



**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.**

**BY**

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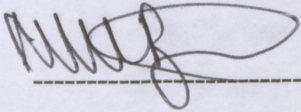
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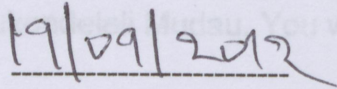
## DECLARATION

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I **RAZWIMISANI MASALA MOSES**, hereby declare that this mini dissertation for the degree of Masters in Public Management at the University of Venda submitted by me, has not been submitted previously for a degree at this university or any other university: that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledge.



**RAZWIMISANI M**



**DATE**

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**For all these people my thanks are due.**

## DEDICATION

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On my personal note, I dedicate this project to my parents, Mrs. Tshinakaho Razwimisani and my late father Mr Mavhungu Razwimisani Munyai. You were there for me all the way.

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 significant 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.

## 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.

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HoD Head of Department

DoE Department of Education

IPT Independent Project Trust

LPDR Lao People Democratic Republic

LRC Lesiner Representative Council

LOC Local Organising Committee

CDFs Community Development Forums

NASGB National Association of School Governing Bodies

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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1.1 Background of the study

<b>SGBS</b>	School Governing Bodies
<b>SMT</b>	School Management Team
<b>COLT</b>	Culture of Learning and Teaching
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Department
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>IPT</b>	Independent Project Trust
<b>LPDR</b>	Lao People Democratic Republic
<b>LRC</b>	Learner Representative Council
<b>LOC</b>	Local Organising Committee
<b>CDFs</b>	Community Development Forums
<b>NASGB</b>	National Association of School Governing Bodies

## CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

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### 1.1 Background of the study

After the establishment of the first democratic government in South Africa, the Education Ministry committed itself in transforming the education system through developing a range of new policies and legislation, which redefined what it means to govern and manage schools, and aimed to achieve equitable access to education and improve the quality of education. School improvement has become part of the educational lexicon. It features in government policies, educational conferences, and most importantly, in school strategies around the world. Indeed, governments have developed substantial programmes of school reform that targeted school governance in the hope of improving the quality of education and learners' achievements. In South Africa there have been also various school development attempts in response to the breakdown in the culture of learning and teaching (COLT).

There are a number of research studies that emphasize the importance of involving parents in school governance and the factors that work against it. On the other hand there is dearth of literature on the parent School Governing Body member's specific roles. Duku's study (2006:56), which explores parent's negotiation of their identities in school governance also cursorily, addresses parent School Governing Body member's governance roles. Much as SGB roles are outlined in SASA and some research been done on parental participation in school governance, what is not clear are the specific roles that parent SGB members perform in School Governing Body. In Vhembe District School governing bodies in Dzondo circuit have been involved in participatory decision making since their inception in 1996. Yet improvements in educational outcomes are limited. This research seeks to explore parent School Governing Body members' roles and how they perform them in the context of parental participation in school governance.

There is a great concern about leadership problems affecting the school Governing Bodies (SGBs) of various rural primary schools in the Republic of South Africa. Before the introduction of the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (SASA), the South African education system was characterized by racial discrimination of unparallel proportions. Historically, the system had racially based legislation such as the Bantu Education Act no 47 of 1953, (Shaba, and 2003:23). This was also reflected in the types of schools South Africa had, *inter alia*; model C schools, community schools, state aided schools and farm schools. In most instances, undemocratic school committee members were responsible for school governance. This was due to the fact that, in some schools, principals were appointing members to serve in these committees, sometimes, members to be elected would be known even before the elections were conducted.

Since the establishment of SGBs in the Limpopo Province, there are already instances whereby, the issue of power relations within them (SGBs) is beginning to surface by manifesting themselves through tensions that are gradually building up (The Star, 1996: 8). More predominantly, these are manifested through the relationship between the principal and other stakeholders. The Act seems to have assumed a healthy relationship among stakeholders because it does not make any provision on how to mediate or guide this relationship.

The governing bodies are given very important functions to perform. Amongst the number of roles and functions, the governing body has to support the principal, educators and other staff members of the school in the programme of their professional functions; SGB also administer and control school property and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including School hostels. Basically governing body's responsibility is to ensure that schools function well and effectively.

SGBs are given more responsibilities, which then suggest that these bodies must be well qualified to execute their duties as expected. More crucial to the success of the

SGBs, is the capacity of parents who are in the majority. Asmal (1999:8) maintains that millions of South African adults and young people cannot read or write in any language, and millions more are functionally illiterate and innumerate. This state of affairs has a potential to render SGBs non-functional, especially in rural areas where illiteracy is high.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 transfers powers and authority to school governing bodies to manage resources for the better performance of schools. The parent components of the School Governing Body are to be in the majority. The act mandates the SGB to improve the quality of education service delivery by providing strategic leadership and policy direction. In this way the SGBs are placed in strategic position to create conditions that are conducive for education of high quality and set the basis for the development of young people's talents and capabilities (Maluleka 2008:2, & RSA 1996:2). The Act does not provide guidelines on how SGB members should work together. In terms of the law the SGBs are to be involved in decision-making and also manage the funds of school, the functions which require some skills and capacity management and the accounting of the usage of money need skills and capacity of members in the SGBs.

The SGBs are to be involved in the decision making settings has not effective. Yet each year the government transfers large sums of money for the smooth running of schools. The SGB are expected to manage and account the usage of these funds to parents and the government. The majority of SGB members in rural communities like in Dzondo Circuit have never been exposed to formal organizational environment setting where skills like decision -making strategic planning and budgeting are practiced.

Above all, schools in Dzondo Circuit are located in areas where there are high levels of illiteracy. A major component of members of the SGB is drawn from a pool of illiterate parents. Members of school governing committees are expected to have acquired certain skills, knowledge and expertise in order to function effectively (Maluleka 2008:2) lack of requisite skills dis-empowers many parent members of the SGB and limit their involvement in discussions of important issues, and thus limit their engagement in decision making settings of the SGBs.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the capacity and skills of School Governing Bodies and their impact on the roles of the School Governing Bodies in the of Schools of Dzondo circuit

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- To identify and examine the role played by SGBs in the management of resources in Dzondo Circuit.
- To investigate and recommend the capacity-building programme of the SGBs that has an impact on the running of schools.
- To critically investigate whether SGBs in public schools are prepared to accept responsibilities associated with Section 21.
- To determine the capacity of SGBs, visas their roles, functions, and responsibilities, they have to perform.

#### 1.4 Research questions

- What roles do SGBs play in the management of resources in the Dzondo Circuit?
- Which challenges do SGBs in Dzondo Circuit face with regard to service delivery?
- What prevents SGBs to be prepared to accept responsibilities associated with section 21?
- What factors hinder SGBs in rural communities from performing their functions?

