research aimed to discover how the two schools were affected by marketization of the education system. Against the backdrop, this study aimed to contribute to the literature on decentralization of the education sector and the role of SGBs by analyzing the two schools selected for this research report and how they used the powers given to SGBs by SASA.

The study analyzes the decentralization concept in the South African education system as decentralization was seen as a part of transformation, away from apartheid education model where administrative and planning powers had been vested in the central government. The research report also explored neoliberalism as a concept as it is an ideology and as an ideology it has conceptual links with decentralization. As discussed in my literature review, neoliberalism can be describes as follows:

The rule of the market. Liberating free/private enterprise from any restrictions imposed by the state (government) no matter the social damage that results. The aim is total

freedom of movement for capital, goods, and services... (Martinez and Garcia (2000) in Ross and Gibson (2006:3)

The literature review also discussed various interpretations of decentralization. For the purpose of my study, I used the following definition:

Winkler's (n.d.) saw decentralization in terms of the transfer of decision making mechanisms and authority to lower levels of an organization – de-concentration or administrative decentralization

To develop insight into the relationship between marketization and decentralization in South African schools, I examined the powers, roles, and obligations given to SGBs through the South African Schools Act related to financial management, fees and fundraising (see Chapter three).

The research paper explored decentralization of the education sector, the South African Schools Act was explored to give flesh to the concept of decentralization which is at the core of neoliberal policy which resulted in SGBs acquiring power. SASA proposed a distribution of power with local government and individual schools, through democratic schools in the form of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) (Pampallis, 2002).

The research report engaged with notions by key neoliberal thinkers like Hayek and Milton Friedman who have argued that neoliberalism and decentralization are good because certain services such as education and health should be decentralized, if decentralized they would yield the following outcomes:

- 1) that greater decentralization would mobilize and generate resources that were not available under centralized conditions
- 2) that a decentralized system could utilize available resources more efficiently (Weiler, 1990)

Further, economists that subscribe to neoliberalism such as Barrera-Osorio et al. (2009) suggest that that the education system places burdens on the state due to demands of managerial technical, and financial capacity of governments; thus, education as a service is too multifaceted to be produced and distributed efficiently in a centralized approach.

However, other key researchers such as Grant Lewis & Naidoo (2006), Motala & Pampallis (2005), and Spreen & Vally (2006) indicate that neoliberalism and decentralization are not good because they turn citizens into consumers and exacerbates inequality in the education sector. Robertson argues that “neoliberalism has its own internal contradictions; of offering ‘freedom’ but instead tightening the shackles of control; of commodifying all in its wake, and yet needing to legitimate itself as an ideology that has something for everyone.”(Robertson, 2007). Galiani, et al (2005) argues that on average decentralization has had a positive impact on the performance of students. However, its effect was negative in schools located in poor areas in provinces with weak technical capabilities. Thus decentralization could worsen inequalities. Subsequently, the study draws from Naidoo’s (2005) argument that decentralization continued to breed inequality and that decentralization had created a two-tier system of public schooling where one tier was well-resourced schools and the second tier was disregarded and reliant on the state. Ross and Gibson (2006) argue that neoliberalism is an instrumental discourse that mystifies, justifies, naturalizes and universalizes inequality and elite economic status.

To explore these opposing perspectives in relation to lived experiences in South African schools, this research report considered financial management, fees and fundraising. These aspects of the legal framework were considered in order to reach a judgement about how the two schools were able to cope in a decentralized environment, whether a decentralized environment led to marketization, and whether it seems to be a policy that is empowering to all schools and communities.

4.5 Reliability and Validity

The data that was selected was examined critically the researcher performed the following activities:

There was record keeping to exhibit a clear decision trail and ensuring interpretations of data was consistent and transparent, Listened and transcribed the interviews, reviewed the transcripts. The researcher sought out similarities and differences across accounts to ensure different perspectives are represented. However, the study looked at two case studies and as a result this may question the reliability and validity of this research report, because interviewees may have given the researcher information that maybe untrue or one sided or time-specific and may change in the

future, this may be due to the fact that human beings are unpredictable and their responses and thought may change depending on the time and context.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

This study involved major ethical issues especially in South Africa where the topic of inequality in education is particularly sensitive. This research dealt with human participants – SGB members: Principal, teachers, non-academic staff and parents. As such, it required Ethics Clearance from the Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This Ethics Clearance was received before the commencement of the fieldwork. Participants were given an information sheet clarifying the purpose of the research and interviews (See Appendix 4). In terms of this clearance, informed consent was sought from willing participants in the research. The agreement they signed is given in Appendix 3. Interview responses were audio-recorded by agreement with the form shown in Appendix 2. Interviewees were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in the use of gathered information in accordance with the ethics clearance).

4.7 Limitations

The research was conducted in two schools and this limited the scope of the research as a few number of people were interviewed. Further, some of the interviewees had personal issues against the principal in one of the schools and it led researcher to think that they might have been biased because during the interviews they portrayed the principal in the wrong light. By attending one SGB meeting per school this might have led the researcher to biased and assume the portray the underprivileged school to be undemocratic in decision making as a majority SGB members more especially the ones with significant powers were unavailable Moreover, case study results are not easily generalizable. However, this research shed insight in the nature of this problem which had broader relevance to endemic national educational issues concerning governance and policy.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents insights gained from interviews and observations from the two schools researched. It explores lessons learnt about perceptions of education as a commodity and how the state has tried to limit the role of the market by inserting clauses and policies in SASA. It discusses the challenges arising from decentralisation in the education system and the effects of minimal state involvement in the Underprivileged School. The powers bestowed upon SGBs pertaining to finance, administration and control of school property, code of conduct and discipline are analysed to understand how the selected schools could handle the powers granted them by SASA. Finally the chapter reports on how the interviewees understood the SASA powers, the importance of parent participations and effects of minimal parent participation when parents are considered to be the custodians of SASA powers.

5.1 Fee Paying Parents vs Non-Fee paying Parents

Neo-classical economists consider that education systems place a burden on the state comprising demands on their managerial, technical and financial capacity; thus, education as a service is too multifaceted to be produced and distributed efficiently in a centralized approach (Barrera-Orsorio et al. 2009). However, the neo-classical position has been critiqued by Galiani *et al.* who argued that decentralization might help but could also harm public services in poorly administered communities so that decentralization may have a negative effect in schools in poor areas (Galiani et al., 2005).

One purpose in the interviews was to explore the nature of decentralization in the South African education system, the extent to which it is market-oriented, and the extent to which it might be reinforcing inequality of educational provision. Another purpose was to discover whether Pampallis (2005) claim was accurate, that the South African government promoted the ideology of markets and consumer choice in order to reduce the financial regional burden of central government by sharing it with regional and local authority or parents. Seeing that Naidoo (2005) argued that South African SGBs are expected to “supplement the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners” through school fees and other forms of fund-raising (RSA President’s Office, 1996b in Naidoo 2005).

The Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy and Exemption Policy which were inserted in the SASA policy, were examined to see whether they actually curbed the invisible hand of the market in public schools (Sayed 2009). I also investigated whether the SASA powers associated with finance were exercised by the SGB members interviewed

The interviews confirmed that both schools were aware of the powers given to them by SASA and could articulate what the SGB had to do with the powers pertaining to finance. An inference from the interviews was that the Privileged school implemented their powers better than the Underprivileged School since the latter lacked the required skills, training, exposure, connections, networks and financial muscle.

Particularly from the Privileged school interviews, it appeared that the education system is commodified and/ market orientated. This was shown distinctly during Principal Mary*, interview:

“The parents here [Privileged School] are saying, ya okay maybe education should be free because we are paying taxes and taxes are supposed to cover education. However, if we want something good for our kids we definitely have to pay more. So they pay R28 000-00.... *unfortunately with money you can do a lot without money you can't do much... quality education costs*” (emphasis mine)

Principal Mary's* (Interview, 20/05/14) point was explained well by Sayed (2009) when he pointed out that education can transform parents into consumers, as the parent-consumer is constituted on the basis of the fees which he/she pays to provide additional finances for school provision beyond the state subsidy. However, the negative effects of commodified education was also highlighted by Principal Mary* (Interview, 20/05/14). She stated:

“It is not fair quite honestly it is not fair in our country it is a money story it is economics...it is not fair because all kids should have the same thing (quality of education)...other kid's parents are not paying anything and so their kids are not getting so many opportunities, because the government cannot afford, [In this school] R28 million comes through school parents and in the township schools they just do not have that capacity.... Hence, we are taking years and years to lift up the poor schools, because there is just not enough money”

The interviews revealed vast differences between the two schools with regard to access to finance, and this indicated the challenge in the state's attempts to close the gap of the invisible hand of the market, as the funds provided by the state were insufficient and the Underprivileged SGB attempts to fundraise in order to improve their school seem futile as "they normally raise on a particular fundraising less than R4000" Principal Tiniko*(Interview, 25/06/14), as they were not taught how to fundraise, Zamani* (Interview, 12/10/14) explained:

"We went to the MEC [of Basic Education] and asked *can the department teach us how to fundraise because they tell us now to go raise R500 000-00. How do we do that?We do not have expertise...*"

The situation in the Underprivileged School illuminated the negative effects of a market oriented education system which seems to favour well off schools, Principal Mary's (Interview, 20/05/14) stated:

"With regards to the school fund, the school fees are the main way of getting funds and then we do have fundraising events...but they raise a small amount of money like they have a target this year of R300 000-00 which is very little compared with R 28 million...So because they [parents] pay fees it means we can have learning material and employ extra staff. "

Van der Berg (2007) noted that private funding allows privileged schools to have options to supplement teaching resources from parental fees as well as supplement school resources. Lilli* (Interview,11/10/14) further explained "We raised a couple of millions from the Oppenheimer Trust all for the science centre..." This revealed inequality in the education system to the extent of creating a two-tier system of public schooling where one tier is well-resourced schools(former white) and the second tier (black schools) is disregarded and reliant on the state (Naidoo 2005). Consequently the latter cannot match the level of quality of the former which is supported by wealthier parents who are able to get private funding and pay more for their children's education. Admitting this, the Department of Education in its 2003 paper on Quality Education indicated that SASA benefited public schools supported by middle-class and wealthy parents.

The Privileged School's network of *Old Girls*, its connections with a higher institution such as the University of the Witwatersrand offered ways it could market itself to get funding, and for middle class and wealthy parents, raising R300 000,00 from fundraising seemed easy. Rajesh* (22/05/14) stated:

“The crux of sponsorship is the alumni, we have new gals that will advance to varsity and become old girls once they graduate from varsity to employment, they are either CEO's or married to a CEO and we always send them Newsletters and invite them to events and ask them to sponsor the school to start new projects. We are Wits University's number one feeder school, this markets [the Privileged School] to other schools [to attract them to attend school at the Privileged School], it also attracts the Dean of the University [of the Witwatersrand] to assist with sponsorship”

By contrast, the Underprivileged School had insufficient funds, and battled to raise funds or get sponsorship as they did not have brand power as the Privileged School. The case of the underprivileged school confirmed the argument made by Spreen and Vally (2006) that the Norms and Standards for School Funding (NSSF) was a total failure, even though it had the good intention of minimizing inequality. Seeing that ‘No fees’ technically did not amount to no fees for the underprivileged when “poverty and poor infrastructure is the norm” (Spreen and Vally 2006:356). Zamani's* (Interview, 12/10/14) supported Spreen and Vally (2006) point by stating that:

‘We have to have a hall and a new lab and refurbish our ground [field] for our children, hence now they can't do anything and we can't help them, and all these things are a huge amount of money. “

This quote corroborates Spreen and Vally (2006) argument in that NSSF was not enough to pay for revamping the dilapidated school property or provide better learning equipment/tools to the underprivileged school. Some parents were unemployed and had no skills to fundraise nor were they taught by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). as a result the parents felt as though they had failed their children.

One can construe that with poverty, inequality, liquidity constraints and unemployment already imbedded in the country, the greater populace in townships such as Soweto where the

underprivileged school was located may face difficulty contributing to fundraising in addition to buying school uniforms, stationary, transport and school lunches. Moreover, the Underprivileged School did not have an “Old Girls/Boys” network because their old girls/boys were subject to an oppressive system that did not allow them to access wealth and participate in the economy so that in the future they could assist their former school when assistance was required.

Nonetheless, the failure of NSSF was also felt in the Privileged School as they had to use monies from their school coffers to fix a building that did not belong to them, Verna* (Interview, 3/07/14) stated:

“Government gives us about R450 000 a year...to run the school and I can tell you that covers electricity and toilet paper alone...We have lot of things we love to get money from the government for... like for instance our hall has a huge crack in it and it is going to cost a fortune to fix, we know the building belongs to them [government] and we apply to them but they never give us funding.”

Most of the interviews corroborated Pampallis’ (2005) accusation that the South African government promoted the ideology of markets and consumer choice to reduce the financial regional burden of central government by sharing it with parents. However, decentralization of the education system and the commodification of education has been met with displeasure from both fee and non-fee paying schools as the state intervenes minimally to reduce the schools’ burdens of being under-resourced and ill equipped with management skills. However, the brunt of the commodification and decentralization of schools is felt more by the underprivileged school where SGB members feel inadequate to assist their children.

5.2 Expertise of Parents in the SGB

Pampallis (2005) argued that the assumption that decentralization can promote greater participation is not always true. In the case of educational decentralization Mncube (2009) is was concerned that a large number of parents did not participate the way they were expected to, and were not yet playing their full role as governors mandated by legislation. According to Mncube (2009), minimal lacking parent participation was a clear indication that democracy in schools had not been implemented to its full potential. This is reflected in the lack of parent participation and

capacity among SGB members, skills, education and insufficient knowledge of legal requirements and rights of SGBs (Pampallis, 2005).

Mcube's points raises concerns because the implementation of SGB's requires parent participation from SGB members and non SGB members. In chapter 2 Epstein's model was highlighted, which argued for the importance of parental involvement and that home or school communication should be a two-way communication reflecting a co-equal partnership between families and schools. Epstein held that collaboration with educators assists teachers to understand their learners better thus making the learners and educators experience in the classroom much more pleasant, which may lead to positive results.

