

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAPACITY AND SKILLS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING
BODIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE ROLES OF GOVERNING BODIES: A CASE
OF DZONDO CIRCUIT, VHEMBE DISTRICT.**

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ABSTRACT

The study was initiated to discover whether there were particular needs associated with the SGBs in the rural areas of Vhembe District, in order to determine what sort of capacity-building was required. Of particular importance in schools was the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 by which significance powers were granted to the SGBs at local level. The powers and responsibilities allocated by the Act indicated that the introduction of the SGBs had far reaching potential to improve effectiveness and, more importantly, to contribute to the capacity of the SGBs in schools. In April 1994, after South Africa's first democratic elections, a new era in education commenced. The education system was transformed to a unitary system and a programme of legislation was launched aimed at promoting democratic ideals and practices. It therefore takes a capacitated SGB to facilitate the process and procedures for the newly introduced legislations.

The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate the capacity of the SGBs in rural areas of Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. To evaluate the capacity of the SGBs, the researcher aimed to investigate aspects such as the rules and responsibilities of the SGBs, typical functions performed by the SGBs, the perceptions of parents' component and principals as members of the SGBs, findings, limitation and what needs for help or training were experienced.

The approach used in the study followed the following procedures: a literature study provided the basis for analysis and clarification of important concepts, the policy context was described, paying particular attention to the specific legislation and documents that framed school governance in South Africa. A sample of two primary and three secondary schools in rural areas around Vhembe District were investigated and the method of investigation was to use questionnaires to obtain data from representatives in SGBs at each of these schools.

Although the findings led to the conclusion that SGBs were largely well-established in accordance with the required document and were widely accepted as legitimate and worthwhile structures there were however specific important needs for training and capacity-building. The other important findings was that parents in rural areas appear to find it difficult to become involved in the educational procedures of schools and are especially reluctant to serve on the SGBs. The reasons for this apparent apathy were found to lie in problems of illiteracy and feelings of ignorance or inferiority.

These conclusions enabled the study to make specific recommendations for improving the capacity of the SGBs. Recommendations were made for improving the roles, functions and responsibilities of the SGBs as well as for capacity-building relating to the needs of the SGBs. A particular emphasis of these recommendations was on ways in which the unique needs of rural communities can be met. This was seen as a priority in order to improve the capacity of the SGBs in these historically underdeveloped areas of the Limpopo Province.