#### 1.5 Research Hypothesis

- Illiteracy hinder of effectiveness of the SGBs in their personal work
- Parents' contribution in the improvement of education is constrained by lack of confidence and motivation in the face of professional expertise of school management.
- Lack of parental involvement in school activities constrains the management of school.
- Education and governance will improve if principals and educators of schools refrain from imposing decisions on school governing bodies.

#### 1.6 Significance of the study

This study intends to reflect on the capacity of SGBs with special reference to those in Dzondo Circuit, which is in deep rural area. The study will focus on the contribution of the parental component of SGB in the school governance and its impact on the education management. In exploring the roles of parent SGB members, professionals such as educators, school principals and education managers will be in a better position to understand parents and their roles in school governance. These professionals will be able to understand parents' needs and interests on issues of

school governance. The understanding of parent SGB members' roles by professionals may also lead to enhanced collaboration between educators and parents; and also between principals and parent SGB members.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the study**

The focus of this study is to investigate into the capacity and role of school governing bodies in Dzondo circuit. Dzondo is located in rural part of the Vhembe District in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. This research focused on the SGBs of selected rural public primary schools and secondary schools in the Dzondo Circuit of Vhembe District. An SGB is a committee tasked with dealing with the entire governance of a school and this study focused on the service delivery and role of SGB in the management of resources. The chairpersons, treasurer, secretaries, principals, educators and one additional member of both SGBs will be investigated.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

The following experiences were mentioned as having a bearing on the method: some interviewees, especially principals, were reluctant to accept the interviewer before some free discussion had taken place. The reluctance could have stemmed from the respondent associating the interviews with inspection of some kind, especially since the interviews took place in the offices of the respective interviewees. With some SGB members, the interviews were conducted in Tshivenda and information had to be translated into English. During the translation process, the content of the interview from the respondents' side could lose meaning as every translation goes with interpretation. The researcher did not have the resources to audio-tape the interviews, which is probably the most accurate way of recording data. Instead, during the interviews conducted with the various responded groups, the researcher jotted down the required information as the interviews proceeded.

## 1.9 Definitions of concepts

According to Section 24 of 1996, refers to a school wherein the School Governing Body has been allocated extra functions such as controlling its own finances, and buildings as well as paying service rendered to the school. The school, therefore, has powers to procure its own goods by depositing money into the school's account.

- **Parents**
- **Educator**

According to the current National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996:1, educator means any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons at an education services or education auxiliary or support services provided by or in an education department.

is organized and controlled (Joubert and Prinsloo, 2001:41). Section 16 (1) subject to the Act, every public school is vested in its governing body (SASA, Act 54 of 1996).

- **Leadership**

According to Bush (2003:3), a central element in leadership is that there is a process of influence. Yuki (2003: 5) as cited by Bush (2003:5) maintains that most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby, international influence is exerted by one person [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in groups or organizations.

It refers to what the parent SGB members do when they are tasked with policy related matters.

- **School Governing Body (SGB)**

### 1.10 Brief summary of Literature review

The School Governing Body means a governing body of public school as contemplated in Section 16(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (National Association of School Governing Bodies' constitution as adopted in September, 2001: 3). The SGB is the body that is elected democratically and it comprises the educator component, parent component, principal as ex-officio member, and learner component in the case of secondary schools.

Members must have the capacity to pool the talents and knowledge of politicians, parents, educators and others in the locality to ensure success in schools.

- **A Section 21 school**

SASA contains provisions that govern the SGBs. The Act supports the idea of a According to (SASA, Act 84 of 1996), refers to a school wherein the School Governing Body has been allocated extra functions such as controlling its own finances, maintaining and improving their school properties and buildings as well as paying service rendered to the school. The school, therefore, has powers to procure its own goods because the money is deposited into the school's account.

- **School Governance**

School Governance has to do with determining the policy and rules by which a school is organized and controlled (Joubert and Prinsloo, 2001:41). Section 16 (1) subject to the Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body (SASA, Act 84 of 1996).

- **Roles**

For the purposes of this study role means the duties and functions that the SGB are tasked to perform as specified by the SASA. It refers to what the parent SGB members do when they are tasked with policy related matters.

## **1.10 Brief summary of Literature review**

Section 21 schools refer to those schools which are self-reliant or self-managing Wragg and Partington (1990:64) state that if a governing body is to be effective, a group of individuals, some of whom may never have met the others before, must become a team and set out to work for the good of the school and its community. This implies keeping up to date about what is going on in education generally and in the school in particular. The governors must have the capacity to pool the talents and knowledge of politicians, parents, educators and others in the locality to ensure success in schools.

## Challenges of school governing bodies in rural areas

SASA contains provisions that govern the SGBs. The Act supports the idea of a partnership between all people who have interest in education. Schools will be improved only through the joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, members of their local communities and education departmental officials; The Act creates a framework that gives parents a far greater role in the governance and development of schools. Wragg & Partington (1990:8) maintain that educational changes hit governing bodies very suddenly in the late 1980s. Governors were by large caught unaware. The demand for governors-training grew and local education authorities were put in the inevitable position of having to provide training.

the SGB is made up of elected members, the principal and co-opted members. Elected Republic of South Africa 1996, defines policy as an attempt to change the behaviour of people, such as educators, non-educator staff or learners, and schools, in order to deal with perceived social and other problems, attempt to eliminate the conditions which led to problems, and to create new norms and standards for schools. According to Van Schalkwyk (1991:42) policy is a course of action, which is formulated by people for people. It gives rise to educational laws, prescriptions, regulations, ordinances, rules and instructions. Van der Westhizen (1991:50) explains policy as guidelines for decision-making to guide those who are involved in the implementation and planning for an example budget. Allen (1994:159) and Robbins (1980:73) are of the opinion that the policy is essential as part of planning.

Section 21 schools refer to those schools which are self-reliant or self-managing schools. The central government devolves power to local school level. The schools are the primary units of improvement or development. The SGBs in these schools are empowered to take control and be responsible for educational and organizational matters in their schools. Most of them are former model C schools.

- **Challenges of school governing bodies in rural areas**

Karlson J. (1996:9) writes that governing bodies are statutory; the composition of these structures should operate on the principles of inclusivity and representivity to ensure that different stakeholders and role players are afforded an opportunity to effectively participate in the development of educational policies

committees and school boards were not trained or work-shopped with regard to their functions and duties as advocates

- **Composition of the school governing body**

In accordance with the South African Schools' Act, (RSA, 1996:13) the membership of the SGB is made up of elected members, the principal and co-opted members. Elected members of the SGB comprise individuals from each of the following categories: parents of learner of the school, educators at the school, and members of staff at the school who are not educators and learners in the eighth grade or higher. Parents are in the majority on the SGB and there should be one parent more than the total of all other members combined. The number of parent, educator, no-educator and learner members who is on a governing body depends upon the size of the school enrolment and whether it is a primary, secondary or comprehensive school (Limpopo Department of Education, 2002:20).