One SGB meeting at each school was observed, to get the gist of what happened during them and whether parents' roles were important. These observations also showed whether the SASA powers associated with administration and control of school property were implemented by the SGBs

On Tuesday the 16th of May at 17:30, I attended the first SGB meeting at the Privileged School. 21 of the 23 SGB members were in attendance (Including 3 observers), 10 out of 12 parents were in attendance. In the SGB there are 3 Indian parents, 1 Black parent and 8 White parents. What was striking was that the Chairperson and deputy-Chairperson were both women. We were seated as in boardroom. The meeting started on time and all SGB parents were given files that included the following: agenda, previous meeting minutes, the South African schools Act, their constitution, code of conduct policy, financial reports, school development plan, 2014 Budget, religion policy, finance policy and procedures. This gave the impression that the school was extremely well organized and there was transparency. Around the table there was an equal level of respect but the Principal seemed to be in control or with the most influence, she conducted herself in an authoritative way but also sharing power with the Chairperson and the other parents.

The parents who had to prepare presentations and give feedback on their progress were well organized and prepared, specifically Sam* the Treasure of the SGB, who also had meetings with the Principal and the finance committee every Tuesday morning at 6am before going to work at a large firm where he was an accountant. He gave a clear presentation about the schools budget and the numbers seemed accurate and indicated that the school was not in debt. However, he

highlighted that the school needed to raise more money to fix the swimming pool and the science centre. Indications that the SGB was not corrupt were that they showed their transparency by requesting quotes from more than one service provider to assist in the fixing of the pool and that all the school finances from past 3 years were available for parents to see. The SGB at the Privileged School consisted of professional members and this was evident when the Principal showed her frustration about the money that the South African Revenue Services (SARS) owed them and the one of the parents who was a lawyer volunteered to assist the SGB to get their money back. During the break members enjoyed a warm meal and soft drinks. These experiences all gave the impression that this school is well organized with the appropriate systems.

At the Underprivileged School, I attended a SGB meeting on Sunday 8 June 2014 at 14:30 pm. The meeting started 45 minutes later than the scheduled time. There were 7 attendees out of the 17 expected. Four out of the 9 parents were in attendance and none of the teachers attended, The Principal, 4 parents, 1 LRC and 1 non-educator attended however his being his last meeting as he was going to a new job. The meeting took place at the school's staff room, their furniture was deteriorating. Even though a large proportion of members were absent, the meeting was held. It was opened in prayer. Two apologies were presented, one was the Chairperson who was currently working in Bloemfontein. The "Minute Taker" was not in attendance and the Principal was quick to point out that she owed the SGB meeting minutes from 3 meetings ago.

They bought in a recorder but she had not typed anything yet when the Principal began writing the minutes and was later relieved of this duty by one of the parents. A young lady gave feedback on a fundraising event that was planned to assist a school in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal. The event had not been a great success as they only raised R2506-70. The Principal stressed that the lack of success was due to lack of parent and staff support as he with a handful of parents had been the only ones representing the school. During the meeting Zamani* acknowledged the lack of parent support and that they needed to do better. The Principal also said that teacher's absenteeism in SGB meetings is getting out of control and there had been no official apologies from them. The Principal also stressed his annoyance that the newsletter system is not working to make parents and teachers aware of the SGB meeting although they had send SMSs two weeks in advance and had even bought a tablet for the secretary to send the SMSs. Another issue was that the parents were not supporting the School Improvement Plans (SIP) which is a programme introduced to assist Matric

learners to attend extra classes on Saturday from 8am -13:30pm. The Principal requested that the SGB parents kindly relieve him sometimes, by just signing in for an hour. He indicated that parents could even attend after attending a funeral. Another issue was that at times only 24 of the 62 learners attended and he needed the SGB to assist him to call the parents to tell them that their children are not attending SIP and to convince parents to volunteer to monitor SIP and their children. In an attempt to improve the condition in the school Zamani* advised that he was working on having parole prisoners to come help clean the school. Other governors supported this as they did not have access to money to hire more cleaners.

A hot topic during the meeting was that of theft among the teachers, security and food handlers who stole food from the National School Nutrition Programme. Nokutula* said that this not good and that SGB supported the Principal's decision to discipline the culprits. Another topic on the agenda was the purchasing of the Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM) the Principal pointed out that this year's material budget was R604 000-00 and this was a big job and supporting BEE companies was a problem as they let the school down and did not deliver on time, so the school needed more than one service provider. Before the meeting adjourned the Principal reported that the auditors from the department of education were tired of attending to memoranda/complaints by the teachers as they brought costly forensics to investigate but never found any form of misconduct. During the meeting, I had an immediate sense that the Principal was the one chairing the meeting, instead of the deputy-chair, as he was the one going through the agenda and highlighting the shortfalls in the school. This made me wonder whether the SGB members knew about the activities in the school or were intimidated by the Principal. However, when the parents wanted to have a say he let them and occasionally the acting chair/ deputy-chairperson would also contribute out of wanting his voice to be heard, but throughout the meeting the parents were in support of the Principal.

These observations revealed the SGB in the Underprivileged School to be weak in that the majority of parents seemed unaware of their roles and as a number of them had little or nothing to contribute, this gave the impression that they might always see the Principal as the boss. Sophia (Interview, 15/10/14) corroborated this when she said "...the Principal has more power in the SGB, he is the CEO he takes the financial decision." Similarly Veli* (Interview, 12/10/14) "...from my view the SGB is a one man show"

The interviews showed that the majority of parents from both schools knew that they had to administer and control school property. However the Underprivileged School had a challenge in implementing this power, as “The fence is broken and there is a big hole at the back and the criminals enter through that hole and still schools chairs...we do not have strong security ” (Principal Tiniko* Interview, 25/06/14)

However, during the interviews it was apparent that parents from both schools recognised the importance of parent participation. Principal Mary*(Interview, 20/05/14) stated:

“We are lucky because we have parents with expertise and everyone brings his or her expertise we have the lawyers, the financial people, we have got the builders, the engineers, the marketers, the ethics people, human resources kind of people and good organizers for the parents association. So each person should be in the SGB because they have some quality that they can contribute...when we need to build a building then the team is chaired by the engineer and if we have finance the team is chaired by a chartered accountant so that each thing is looked after by a professional. *That’s what makes a difference between a school like this and a school in a disadvantaged community, where they do not have access to so much intellectual capital*” (emphasis mine).

Principal Tiniko* (Interview, 25/06/14) stated:

“The role of the parents is to assist educators in teaching and learning by providing resources so that learning and teaching becomes a success...the SGB has assisted us in getting extra furniture for the school and learners and the class rooms, they have also managed to organize a fridge and a microwave for the educators”.