- **The effects of South African leadership crisis in schools**

Leadership is the cornerstone of every country, organizations and institutions worldwide. Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, leadership became a thorny issue and this has been debated vividly in all government circles, organizations and institutions, but yielded little consequences. The challenges, among others, are namely, capacity building, mismatch of people in their leadership positions, tribalism, electing members without leadership attributes, and so on.

## 1.11 • The roles and functions of school governing bodies

The advent of political freedom in South Africa in 1994 has ushered in a dispensation in which democratic structures such as SGBs have to govern schools. In the apartheid era, school committees and school boards were appointed by principals and did not govern the schools according to school policy. Such committees and school boards were not trained or work-shopped with regard to their functions and duties as advocated by Simon and Taylor (1981:191). School committees and boards were mostly used to rubber-stamp things that they did not know about. To make matters worse, they did not know how to apply policies and to handle the disruptive situations whenever they occurred at schools.

In this chapter, the research focuses on the literature review, where various books,

The SGB functions as a unit, although individual members have individual responsibilities and it is allowed to set up committees in order to fulfill its tasks effectively. SGBs are given functions according to their experience, knowledge and capacity. Section 21 lists function that may be allocated to a school if it's SGB demonstrates the competence to perform such functions effectively.

## • School governance and professional management

Khosa (2002: 104) indicates that there is no clear line between the governance and management functions. SASA does not give a clear distinction between school governance and school management and this created a serious problem since 1994. SGB members have been blamed by the management members of going beyond their governance terrain and on the other hand, SGB members, especially the parent component, have complained of unsupportive principals and staff dominating SGB meeting (Khosa, 2001:104).

## 1.11 Organisation of study

- **Chapter 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

This is an orientation chapter in which background, problem statement, and delimitation of the study. The chapter also outlines the aims and objectives of the research; brief summary of literature review, organisation of the study, the clarifications of concepts and the significance of the research.

- **Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, the research focuses on the literature review, where various books, journals, articles, government legislations are perused. The chapter also gives an understanding of the concepts leadership and governance of the SGBs, which are the core business of the research.

- **Chapter 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the research methodology, in which the research design, methods of data collection and analysis are outlined. The chapter also highlights the target population, sampling methods, data collection procedures and techniques.

- **Chapter 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION & ANALYSIS**

In this chapter, data collected from the interviews are presented, analyzed and interpreted.

## CHAPTER 5 • Chapter 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This is a final chapter of the research. It, therefore, focuses on the recommendations based on the findings, analysis, and interpretation outlined in chapter four. The conclusion is also presented in this chapter.

### 1.12 Conclusion

In this chapter the nature of the study were explained with reference to what the problem is that have been researched and the background of this study. The research design will be also discussed, referring in detail to the methodology, population, sampling, data collection techniques and data analysis were used to conduct this study.

Ledigo (1997:2) maintains that one of the major reasons why education is in a mess in South Africa, especially in historically black schools, is the absence of effective school governance. He goes on to argue that getting school governance right will go a long way towards educational reconstruction in Limpopo Province. This calls for SGBs to be capacitated if Limpopo Province wants to see education reconstructed and changed for the better.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW of the School Governing Bodies

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### 2.1 Introduction

Wragg and Partington (1990:64) state that if a governing body is to be effective, a group of individuals, some of whom may never have met the others before, must become a team and set out to work for the good of the school and its community. This implies keeping up to date about what is going on in education generally and in the school in particular.

The governors must have the capacity to pool the talents and knowledge of politicians, parents, educators and others in the locality to ensure success in schools. SASA contains provisions that govern the SGBs. The Act supports the idea of a partnership between all people who have interest in education. Schools will be improved only through the joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, members of their local communities and education departmental officials. The Act creates a framework that gives parents a far greater role in the governance and development of schools. Wragg and Partington (1990:8) maintain that educational changes hit governing bodies very suddenly in the late 1980s. Governors were by large caught unaware. The demand for governors-training grew and local education authorities were put in the inevitable position of having to provide training.

Lediga (1997:2) maintains that one of the major reasons why education is in a mess in South Africa, especially in historically black schools, is the absence of effective school governance. He goes on to argue that getting school governance right will go a long way towards educational reconstruction in Limpopo Province. This calls for SGBs to be capacitated if Limpopo Province wants to see education reconstructed and changed for the better.

## 2.2 The capacity-building programme of the School Governing Bodies

Beckman (2000:82) defines capacity-building as the power to act, directed towards community empowerment and includes the development of both the materials and human resources necessary for effective governance. Section 19 of SASA stipulates the following strategies for a comprehensive development of capacity-building in the education system as a whole:

- To provide introductory training for newly-elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions;
- To provide continuing development of governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them assume additional functions; and
- The principal and other officers of the Department of Education render all necessary assistance to governing bodies in the performance of their functions in terms of the Schools Act.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1996, defines capacity-building as training that will ensure that the trained will acquire the power to act. Capacity-Building is directed to the empowerment of the governing bodies and it entails the development of both the material and human resources (knowledge, skills, and attitude) necessary for effective governance and management. In many school communities there are skills that need to be developed if the relevant structures are to be effective (Republic of South Africa, 1992:89). Large numbers of SGBs in most instances will be performing their roles for the first time. But many such persons might have relation to capacity building; SASA encourages the provision of information to personnel and workshop for the newly elected members of the SGBs.

Section 19 of SASA provides that it is the responsibility of the HOD at provincial level to ensure that SGBs are trained to perform their functions effectively. The Act does not

lay down basic guiding principles for the implementation of training programme for the SGBs. No special training is assigned to the district or circuit according to Section 21 status, which brings more functions to the SGBs. Van Wyk (2000:103) remarks that the board members' training manuals' content and layout is difficult to comprehend; therefore parents would not have the capacity of accessing the information.