Sophia* (Interview, 15/10/14) explained that

“The role of the parents in the SGB is very important as they are the ones that represent those parents out there. [However] *our parents have general knowledge, a few percentage in SGB are professional*”. (Emphasis mine)

It was immediately apparent that both schools recognized the importance of parent participation as they believed that parents had something to offer the school such as: “free labour”, advice,

assistance with resources and help with the governance of the school. However, when it came to human and intellectual capital the Privileged School was far ahead of the Underprivileged School, having professionals to assist and complete projects, this was supported when Principal Mary*(Interview, 20/05/14) referred to her SGB “*as a think tank*”, that is different from schools in “*disadvantaged community, where they do not have access to so much intellectual capital*” (emphasis mine). (Principal Mary* Interview, 20/05/14)

In spite of recognising the importance of parents, the Underprivileged School seemed to have difficulty in getting them to participate and there were also issues of power struggles in the SGB, which had led the Principal to be accused by teachers and SGB members of being a power monger, undemocratic and lacking transparency on issues relating to finance, Veli* (Interview, 12/10/14) stated:

“There was a lot of SGB members when we started now there are a few of us because when you speak you are not heard...the Principal has too much power... The Principal is eating [stealing] the money...there is no unity and good spirit in the SGB because people do not balance each other....”

During the SGB meeting at the Underprivileged School I noticed the annoyance of the Principal with regard to the accusations mentioned above when he announced that auditors from the Department of Education were tired of attending to the memorandum/complaints from the teachers as they bring costly forensics to investigate and they never discover any form of misconduct. As a result during the interview, Principal Tiniko* emphasized that his “SGB needs significant training, like in financial management....” (Principal Tiniko* Interview, 25/06/14)

The negative effects of lack of parent participation in the Underprivileged School was further explained by Veli* (Interview, 12/10/14) who stated “The treasurer stopped attending meetings and when we need him to sign cheques we have to search for him and the Chairperson moved to Bloemfontein as he got a job there...” Veli’s* point corroborated Pampallis’ (2005) claim that the assumption that decentralization can promote greater participation is not always true. Pampallis’ (2005) claim and Mncube’s (2009) concern that a large number of parents do not participate the way they are expected to, and are not yet playing their full role as governors mandated by legislation, were valid in the case of the Underprivileged School as few parents participated in the

SGB meeting observed and the ‘innovative ways’ to invite parents continued to fail. During Veli’s * (Interview, 12/10/14) it seemed that he felt that the Chairperson and the Treasurer were not playing their full role as governors mandated by legislation. The inactive role of both Chairperson and Treasurer led one to question whether the SGB at the Underprivileged school was democratic. Could they vote on important issues when there was minimal attendance? Who was signing the cheques in their absence and could this lead to theft or corruption which may lead to the Principal being accused of theft? Were the inactive parents aware that their actions could hinder or stop functions in the school when certain people or items were not paid for?

During Sophia’s* interview it seemed that Epstein’s argument for the importance of parental involvement and for home or school communication, would be difficult to implement in the Underprivileged school because “some households are child headed households, some learners do not live with their parents, and they do not give their parents the newsletter to read and some parents or grandparents cannot read and this minimizes the parent participation in schools...” (Sophia* Interview, 15/10/14). By contrast, Epstein’s model appeared to be well suited in the case of the Privileged school.

Even though parent participation seemed excellent at the Privileged School, it was notable that there was only one black parent representative in the SGB, making it ironic when Principal Mary* (Interview, 20/05/14) stated:

“Those well-educated [black]parents... tend to move their kids to the suburbs, if those well-educated [black]parents kept those kids in the township schools we could change those schools because it is the power of parents because the parents can say I do not like this”, (Emphasis mine)

What was ironic was that the Principal would have no school to run as the majority of the students at the Privileged School were black and were probably from townships. Moreover, the Privileged School’s SGB had one black parent from the East bank close to Alexandra Township. Seeing that the large number of black well-educated parents at Privileged School were not part of the SGB that implied that if they had kept “those kids” in the township schools they would not have changed township schools either.

These quotes suggested power struggles and raised the question whether parents from the Underprivileged School really did not participate because they simply did not care, or because they felt intimidated since some of them were illiterate, or for a number of other possible reasons. Perhaps they did not live with their child/ children so they could not attend meetings and/ support school activities or they were attending funerals over the weekend or they obtained new jobs in other regions to financially sustain their families, thus limiting their involvement or perhaps these working class parents worked the entire week Monday to Monday or Monday to Saturday and considered their Sunday as a day of rest or a day for attending to essential chores and errands, having no disposable money to hire help. Mncube(2009) gave answers to some of these questions by stating that “most SGB meetings had low participation by parents due to the following reasons: unequal power relations, socio-economic status... poor communication of information” . The interviews also highlighted Mncube’s (2009) argument that the South African era of inequality has not ended, instead SGBs in South Africa tend to exacerbate it. Mncube’s argument is supported by findings from this study that the Privileged School operated more effectively than the Underprivileged school.

5.3 Dysfunctionality of Underprivileged school

The violence associated with South Africa has trickled down to schools, as learners’ violate each other and their teachers in schools. In the literature review Seekings and Nattrass (2002) were cited as stating that the causes of poor performance and inequality in schools was a lack of order and discipline among both teachers and pupils, which often resulted in the loss of time for teaching and learning. Mncube(2009) elaborated by arguing that continual violence which Was overlooked, threatens democracy and governance of schools. During the interviews two of the SASA powers relating to code of conduct and discipline were discussed.

During the SGB meeting at the Underprivileged School, one of the female parents expressed annoyance with a 22 year old grade 10 pupil who was considered corrupt being a bully and smoking during school hours. Zamani* expressed that the young man had assaulted him by punching. Lerato*, the SGB parent in charge of safety and security expressed that she went to the boy’s home where this boy was completely the opposite to the way he conducted himself at school, being well mannered at home .The issue was that the mother did not want to come to the school to see what her son was doing and so call him to order or discipline him. During the meeting the

Principal indicated that a grade 10 teacher refused to teach an entire class of learners that were ill disciplined and out of control. The Principal reported that the matters pertaining to the disobedient learner and to the teacher who was unwilling to teach, could not be handled immediately as they were still working on the code of conduct policy as well as identifying governors to be part of the disciplinary hearings.

Interviews revealed that the code of conduct was significantly important in the handling of ill-disciplined learners and that the levels of disobedience and discipline varied from school to school.

The interview with Nokutula* (Interview, 12/11/14) showed that the issue of ill-disciplined learners at the Underprivileged School was a problem when she said:

“These kids are bad mannered, there was an incident at the school where the children had to clean after school, when they were done mopping the floors, they poured a bucket full of dirty water on a teacher...one classroom even burnt because the learners were smoking and through the cigarettes in a plastic bin which caught fire and burnt the classroom.”

The Underprivileged School seemed to be struggling to implement the code of conduct as discipline continued to be a problem even though a couple of learners had been suspended.

During Sophia's *(Interview, 15/10/14) I noticed mixed emotions, when she gave the perception that discipline was still a significant challenge

“In the past three years the SGB has played a significant role in creating policies and resolving disciplinary issues... but ey no let is not talk about discipline but let us just say the code of conduct resulted in some learners being suspended in the school...”

Even though implementation is a school management issue it seemed that if the SGB at the Underprivileged School had had a code of conduct policy, students might have been more well-mannered, because a code of conduct policy would advise students of consequences prior to misbehaving and this might have minimized bad behavior. Zamani* (Interview, 12/10/14) showed the importance of a code of conduct by stating that:

“...the code of conduct was left behind [not considered when drafting school policies], but now we have completed that code of conduct policy and we are now taking care of disciplinary issues...”

It was found that the Privileged School also had ill-disciplined learners but they were punished through *restorative discipline*, Principal Mary* (Interview, 20/05/14) explained:

“We have a code of conduct and we monitor it strictly, we still have problems with late coming, it is a problem. We have what we call *restorative discipline* and it is an idea I got when I went to a conference in Canada...it is like when you have done something wrong you do not so much get punished for it, but you have to put it right, if I have wronged you, I have to put it right by you, however you think I can make it right for you. So if a child does something wrong like we had a child who forged bank notes and she took forgeries to the tuck shop... the governing body had a hearing as this was a serious offense.”

However, at the Privileged School it was highly unlikely that a student would be suspended Lezlie* (Interview, 7/7/14)

“... We have had cases of suspensions but it is extreme cases and it is so hard to get someone suspended it is almost impossible...”

In the course of the interviews I found that both schools were aware of the SASA powers pertaining to discipline but the Underprivileged School seemed to require assistance from the government to draft policies such as the code of conduct in time, before learners reached the point of hindering each other's educational development and assaulting staff members. However, I was left wondering whether the Privileged School's discipline method would apply at the Underprivileged School. And even whether the Underprivileged School really cared about the safety of the pupils, staff and SGB members since it took them so long to draft a code of conduct policy. It was evident that the code of conduct policy is very important because schools cannot take action without a policy allowing them to suspend unruly children.

5.4 Improvement of SGB and the handling of SASA Powers given to SGBs

SGB members were asked whether or not their SGBs needed improvement and if they could handle the powers bestowed upon them by SASA, to find out if the SGBs were regarded by their members

as functional and whether there was truth in the statement by Secretary General of National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB), Mr Matakanye Matakanye, that “80% of SGBs in South Africa are dysfunctional” (Mail & Guardian, 2012). Similarly Mr Paul Colditz, Chief Executive of the Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools, claimed that, “Only about 10% [of public schools] are truly functional schools (Mail & Guardian, 2012).

During the Privileged School SGB interviews, it seemed clear from the onset that this SGB did not need improvement. These interviewees were very confident and proud when talking about their school, and they came across as being happy the way things were (decentralized education system with minimal interference from the government). This was captured well by Principal Mary* (Interview, 20/05/14):

“Our governing body can manage all the powers without being corrupt...In some schools maybe they need assistance, butWe do not need department interference.... The reasons schools like this are still good schools is not because of the government at all...” (emphasis mine)

Verna*(Interview, 3/07/14):

“The government has no input....We do not need any improvement our SGB is brilliant!”

Lilli*(Interview, 11/10/14):

“Anything can be improved but I think the SGB is really a good one...but there were times...I didn’t have any finance person and that was really difficult then we got Sam, at that point yes we could have improved we needed a better finance person...but Government shouldn’t take the powers...I think we can go for less government than more government. If the school is not broken...you do not have to try and fix it. The system for us is not broken...”* (Emphasis mine).

In contrast, at the Underprivileged School SGB members were serious about getting training and it seemed as though SASA powers were still relatively “new” to some members. However, I was left wondering whether training would assist the SGB at the Underprivileged School. considering the lack of parent and teacher participation as mentioned in the previous section. Lilli*(Interview, 11/10/14) stated:

...I do not think members [Privilege School] need training but I think SGB members need to understand what SGBs are about and what your role is in the school

Since the Privileged School SGB was doing well without specific training as they were professionals who could be told by the schools management team what to do, how to do it and knew what was expected of them and could execute tasks and projects, it did not matter even if they had minimal knowledge of the SASA policy framework i.e. their roles and powers bestowed upon them. All they had to do was to keep the school running, execute tasks and projects and make sure parents paid fees “*as it takes money to run a school*”(Lilli*Interview, 11/10/14)

From both of the schools studied it became clear that decentralization of the South African education system and the introduction of the SASA policy and its powers bestowed upon SGBs were not suited for all South African public schools more especially for Underprivileged Schools. SGB members at the Underprivileged School struggled to implement their powers and even follow Section 16 which clearly states that the day-to-day professional management of the school should be the responsibility of the Principal and the governance of the school remains the responsibility of the SGBs (Mncube 2009). I noticed Mncube’s point during Zamani* (Interview,12/10/14) interview when he said “As I am not employed, going to school is my daily bread”. Zamani’s* interview made me question whether or not he understood his role or thought that the Principal was not doing his job when he recalled that

“One of the classes did not have tiles, I saw it and I asked the children why do they not clean it off, so I went to the Principal and I said ”do you know about this problem? ” and “how long has this been happening?” and it has been happening for a while and I cannot let my children to stay in a class like this and he took me to another class that has more holes. During the closing of the school we went to Ceramic Tile Market (CTM) with the Principal to buy tiles and they are fixed now... And the next meeting the Principal must come and account and if he does not do that!...”.

When interviewing the Underprivileged School SGB I realized that and that they were not confident about keeping all of their powers, this was exemplified by Principal Tiniko* (Interview, 25/06/14):

“Yes the SGB needs improvement especially when it comes to the policy of the department. Parents do not understand how the department operates and that is why we are having a lot of problems especially when it comes to finance...the SGB needs significant training, like on financial management, curriculum management....[but]the SGB has been able to

manage the powers given by SASA when it comes to maintenance, they [parents] do come and assist in fixing doors, cleaning [but] it [government] must take some of the powers given to the SGB”

Sophia* (Interview, 15/10/14) also stated:

”Our SGB needs training and intensification of roles, rules and responsibilities...our SGB as a whole needs training. *The SGB has not been able to handle the powers from SASA like I can say 50 percent yes and 50 percent no. The government must take on the role of finance like management of funds...there are a lot of loopholes.*” (Emphasis mine)

Zamani* (Interview, 12/10/14) elaborated:

“I might as well agree that the SGB needs improvement because the Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership is not helping us... they do not do follow ups...We really need training and I even requested one [training] now and I found out it was rejected, by the Chairperson unknowing that he himself needs that training, and he has said ‘no we do not need training’, but I said ‘we need it because we are lacking’ ”.

In reality, as Mncube pointed out,. SGB responsibilities were not executed because members of the SGB specifically parents were not fully participating as many of them did not have the required skills to perform their responsibilities or duties assigned to them. This situation has resulted in the Principal performing the tasks that wer supposed to be the responsibility of the SGBs (Mncube 2009). This was evident at Underprivileged School SGB which could not handle the budget and this has led to the Principal to taking control, but then being accused of theft when SGB seemed to not r have minimal understanding how to handle finances.