Mathonsi (2001:66) argues that the paperwork training methods of school governors should be changed. Adams and Waghid (2003:17) endorse the fact that school-board members need to be educated and empowered for them to become practical agents of the democratic school governance. It is in this regard that the researcher has included the basic principles in the governors' training as cited by Wragg and Partington (1990:72) as applied in Great Britain. The two argue that there is much to be said for a carefully thought-out policy on governor training. Amongst basic principles identified and described are the following:

#### 2.2.1 Follow through

##### **2.2.1 Involve the profession:**

Often courses are set up and then forgotten about. Governors who have been to an Heads of schools or educators might occasionally be hostile to training programme if they fantasize that a squad of muscled intellectual heavies will descend on them bristling with expertise and tactical weaponry. If one involves heads in the training, not only can they see what is happening, but they can also provide valuable advice;

##### **2.2.2 Make it practical:**

Coatsworth (1995:224) advances the idea that one reform that has gained popularity in Let governors see curricular materials, tackle real cases that are put to governors, and role-play imaginary meetings; had experience in other consultative and decision making groups, and this experience and knowledge must be recognized and drawn upon in the process of capacity-building developments. Republic of South African (1992:91) points out that, in

### 2.2.3 Bring in as many as possible:

Training courses which only allow one person to attend from each governing body will take an age to spread and will never reach most people. If possible regional courses should be mounted for two or three representatives from each governing body, and local courses for a larger group of people from each school;

### 2.2.4 Provide back-up material:

Often people go to training courses and then find they cannot recall the details. A small resource booklet or pamphlet summarizing the conference, a set of guidelines, letters of information or news-sheets will give people a useful record of proceedings, which they can refer at leisure;

### 2.2.5 Follow through

Often courses are set up and then forgotten about. Governors who have been to an induction course in the early stages of their governorship may have an appetite for something more exciting after a year or two. Furthermore it should be remembered that hundreds of new governors are engaged every year, in many cases for the first time in their lives. Thus a course run in one year might have to be repeated every year or two cater for all the new comers.

Cookson (1995:224) advances the idea that one reform that has gained popularity in the past decade is the increased participation by parents in the governance of the school site. This strategy is designed to bring community involvement closer to the decisions that affect what happens in the classroom. In the past decade, school site governors have become the linchpin of several school reform strategies. But it is still not clear as to whether school governors are truly capacitated in making the decisions that shape the core of the school.

The SGBs level of functionality are determined by a number of factors: The school's history, the location of the school, the access it has to expertise inside and outside the school, the school's relationship with its parents in the community and, critically, the leadership that is exercised inside the school (Republic of South Africa, 2004:103).

### 2.3 The Roles and responsibilities of the School Governing Bodies

The advent of political freedom in South Africa in 1994 has ushered in a dispensation in which democratic structures such as SGBs have to govern schools. In the apartheid era, school committees and school boards were appointed by principals and did not govern the schools according to school policy. Such committees and school boards were not trained or work-shopped with regard to their functions and duties as advocated by Simon and Taylor (1981:191). School committees and boards were mostly used to rubber-stamp things that they did not know about. To make matters worse, they did not know how to apply policies and to handle the disruptive situations whenever they occurred at schools.

Warnock (1988:120) believes that the democratization of education includes the idea that stakeholders such as parents, educators and members of the community must participate in the activities of the school. According to Townsend (1994:23) the governing body has to make decisions on behalf of the school and must ensure that the school is administered properly. The Act recognizes SGBs as a group of people assigned to govern a school. SGBs are also entitled to promote the best interests of the school and to ensure that the learners at the school receive the best education possible. According to SASA it is the task of the SGB to help the school principal to organize and manage the school's activities in an effective and efficient manner. The success of SGBs can to some extent be measured by the parents who see themselves as having a role to play in the education of their children. This can be done by participating in school matters without being paid for the services they render (Republic of South Africa, 2003:132).

The governing body, which is a representative of all stakeholders, should have the capacity and potential to solve problems. The best partnership in education is characterized by mutual trust and respect, common vision, open communication and shared goals and values as outlined by Van Schalkwyk (1992:88-89). Section 20 of SASA prescribes the following tasks to be rendered by the SGBs:

- To develop the mission statement of the school;
- To adopt a code of conduct of learners at the school;
- To develop a constitution;
- To support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions; and
- To encourage parents, educators, learners and other staff to render voluntary services to the school

The above roles may look easy at first glance whereas they require a governing body to be well capacitated to deal with them as expected. To develop a constitution which is in line with the legal requirements remains a challenge to SGBs. Only SGBs, which are composed of some members who have an understanding of the education profession or are professionally qualified, can assist on the professional performance of educators.

#### **2.4 The functions of the SGB in section 21 schools**

The SGB that demonstrates the capacity, knowledge and expertise to perform the compulsory (mandatory) section 20 functions may be allocated certain functions over and above these functions. The allocated functions are: maintaining and improving the school's property and buildings, determining the extra-curricular activities of the school and the choice of subject options, purchasing textbooks, educational materials or equipment as well as paying for the services to the school. The awarding of section 21 functions to schools is more than a paper transfer of additional functions to a school.

(DoE, 2003:2). It is recognition of the ability of the school's stakeholders to take charge of the operation of the school. It is a vote of confidence in a school's ability to control its own destiny (DoE, 2003:2).

#### **2.4.1 Promoting the best interests of the school and ensuring its development**

The School Governing Body should try to use its knowledge, skills and expertise to improve the quality of education for learners at the school. Every member of the SGB must be prepared to play his/her part actively and all should reach an understanding of what it means to be good member of a school governing body (DoE, 1997:10). This is endorsed by Davies (1999:105) and Visser and Beckman (1999:153-154) who state that the SGB members should put the interests of the school above their own personal, political, religious and language interests.

#### **2.4.2 Maintaining and improving the school's property.**

SGBs in section 21 schools are expected to maintain and improve the school's property, buildings and grounds. This means that plans to maintain and improve the school should be developed according to provincial department specifications and local council specifications and the expenditure on these improvements should keep within the budget (DoE, 2002:17). In addition, the SGB should try where possible to utilize local human and material resources. The school must also have a clear policy with guidelines on the use of facilities at the school.

While it is easy for SGBs serving middle-class schools to practice this because of the expertise, and skills of their members and also their school's financial position, SGBs "in poor working –class communities where poverty levels in families qualify them for special grants from government" are unable to make developments and improvements on their property and buildings (Karlsson, 2002:334). This is reiterated by Motala and

Pampallis (2002:153) who state that many school Governing Bodies in the rural areas and in less advantaged urban areas, do not as yet have the requisite skills and experience to exercise their new power and may have problems fulfilling their basic functions or qualifying for additional functions. This is exacerbated by the fact that the educated elite is migrating from rural undeveloped areas to towns and urban areas where living conditions are better. In many instances even if these people are co-opted into the SGBs in case they still reside in these areas, they rarely attend the meetings because of their busy schedules.

#### **2.4.3 Determining the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the provincial curriculum policy.**

The SGB of a section 21 school is also required to determine the extra –mural curriculum and choice of subject options according to the provincial curriculum policy. For this to occur there must be a functional curriculum committee familiar with current curriculum development and also applicable legislation and documentation, that guides the extra-curriculum program of the school (DoE, 2003:4). A school that applies for this function needs to demonstrate that extracurricular activities and extra subjects are well managed and enhance the school's education programme. For instance, there must be a proper timetable and adequate safety measures and funds for these extracurricular activities. SGBs in section 21 schools should demonstrate a great knowledge and competence of the following skills: administrative, financial, consultative, human resource and legal skills. This is very important considering that the SGB is a "justice person" who is legally responsible for the decision it makes based upon the functions and powers devolved (Sayed and Carrim, 1997:94).

Sayed and Carrim (1997:94) argue that is unclear where governing bodies are ready to take on such responsibilities, because although they have more knowledge of local conditions, the parent component of the SGB often knows little about larger issues that are just as important in determining an appropriate course of action (Van Wyk,

2004:51). Many SGBs in South Africa and abroad lack the expertise within the field of education and therefore cannot play a meaningful role in curriculum issue (RSA, 1996, section 20). Wragg and Partington(1990:32) stress that governors tend to leave curriculum matters to the principal and his staff and where governors attempted to involve themselves more with what is tauter have sometimes met with resentment from teachers.

#### **2.4.4 Supporting the principal, educators and other staff of the school in their professional functions**

An important aspect in the provision of quality education is the enlistment of all stakeholders in the organisation of the school. Petreson and Deal (1998:28) stress that school leaders, principals, teachers and parents are the key to eliminating toxic culture and building a positive one. The support of the SGB in improving the performance of schools cannot be over-emphasized as several researchers have reiterated the role parental involvement and support of parents plays in improving student achievement (Cohn and Crossmiller, 1987:87).

The introduction of SASA.84 of 1996, which outlawed corporal punishment makes the involvement of the SGB in education essential because the discipline of the child depends on the clearly defined rules and regulations that parents, educators and learners (in the case of secondary schools) agree on. The SGB should encourage parents to be active participants in all school activities as this builds relationships and helps break down barriers, develops consensus and promotes a sense of unity in the school (Cohn and Crossmiller, 1987:382). In its role of encouragement, the SGB should respect and acknowledge the status and function of parents who share the responsibility of governance of the school (Davies, 1999:106). Guskey and Peterson (1998:13) stress that schools must make sure that meetings and training sessions are scheduled at times that are convenient to parents and should value their involvement.

Although the S.A.S.A. 84 of 1996 state that the SGBs should support the principal, educators and other staff in the performance of their professional functions. However, research has shown that there is little support of educators by SGBs (VAN Wyk, 2004:51). This is caused by, among others, a lack of or inadequate expertise within the field of education. Guskey & Peterson (1996:12) content that some governing bodies avoid, ignore or neglect issues related to teaching and learning.

The SGB should also allow the reasonable use of the facilities of the school for community, social and school fundraising purposes, subject to such reasonable and equitable conditions as the governing body may determine. This may include the charging of a fee or tariff which accrues to the school. The use of the school's property in fundraising activities is important, as many parents in disadvantaged communities are unable to pay school fees. The few funds raised can be used to alleviate some of the needs of the school.

However, Karlsson(2002:334) warns that this has the unintended effect of widening the gap between schools serving middle-class learners and those serving township and rural schools, as the SGBs of the former have greater access to school fee income and are thus able use the extra funds to, for instance , hire extra educators. Most of the schools serving middle class communities have better facilities such as sports facilities, halls (which are in demand from church groups and other groupings) that they use to accumulate more funds from people who hire these facilities. Meanwhile schools in disadvantaged communities do not usually have these facilities and are therefore unable to generate a lot of money through leasing these facilities.

#### **2.4.5 Purchasing textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school**

School Governing Bodies of section 21 list may deal directly with suppliers and contractors for the relevant budgeted items in accordance with standard procurement

procedures (DoE, 1998:28). One of the extra functions that the SGB has is to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school. For this to occur the school should establish a learning support material committee consisting of relevant staff members as well as SGB representatives (DoE, 2002:18). The duty of this committee is to develop guidelines for the selection, distribution and retrieval of learner support material and also to ensure that the set guidelines are adhered to. The school must also keep a stock register where all the support material for the school are recorded and maintained. It is important for the SGB to know and understand the procurement procedures when acquiring new material, for instance, tendering procedures. The school should keep documents as evidence of correct dealing with suppliers and contractors and of how materials and services were used so as to submit these for audit purposes to the provincial department of education as part of the finance report. This is done by the finance committee, which consists of both educators and parents.

School Governing Bodies (“work under very sometimes demand conditions that make it impossible for them to develop expertise in the most current ideas and research on student learning” (Guskey, et al, 1996:12). This means that SGBs get constrained on issues with less influence in educational provision. As a result the parent members in the Learner Support Material committee might find it difficult to understand their role in the decision to select learner support material has traditionally been made by educators in a particular learning area. The decision to include parent on such a committee is symbolic of the government’s intention to change the situation wherein parents were completely excluded, however, many teachers are defensive about intrusion into what used to be called their ‘secret garden’ (Sallis, 1995:50).

#### **2.4.6 Controlling and caring for the school’s money and property**

One of the major functions of the SGB is take care of, control and protect the school’s assets (money and property) in a careful and morally responsible manner (Davies,

1999:110). In addition, the South African Schools' Act 84 of 1996 compels the SGB to "take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school". As the state has to build and maintain public schools, pay educators and buy most of the teaching materials, funds are usually insufficient; hence SASA's recommendation for SGBs to charge school fees (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch, 1997:37). Van Wyk (2004:7) stress that the SGB must oversee the financial management of the school and other money, which may be paid into the school's account. The SGB must be morally accountable to the school for all its financial undertakings and transactions.

Heystek (2004:7) argues that for parents (as SGB members) to perform the expected policy and financial functions, they must have the ability to read and understand the legislation and policies in order to implement them. Moreover, many educators as opposed to principals feel that many parents, especially in disadvantaged communities; do not have the competence to handle financial matters (Van Wyk, 2004:53). This is supported by Heystek (2004:7) who stresses that the high rate of illiteracy or semi-illiteracy of parental governors on the SGB might create difficulties in the implementation of school-based management.