Rondinelli, Nellis, and Shabbir Cheema (1984) argued that the majority of countries where governments have attempted to decentralize have faced serious problems of implementation. In context of educational decentralization I would argue that the Underprivileged School had a problem of implementation as Sophia* (Interview, 15/10/14) indicated that their SGB “*needs training and intensification of roles, rules and responsibilities , a SGB cannot be half baked.*” Thus, Galiani et al.(2005) argued that decentralization might help but could actually harm public

services in poorly administered communities and the effect of decentralization may have a negative effect in schools in poor areas. “*As a result decentralization can help the good get better and the already disadvantaged worse off*”(Galiani, et al 2005)[Emphasis mine].

This chapter has presented evidence of how the SGBs in both schools operated very differently It suggested how neo-liberal policy influenced the education system and how both schools were affected by the imbedded neo-liberal influence in the education system. The chapter also discussed the SASA powers bestowed upon the SGBs pertaining to finance, administration, code of conduct and discipline. The chapter highlighted the importance of SASA powers as well as the challenges faced by both schools more particularly the Underprivileged School. The chapter also highlighted the impacts of decentralization and limited state intervention. Inequality was also discussed in relation to how decentralisation and/ neoliberal policy contributed to minimal educational provision. Finally the importance of parent participation and the effects of minimal parent participation was discussed to assess whether the [Disadvantaged School SGB could handle the powers granted it SASA

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

6.0 Introduction

This study was initiated to give clarity on the role of SGBs and how schools use the powers given to SGBs by SASA. Chapters two and three presented an overview of the literature; Chapter two in terms of decentralization of service delivery in developing countries, and Chapter three in terms of the reforms in the education system in South Africa and the adoption of SASA. Chapter three traced the history of education system from apartheid to the recent era, and discussed in detail the important issues concerning decentralization and SGBs. The fourth chapter discussed the qualitative methodology, data collection and the methods of gathering data. Chapter five presented an assessment of the SGBs at the Underprivileged School and the Privileged School drawing from the interviews conducted in both schools with special focus on areas of finance, discipline, training, and power. This chapter presents answers the research questions and offers recommendations moving forward.

6.1 Are the SGBs equipped with the capacity or support that is required to use the SASA powers so that they function well?

During the interviews in the Privileged School it seemed as though the SGB members had the capacity required to function well. The parent representatives of the SGB appeared to have a variety of skills, strong academic backgrounds and financial muscle as well as a strong Principal who contributed to the professionalism of the SGB. As a result it was effortless for this SGB to use its SASA powers to function well. Seeing that these SGB parent representatives had professional skills it allowed them to execute the powers given to them without attending the Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership for SGB training. One of the SGB parent stated that *“I do not think members need training but I think SGB members need to understand what SGBs are about and what your role is in the school”*

During the SGB meeting at the Privileged School, it seemed as though the parents were well organised because during the SGB meeting they gave clear and precise presentations on their projects on how they were going to execute projects. When the Principal needed legal clarity or assistance, a SGB parent who was a lawyer volunteered to assist and similarly a SGB member who was an accountant offered to assist with money owed to the school by SARS. Each SGB member

received a file with all the policies required by SASA along with financial records of the school. The Principal in the Privileged School was happy with the SGB and referred to it as a *think tank*. However, when the Privileged School did not have a professional parent in the SGB they bought a service from a professional to assist with a project. It seemed that if the parents were lacking or were unable to execute a particular project the school would quickly go to its coffers and the problem would be solved. Therefore, it gave the impression that the Privileged School was equipped with the required capacity to use SASA powers so that it could function well.

In the Underprivileged School the 14 SGB members appeared to be not well equipped to use powers granted them in terms of SASA. This was exemplified by a teacher stating that “*our parents have general knowledge*, a few percentage in SGB are professionals. The parents are part of the working class and have minimal level of education and skills.” As a result it may have seemed as though their lack of capacity hindered their abilities to use their powers, since they did not receive significant training. One parent expressed how important it was to have training, seeing that the SGB at the underprivileged school was “ignorant and lacking”. Since most parents were part of the working class and some might have ‘general knowledge’ and minimal level of education and minimal skills, they had limited capacity to use all their SASA powers and as a result they often saw the Principal as the “CEO” who was in charge of everything even financial management. However, some parents and teachers who had somewhat of an understanding of how the SGB should operate, expressed the need for training on financial management. I learnt that some of the parents did not trust the Principal with finances even though he had not been found guilty of any misconduct. With regard to drafting policy, the SGB took its time to complete the code of conduct and as a result students who were ill-mannered for a long period were not suspended or dealt with appropriately.

I also learnt that decentralization applied very well in the Privileged School as it “could utilize available resources more efficiently” (Weiler, 1990). I observed that the Privileged school operated very well in a market orientated education sector due to the SGB parent’s having acquired higher education and financial management skills, while it was the total opposite in the Underprivileged school.

6.2 How are the SGBs in two schools (located in underprivileged and privileged locations) using the powers given by SASA?

I gained some insight into how the two SGB viewed their use of the powers given to them by SASA. It appeared as though the SGB at the Underprivileged School found it difficult to use all the powers given to it by SASA. One of the teachers said that *The SGB has not been able to handle the powers from SASA like I can say 50 percent yes and 50 percent no.*” I learnt that the Principal believed that they are using most their powers however those related to getting funding and financial management were contentious. One of the SGB parents said they were handling their powers, giving as example that the Principal used to chase children away and the SGB didn’t know, when they discovered it, they said to the Principal “SASA says the SGB is the one to recommend the suspension and/dismissal of a learner, not a Principal”. The SGB parent further indicated that “The power lies with us! The Principal has nothing, no power at all!” However, this parent acknowledged that the SGB needed training by stating that “the training is needed because the association (Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership) tells us you just do not sign documents”

One SGB parent from the underprivileged school indicated that the SGB was attempting to use its powers relating to administration and control of school property, using the following example. He had discovered that the tiles in more than one class were dilapidated, had approached the Principal and the class rooms tiles were fixed. The principal himself stated that “the SGB has been able to manage the powers given by SASA when it comes to maintenance, they [parents] do come and assist in fixing doors and cleaning” However, the school’s biggest challenge was drafting a code of conduct policy so that it could exercise its power to discipline unruly children timeously.

In the Privileged School I noticed that the SGB boasted of professional parents, this allowed the SGB to execute the majority or all of their SASA powers pertaining to finance, administration and discipline. The Principal was proud of her SGB and stressed that it constituted *intellectual capital* having lawyers, financial people (accountants), builders, engineers, marketing specialists, ethics people, human resources and good organizers for the parents association. The principal indicated that each person in their SGB was there because they had some quality that they could contribute so that when the school had to build a building the team was chaired by an engineer and if they had finance projects the team was chaired by a chartered accountant, each thing was looked after by

a professional. Therefore it could be concluded that appeared as though the Privileged school used most or all their SASA power as compared to the underprivileged school

6.3 If the SGBs are not doing well, should the state intervene by taking on the responsibilities of the SGBs?

I cannot make a definitive statement but I did gain some insight into the problems that are experienced. Of the two schools studied, it seemed as though the SGB in the Underprivileged School was not doing well and the Underprivileged school considered the role of the state very significant as they assumed that if the state intervened specifically in financial management, it would close the deficiencies in the school's budget. The Underprivileged school had a problem of minimal attendance of SGB meetings by teachers and parents. The issue of parents having few skills and financial knowledge led to most of its powers not being performed. In the Underprivileged School I learnt that the majority of the parents felt that they could handle their powers except those related to finance, as the Principal explained "The SGB needs significant training, like on financial management..."