#### **2.4.7 Paying for services rendered to the school**

A section 21 school, unlike a section 20 school, has to pay for services rendered, for instance electricity, telephone accounts from its own funds. The school should establish a finance committee made up of members who have adequate skills in budgeting and accounting procedures. This committee should outline duties and the procedures to be followed in spending the money, for instance signing procedures, handling of petty cash, school fee exemptions, etc. The finance committee monitors the monthly income and expenditure to ensure that services that are budgeted for are paid out. The finance committee must use proper accounting procedures to record and

file all financial transactions e.g. receipts and invoices (DoE, 2002:18). The finance policy should also contain rules and regulation about the use of equipment and facilities.

This is one of the most critical and challenging functions of the SGB as the correct handling of the school's finances result in the community gaining confidence and trust in the SGB. A school does not gain Section 21 status until it can carry out this function effectively (DoE, 2002:5). This usually encourages parents to participate in the activities of school. The SGB must therefore be transparent and they must keep adequate financial records and draw up a financial statement each year (Davies, 1999:111). The financial statement must be audited by a suitably qualified independent auditor and must be sent to the Head of Department within six months after the end of the year.

### 3.3. Composition of the school governing body

Many people have reservations about SGBs in disadvantaged areas performing their functions effectively. Heystek (2003) and Van Wyk (2004) cite illiteracy, lack of skills, knowledge and understanding about legislation and policies pertaining to finances as factors that may result in the SGBs failing to handle finances in an effective way. Davies (1999:106) contends that members of the governing body will only be able to perform their task in morally responsible and accountable manner when they have a clear conception of their functions. This is supported by Beckman and Visser (1999:160) who state that without proper capacity building regarding legal elements, it is possible that problems will occur which could be of such magnitude that this may defeat the whole purpose of public school governing bodies as democratic mechanisms of localized government.

The lack of or insufficient capacity building on SGBs by some provincial departments of education regarding financial matters exacerbates this situation. This is supported by the survey conducted by Education for All 2000, Assessments (DoE, 2000:45) where it was established that "not all SGBs "had undergone training" at the time the

survey was conducted. A circular distributed by the Vhembe District (Circular, Systems and Planning, 31 march 2004) also gives credence to this as the Limpopo Department of Education makes an apology for the inconvenience caused by, amongst others short notices given before an activity, cancellation of activities at the eleventh hour, some activities starting later than the actual time and also stated the non-attendance by some training co-coordinators.

As highlighted in the circular, workshops for capacity building are conducted, at a time when the parent component of the SGB is at work or committed. This is caused by the fact that there is no clear programme to indicate when and where the workshops are to be held. As a result, employers do not have sufficient time to make the necessary adjustments to their programmes to release these people of training.

## **2.5 Composition of the school governing body**

In accordance with the South African Schools' Act, (RSA, 1996:13) the membership of the SGB is made up of elected members, the principal and co-opted members. Elected members of the SGB comprise individuals from each of the following categories: parents of learner of the school, educators at the school, and members of staff at the school who are not educators and learners in the eighth grade or higher. Parents are in the majority on the SGB and there should be one parent more than the total of all other members combined. The number of parent, educator, no-educator and learner members who are on a governing body depends upon the size of the school enrolment and whether it is a primary, secondary or comprehensive school (Limpopo Department of Education, 2002:20). A primary school of between 160 and 719 pupils has six parent members, two educator members, one no-teaching member whereas a secondary school with more than 629 learners will have ten parent members , three educator members two non-teaching members and three learner (DoE, 2002:20). In the absence of a non-teaching staff member the number of parent governors is reduced by one.

The small member of educators is, according to Deem, Brehoney and Heath (in Van WYK:2004:49) problematic for educators as they have frequently to rely on the SGB as a whole (and not their own educator representatives) to meet their needs, as educators are often reluctant to engage in direct confrontation with school principals at SGB meetings. This small number means that their right to have a say in the affairs of the school is curtailed. The entrenchment of the position of parents is indicative of the importance attached to their input in the affairs of the school (Visser, 1999:631).

SGBs are allowed to co-opt members from the community if they feel the person can make a good contribution to their functioning. Wragg and Partington (1990:67) stress that co-opted members should bring a dimension to the governing body, which other members cannot readily give. However, such members do not have voting rights on the School Governing Body, governors normally serve for a year's except Learner Representative Council (LRC) members who serve for a year unless re-elected and provided they are still at school. During these three years, if for whatever reason any member ceases to qualify as a governor she/he automatically ceases to be a member of the governing body (DoE, 2003:78). The primary reason for members losing their status is that they cease to be members when their children leave the school (DoE, 2003:78). Office bearers serve for only a year unless re-elected.

The establishment of SGBs with the inclusion of parents, educators and learners (in secondary schools) clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to democracy. This is supported by Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999:25) who stress that this will help involve people in making decisions that affect their lives and therefore has a role in spreading democracy. De Clecq (2002:87) adds that local institutions develop greater motivation, commitment and involvement when in control and this control is important if education is to be relevant to local needs and conditions. School governing bodies were instituted with the aim of entrenching democracy and instituting representative governance, which it is strongly believed that it will enhance the effectiveness of schools and therefore improve the quality of education (DoE, 1996:

22). Davies (1999:101) states that representation of these stakeholders on the governing body of the school (SGB) is a positive move in the effort to achieve the aims of democratisation, which includes participation. The participation in education is meant to achieve better education for all learners. The philosophy of giving significant powers to parents in decision-making "gives primacy to the concept that decisions about managing are best taken by those people closest to the users of the service" (Green, 1993:22). By involving more people in school governance the government hopes that this will boost democracy and ensure equity amongst schools (Dielens & Enslin, 2002:4).

## 2.6 School governance and professional management

Khosa (2001: 104) indicates that there is no clear line between the governance and management functions. SASA does not give a clear distinction between school governance and school management and this created a serious problem since 1994. SGB members have been blamed by the management members of going beyond their governance terrain and on the other hand, SGB members, especially the parent component, have complained of unsupportive principals and staff dominating SGB meeting (Khosa, 2001:104). The former Minister of education, Asmal (2000: 2), in his speech, maintained that, in many cases school principals still held considerable influence over who is to be elected into the SGBs. The Deputy Minister of National Education Mangena (2002: 1) indicated in his speech that, as a department, they expect a School Governing Body to play a governance role and the principal, together with the School Management Team (SMT), a management role. Though, pronounced, the two parties strive to reach agreement on governance of schools, but the problems continue. This could be the fact that SGB members need recognition in their leading role and they want to be seen to be working or maybe the level of their education makes them fail to understand their roles.

Mathonsi (2001: 4), in his speech about transforming governance and management of education, has indicated that the fact that the majority of our parents did not receive any formal education does not suggest that they cannot think logically, conceptually and contextually. But the question remains unanswered as to why the SGBs in the rural primary schools do not take a leading role in the school governance. The report of the Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (Republic of South Africa. 2004:84-85) tries to highlight difficulties experienced by SGBs with regard to SMTs and vice versa , *inter alia*: lack of communication, lack of implementation of decision taken at SGB meetings , conflict over spending priorities, unavailability of management members or SGB members and blurring the distinction between SGB and SMT. Some SGBs according to the report on Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (Republic of South Africa. 2004: 84-85), indicate that the SGBs are not provided enough training , which results in a limited understanding of school policies. Puth (2002: 32) also indicates that communication must be seen as a key resource of leadership. In line with the findings by the Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance, leadership problems have never been given attention as such. It is therefore, significant to determine how lack of SGBs capacity in rural schools impact on their poor governance responsibilities.

The minister of National Education in South Africa, Pandor (2006: 20), indicated that there must be equitable distribution of power between principals and their SGBs when she was addressing the seventh conference of the International Confederation of principals held at Cape Town in July 2006. She noted that since 1994, policies and strategies in education received much attention under democratic dispensation but were lacking in the implementation. This, according to her was partly due to the fact that the focus has not been on the SGBs; it has been on the school leadership. When the department developed new education legislation in the post-election period in 1996, it gave a great deal of attention to democratization and very little attention to policies and practices that are related to the development's biggest challenges; the promotion of quality learning and teaching.

The state policy focus was on the need to promote inclusion and participatory democracy in the schooling system. Principals are not given a platform to perform their roles and also the support they deserve in executing their strategic leadership and development role. There is a lot of confusion with regard to management and governance. Lewis and Naidoo (2004:11) confirm in their research on governance and management that all stakeholders emphasized the importance of parental participation in school governance, but stakeholders such as principals and educators do not necessarily value participation in it or for advancing democratic decision making in school. In their practices, such participation and consultation promoted by principals and educators often assist them to make their work easier. This creates a scenario wherein all stakeholders fail to understand the leadership role they should play in the true sense of the word.

## 2.7 Challenges of school governing bodies in rural schools

Karlsson (1996:145) writes that governing bodies are statutory; the composition of these structures should operate on the principles of inclusivity and representivity to ensure that different stakeholders and role players are afforded an opportunity to effectively participate in the development of educational policies. In line with the above the Legal and Policy Framework for Education governance in Limpopo Province (1997) indicate the following on school governance:-

- A cornerstone of the education policy of Limpopo Province Department of Education is the governance of education in general and schools in particular. That is encapsulated in:
  - The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
  - The National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27, 1996)
  - The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84, 1996)

Kogan *et al* (1994) in Anderson *et al* (2001) as well as Packwood (1989) in Coleman (1994) identified four models for governing bodies. They are:-

- The accountable governing body;
- The advisory governing body;
- The supportive governing body; and
- The mediating governing body;
- For the uncountable governing body, the purpose centres on ensuring the following:

School is operating to the policies and prescriptions of the Department of Education. The advisory governing body supports the organisation in its relationship with external agencies and represents as mote internal role for the members. The mediating governing body has wider horizons and is concerned with the local educational system, ensuring the school fits into the broader pattern.

### 2.7.1 Inclusiveness

McPherson (2000:315) writes that, The Schools Act (South African School Act) empowers S.G.B's (School Governing Body) with responsibilities for school governance and management while LRC's (Learner Representative Councils), through their representatives on the SGBs, access school policy and decision-making process. The above mentioned responsibilities may also characterize school governing bodies. The first characteristic of inclusiveness has been eluded earlier on. Effective governing bodies operate in a particular manner, following the set procedures. McPherson (2000:215), argues that SGBs should in their structure, operate on the principles of inclusivity and representivity to ensure that different stake holders and role players are afforded an opportunity to effectively participate in the development of educational system.

## 2.7.2 Collaboration

Collaboration is the working together by the parents and educators and learners (in the case of the secondary schools) in school governance in order to promote the best interests of the school (Heystek, 2004). The nature in which the SGBs are constituted allows greater space for community members to collaborate with educators in school governance. It is of primary importance that each component in the process of collaboration understands its line of operation within the SGBs. Where there is a lack of understanding of one's roles and responsibilities the relationships within the SGBs are negatively affected. This lack of understanding is referred to as by Heystek (2004) as 'power plays'.

This means that power plays may lead to poor collaboration amongst SGB components. This excerpt suggests that there must be a form of partnership between the SGB components, especially the principal, and the chairperson of the SGB. Farrel (2001:72), further argues, "The most important relationship is that between the head teacher and the chairperson of the governors, and the chairperson has a tricky task of balancing the views of other governors and the ambitions of the head teacher for the school." This therefore means that the head teacher- chairperson relationship or partnership is improved if both head teacher and chairperson understand their roles and responsibilities in the process of implementing school policies. These power plays and domination could also be seen at the level of understanding of each component playing its roles (Heystek, 2004).

## 2.7.3 Meetings

After school governing bodies are elected, according to section 23 of the South African Schools Act, they should meet regularly at least once a quarter unless if there is a need for an emergency or special meetings. Meetings should be conducted along body meetings. Members of the governing body should be familiar with meeting

democratic principles such as equality among members and transparency and that decisions are by consensus or majority vote.

#### **2.7.4 Accountability**

Accountability is one important characteristic of the school governing body that has also been discussed amongst the four models of governing bodies. However (McPherson 2000) stressed the importance of transparency and good communication in handling external relations, because the feedback given to the community is viewed as strategically important to build positive governance attitudes and may encourage active parental participation in school matters.

#### **2.7.5 Participation**

The community is the society whose interests in education the school serves (Mathonsi, 2001). In establishing SGBs the government hoped to bring about greater community involvement in matters of school governance. In outlining the meaning of community involvement, it is important to give a comprehensive definition of the SGB. Mathonsi (2001:12) notes that: the SGB is a body in which all components of the school community are represented. It stands in a position of trust of the school and it governs its activities. It is also at the center of everything in the school and all the powers of school governance are vested in it. The main purpose of SGBs is to enable all key stakeholders, especially parents, to play a central role in the education of their children. The SGB is a structure that should involve the interested stakeholders in a democratic manner in an attempt to link education and social development. It strives to make schools to serve the relevant needs of the immediate communities and to bring a sense of ownership among communities.

The degree of professionalism has the impact on the level of participation in governing body meetings. Members of the governing body should be familiar with meeting

procedures and other education issues. Therefore each role should be defined. Undefined roles may lead to disharmony and conflict amongst the school governing body members. Situations where one member dominates the others should be avoided at all costs. It is common for principals of schools to dominate proceedings of governing body meetings for various reasons. (McPherson 2000:123) discovered this tradition which undermines the functioning of SGBs.