Moreover, the Underprivileged school which is a no fee paying school, which only received state funding, felt that they needed the state to intervene so that they can get extra funds. According to both principals in the Privilege School and Underprivileged School the state funding was insufficient.

While the Privileged school seemed to have adapted in the market orientated education sector. The Underprivileged school experienced extreme difficulty to maintain their school. Since SGB found it difficult to fundraise because of the lack of training by government, as they saw it. Therefore raising money to purchase resources or fix broken equipment was an extreme challenge that left the parents feeling that they were failing their children. The financial issues in the Underprivileged School made seem as though not all schools were able to cope in a decentralized environment, which led to marketization of the education sector.

6.4 Has the minimal use of the SASA powers bestowed upon SGBs increased inequality in educational provision in the public schools selected for this research report?

It would be incorrect to think that the minimal use of the SASA powers given to SGBs was the sole cause of inequality in public schools. Inequality was rooted in the history of the South African education system where black parents had been educated under the apartheid education system which had not been designed for them to acquire higher education or access great wealth but instead they were expected to be labourers and be part of the working class with minimal or no knowledge of finance, business, law and accounting.

From the interviews one learnt that the historically oppressive education system might have limited the parents from the Underprivileged school who are part of the black working class, to fully participate in SGB meetings or their children's lives partly because the parent/s may be attempting to get a 'better life' by working in another province or they work round-the-clock regularly without a day off and at times in SGB meetings the parent/s feel inferior or inadequate which leads them to not implement their powers, and end up seeing the Principal as a "CEO" as he might be the most educated and skilled person in the SGB. The research report also indicated that it might appear that the result of inequality in the education sector might be that the current market orientated education system was not actually designed for underprivileged schools rather it was a consequence of the apartheid government during the slow economic growth in the eighties and nineties having become increasingly unable to disburse the same level of financial support to white schools as before. Consequently, the National Party government became aware that the white schools would have to contribute considerably in order to maintain their standards (Sayed, 1997). According to Sayed (1997) *the National Party government advocated for education decentralization because it allows greater control of schooling for those who pay for it and that it will enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the nation's schools*. This did not include black schools and as a result it exacerbated inequality in the South African education system. Thus, it may seem that it is not only the minimal use of SASA powers which has increased the inequality in educational provision but financial means that one has to have to enrol their child in a fee paying school which is well-known for *quality, efficiency and effectiveness* like the Privileged School selected for this research report.

6.5 The study will try comment on the account by Pampallis (2005) that the South African government promoted the ideology of markets and consumer choice to reduce the financial regional burden of central government by sharing it with parents.

Pampallis recounted that the current school financing structure was developed during the negotiations between the ANC and the National Party (NP) over section 247 of the interim Constitution (Spreen and Vally 2006). The NP advocated for decentralisation as *it allows greater control of schooling for those who pay for it*. Data from the two schools studied in this research could not shed a direct light on Pampallis' account but it did seem that decentralization and the ideology of the market were more evident in the Privileged School as the Principal and SGB parents expressed that it takes money to run a school and that they must make sure that school finances are raised, to run the school and provide extra resources, since quality costs. The Principal in the Privileged School also mentioned that the parents know that if “ they want something good for our kids we definitely have to pay more. So they pay R28 000 [annually]... [In this school] R28 million comes through school parents”.

The interviews in the Privileged School made seem as though the school managed to function well within the constraints of neoliberalism, since the school charged fees and knew how to raise the money needed to run a school. The Privileged School went as far as building their school as a brand and as a result they got several million Rands to build a science centre from the Oppenheimer Trust and donations from their Old Girl former students.

Even though the Privileged School was doing well financially at times it wanted the government to intervene, one of the teachers in the SGB indicated that “*Government shouldn't take the powers but they can take some of the finances*”.

In the Underprivileged School, which was a non-fee paying school, made me understand that the negative impact of the market orientated education policy because the government financial support was not enough and even though the school tried to raise money they did not know how to sell themselves to sponsors, unlike the Privileged School which had a Marketing specialist in the SGB. Although the state has attempted to reduce the hand of the market by introducing the Exemption Policy and the NSSF, these have been only partially successful. The NSSF doesn't

cover transport and school uniform and to date “poverty and poor infrastructure is the norm” (Spreen and Vally 2006:356). Nor is the NSSF enough to pay for revamping the underprivileged dilapidated school property or provide better learning equipment/tools. Some parents were unemployed and had no fundraising skills. Moreover, the Underprivileged School did not have an “Old Girls/Boys” network because their old girls/boys had been part of an oppressive system that did not allow them to participate in the economy so that in the future they could assist their former school. Therefore it may seem that the effect of government having reduced its financial burden and shared it with parents has been to benefit only the Privileged School. Further, I have learnt that as a result inequality in schools may have exacerbated since the underprivileged parents cannot pay for quality education and are unable to exercise their SASA powers pertaining to fundraising. The situation in the underprivileged school led me to speculate that even if all South African decided to pay fees of R10 000 or more taxes towards all underprivileged learners, not much would change because the SGBs in the Underprivileged School would still be weak and all that money from sponsors and/taxes would just be spent on paying professionals/consultants who would provide a service that the SGB lacked in.

I learnt that that SASA powers are market oriented and that neoliberalism as a concept is an ideology and as an ideology it has conceptual links with decentralization and in the case of the South African education system. Both these concepts led to the ideology of markets and consumer choice which forced parents or citizens to consumers and Spreen & Vally (2006) indicate that neoliberalism and decentralization are not good because they turn citizens into consumers and exacerbates inequality in the education sector.

6.6 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to determine whether the SGBs in an underprivileged and a privileged school could handle the SASA powers given to them by analysing and exploring the link between neoliberalism and decentralization. From the interviews it seemed as though Privileged School managed to function well within the constraints of neoliberalism and decentralization which led to the Privilege School to be efficient as it charged fees, the parents in the SGB were educated and had skills such as Accounting and Fundraising, whilst it was the total opposite in the Underprivileged School, because the SGB did not have required skills, lacked financial muscle as it was a non-fee paying school and it had insufficient resources and capabilities. During the interviews with the SGB members in the Underprivileged School it seemed as though the SGB

needed the state to intervene to assist them with the power pertaining to finance. The minimal use of SASA powers bestowed on the Underprivileged SGB was not found to be the only contributor to inequality in educational provision between the two public schools studied, others being unemployment, illiteracy, the history of the South African education system and their impacts on low level parent participation. This research report also commented on Pampallis' (2005) account of how the SA government promoted the ideology of markets and consumer choice to reduce the financial regional burden of central government by sharing it with parents, it was found that in the Privileged School neo-liberalism was indeed embedded in the school as parents become consumers and knew and accepted that they had to pay for a good service. Historically, the apartheid government had advocated for decentralisation of the education system because it allowed greater control of schooling *for those who pay for it*, and those schools were predominately schools for whites, though in recent times inequalities are characterised by class. Inequality in the education system has arisen because the majority of the parent/s in the black schools are unable to pay for school fees due to various reasons such as unemployment. I also argue that even if large amounts of money were sponsored to Underprivileged schools they would not see much change as the SGB in the Underprivileged School would still lack professional skills thus the schools would spend a lot of money on consultants and professionals to assist them with projects, whilst the Privileged Schools effectively received free labour from its professional SGB parents. Thus, one would conclude that the SASA powers were not effective for one of the schools to deal with the marketization of the education sector. Thus, the research report argues that the education policy is not suited for all schools, more specifically schools that were not designed to function in a market orientated environment

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Section A

- 1) How many members are part of your SGB?
- 2) What is your profession/career/job?
- 3) What is your responsibility in the SGB?
- 4) How many years have you been part of the SGB?
- 5) When do you have your meetings and what time are the SGB meetings?
- 6) What do you discuss in the SGB meetings?

Section B

- 1) In your opinion what do you think is the role of the SGB?
- 2) How many meetings have you attended in the past year?
- 3) Who has the most power/influence in the SGB (Principals, teachers or parents)? Why is it so?
- 4) Does the SGB recommend the appointment of teachers? If Yes, How does this process take place?
- 5) How many teachers have the SGB recommended? Are they still with the school?
- 6) Do you feel that the SGB acts as a supportive structure to the school, providing educators with the supportive measures to deliver of the student's needs? Could you elaborate in your answer?

Section C

- 1) Are you a state or state aided school?
- 2) Are you a fee or no-fee paying school?
- 3) Do you have a bank account and how do you maintain it?
- 4) Has your school established a school fund?
- 5) Does the SGB prepare an annual budget for the parents to approve?
- 6) Does the SGB keep financial records?
- 7) Does your school have an auditor? If Yes
- 8) How often does the auditor audit your accounts?

Section D

- 1) Could you please outline some of the key issues that the SGB have resolved or delivered on in the past 3 years?
- 2) Could you provide a specific example that the SGB forum has intervened in the past, and what were the outcomes?
- 3) Is there anything you would advise the SGB to do better?
- 4) Has your school been able to handle the powers given by SASA? If No why?
- 5) Do you feel that the government should take on some of the powers? If so why?

Appendix 2: Permission to record an interview form: Participant consent form: Recording of the interview

Dear participant, thank you for agreeing to participate in my research. Your participation is completely voluntary and you have the right to stop the interview if you feel uncomfortable with carrying on with the discussion.

- (a) I would therefore love to record each interview in order to ensure that to keep an accurate record. The recording is voluntary and you may choose not to be recorded if you wish. I can also take down some notes during the interview if you do not wish to be recorded.
- (b) A copy of your transcribed interview will be brought to you if wish to keep it as well.

Please sign below if you agree to be recorded during the interview.

Participant's signature_____

For further information concerning my research please feel free to contact me or my research supervisors on the following contacts:

Researcher: Nompumelelo Melaphi **Email:** nmashabe@gmail.com

Research Supervisors: Professor Stephanie Allais Numbers: +27 (0)11 717 3076. **Email:** stephanie.matseleng@gmail.com

Appendix 3: Informed consent form (for participant's signature)

Participant's consent form:

Dear participant, thank you for giving me the opportunity to discuss with you issues concerning my study titled: ***Decentralization of schools in South Africa: study of two SGBs***

It should be understood from the beginning that your participation is absolutely voluntary and that you have the right to stop the interview when you feel that you cannot continue with it.

- Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you feel that you are not comfortable with participating anymore you are allowed to withdraw the interview even after if it has been recorded.
- If you decide to participate, I plan to interview you preferably for an hour. You may conclude the interview at any stage you feel like doing so, and we can reschedule the interview for a date most convenient to you.
- The interview will comprise of some pre-scheduled questions but you are free not to respond to some questions that you might not be comfortable with answering them.
- You are also free to share with me anything that I might not have asked you that might be relevant to the study.
- You are guaranteed anonymity. Your name shall appear on the report only if you agree that it appears.
- This research has no monetary benefits attached to it and hence no payment will be given to you for participating in this research.
- In order for me to have an accurate record of what you have shared with me during the interview, you would be welcome to allow me to record the interview. The recording is voluntary and you may choose not to be recorded. If you do not want to be recorded, I will make notes during the interview.
- A copy of the report will be made available to you if you wish.

Please sign below if you agree to be interviewed.

Participant's signature_____

For further information concerning my research please feel free to contact me or my research supervisors on the following contacts:

Researcher: Nompumelelo Melaphi **Email:** nmashabe@gmail.com

Research Supervisors: Professor Stephanie Allais Numbers: +27 (0)11 717 3076. **Email:** stephanie.matseleng@gmail.com

Appendix 4: Participant Information sheet:

Participant information form

My name is Nompumelelo Melaphi. I am studying towards my Master's degree in the department of Corporate Strategy and Industrial Development (**CSID**) at the University of the Witwatersrand on the project titled: ***Decentralization of schools in South Africa: study of two SGBs***

My research focuses on the question, "Has the South African Schools Acts of 1996 introduction of decentralization through the School Governing Bodies(SGBs) failed to improve the South African education system since there is vast inequality in South African schools?" the core of this research project lies in the exploring of SASA and influence of decentralization in the governance of schools, post-apartheid.

I will be interviewing SGB members and non-members from a Privileged School and Underprivileged School, requesting them to tell me about their experience in the school and the SGB meeting and the role that the SGB plays in these particular schools. It would be my pleasure to have you as one of my informants on the subject mentioned above.

The interview is basically a conversation between you and me and you are free to stop the interview at any point you might feel like taking a break. You are free to express yourself in the language that you are comfortable with. During the interview I will be asking you questions about your background, the school you represent the role you play in the school or SGB, Your understanding of the role of the SGB and if the SGB has improved the conditions at school or not, I would also like to know if you what would you like to know if you would like the SGB to continue in your school or you would prefer it if the government takeover. Your name and information would be treated with confidentiality. Your name will only appear when you want it to appear. The interview will last for approximately an hour. You are also allowed to talk as much as possible about the members of the SGB , yourself and the school you are representing .

If you agree to be interviewed, your participation is totally voluntary and you are free to stop the interview at any stage you might feel uncomfortable. In the written report, pseudonyms will be used, unless you don't have any reservations about the use of your name in the written report. In order for me to capture the information that you will give me, it would be essential to record the interview. However, I will only record the interview with your consent and will also take down notes, should you feel uncomfortable with being recorded. The final product of this research would be a Masters research which will be possibly completed in February 2014. The raw data of this

interview will be kept accordingly at the University of the Witwatersrand and will only be done with your consent. A copy of this thesis will be availed to you if you wish to read it. You are kindly invited to participate freely during the course of the interview.

For further information concerning my research please feel free to contact me or my research supervisors on the following contacts:

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