### 2.7.6 Decentralisation sub-committees

Decentralisation was the strategy by the state to share its power with other stakeholders, particularly those who are closer to the school in order to bring about improved control of the schools (van Wyk, 2004:32). The debate around problems that seem to prevail in education, especially at a primary level, resulted in an approach that was to bring about reforms (democratisation) in the schooling system. These reforms were done within the parameters of decentralisation (Maclure, 2004:315). It was hoped that the decentralisation of education would bring about a greater responsiveness to the needs of the particular local people in that school community.

A high level of participation was also a focal point in the decentralisation of education (Maclure, 2004:8). This means that the Department of Education wanted to delegate some of its tasks to community members. Parents were made to participate in school governance by electing the SGBs. The SGBs were expected to deal with all the issues of school governance. These include among other things developing the mission statement of the school; adopting a code of conduct for learners and determining the admission and language policy of the school within the framework of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (van Wyk, 2004:34).

Generally educational decentralisation is the situation in which the interests of the local people are represented in a schooling system (MacLean & Lauglo as cited in Maclure, 1994:300). Cohn & Rossmiller as cited in Maclure (1994:312) further assert that, a

more focused view is that educational decentralisation means that the existence of schools that are more responsive to community life are better than those which are solely responsive to the department of education. A greater orientation to community, life, occupations and values could facilitate greater participatory input from local people as well as more adaptable and flexible management strategies that are friendly to the community (Maclure, 1994:345).

### 2.7.7 Establishment of sub-committees

The best functioning governing body should establish sub-committees to perform specific tasks for example Disciplinary Committee, Fundraising Committee, Finance committee, Selection Committee or Safety and Security Committee. During meetings of the governing body or its sub-committees, clear agenda should be followed. Establishment of sub-committees also increases the number of parents and members of the community's participation in school affairs which increase the number of people who identify themselves with the school which is a good signal towards ownership of the school.

### 2.7.8 Communication

Communication amongst members of governing body is also crucial in causing harmony towards the development and achievement of vision and mission of the school. Anderson *et al* (2001:81) write that "Effective communication among these groups (governing bodies) is essential to ensure stakeholders share the same vision and interact to the benefit of the students". Anderson *et al* (2001:90). Communication should be extended beyond the school limits towards its community. Of course, this will depend upon the extent to which the school wishes to be perceived as integral part of the community. This also depends on the size of the community and its geographical range of the intake of the school's learners. The means and ways of communication will therefore, vary depending also on the general development of the

community and the level of literacy in the community. Written notices can be used or a word of mouth through learners themselves or both can be used to communicate with parents and the community.

### 2.7.9 Capacity building

According to Section 19 of the South African Schools Act, 1996 the provincial department must offer a programme of introductory and sustained training for newly elected governing bodies. McPherson and Dlamini (1998:45) report in their research in the province of Limpopo Province that after the first election, the following areas of training were to be provided by the Department:

- Understanding the objectives and functions of governing bodies;
- Understanding the curriculum;
- Understanding the South African schools Act; and
- Understanding the organizational structure of the Department.

Skills and competencies:-

- Meeting procedures
- Drafting code of conduct for learners
- Drafting a constitution
- Forming relationships between the various stake holders

(McPherson and Dlamini 1998:45) emphasize the importance of capacity building of governing bodies and in particular of the above list as they state that: Failure to provide adequate capacity building in these areas will render governing bodies ineffective. This will lead to a lack of credibility in the community and eventually to the demise of governing bodies. Mc Pherson & Dlamini (1998:46). Karlsson et al. (1996:90) also state that capacity building programmes for governing bodies were needed to ensure the sustainability of governing bodies and develop the financial and organizational

capacity of members. They further report, that these programmes would play an important role in the process of democratising school governance and ensuring affirmative action for marginalized groups such as women within the various constituencies.

## 2.8 Conclusion

According to SASA it is the responsibility of the SGBs to formulate policies to ensure that parents of each school are involved in the education of their children. For the SGB to function effectively, the environment has to be favourable. It is imperative for every school to make it a point that additional resources are secured to enhance the training of all the SGB members with respect to the performance and good accounting practices.

### 3.2 The study area

SGBs should be seen to be both agents of the state as well as the community. It is in this regard that SGBs should strive to adopt a balanced perspective. SASA has given more responsibilities to SGBs in terms of policy development and implementation which calls for members to be well prepared to bring effective school governance for quality education in schools. SGBs need to be familiar with their duties and responsibilities to ensure effective school governance. To ensure that SGBs do what is expected of them, HOD of Education at provincial level is entrusted by SASA with the task to provide introductory and continuing training to the SGBs.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 Introduction

#### 3.1.1 Quantitative Research

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate an overall methodology together with the methods used to achieve the objectives of this research as stated in chapter one. It also describes the overall methodology adopted, population identification, sampling procedures and unit of analysis, methods for data collection and analysis. A case study design was used to conduct the research. The research was focused on how best the SGB understands its roles, functions and how effective is the SGB in performing its roles.

### 3.2 The study area

This study was conducted in Dzondo Circuit under Vhembe District of Education which is found in Limpopo Province. The overall aim of the study is to investigate into the capacity and role of school governing bodies in Dzondo circuit.

### 3.3 Research Methodology

According to Huysamen (1995:163) research methodology is the creation and development of techniques and strategies to collect data, the development of methods to investigate and improve the psychometric properties such as reliability and validity of the data obtained by means of these techniques and the analysis of such data. In this study, research methodology involved a selection of appropriate research approaches, research methods, sampling procedures, respondents and instruments for collecting and analyzing data.

In this study quantitative and qualitative methods were used, although, qualitative methodology was dominant. The use of different methodologies according to Babbie (2007:113) is to test the same findings is called triangulation.

### 3.3.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research methods include the implementation of statistics to measure data. Statistics, according to Leedy (1993:244), are a very simple matter but are a powerful tool in the hands of the researcher who is able to view their nature and interrelationships more understandably. Through statistics, therefore the researcher is able to conceptualize what otherwise might be incomprehensible (Leedy, 1993:244), hence the advantages of this study. The facts gathered from questionnaires were translated into tabular form. This was done so that the facts (statistics) could be interpreted more clearly

Quantitative research tends to be associated with measuring (Barnes, 1992:108). According to Good (1993:279) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (1994:4), quantitative studies emphasise the use of numerical measures to arrive at specific findings. Data collection in quantitative research is accumulated by means of inanimate instruments such as scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires and computers (Storbeck, 1994:73). Creswell (1994:4) is of the opinion that because quantitative research is impersonal and experimental it is not suitable to study human phenomenon. Contrary to Creswell's view (1994:4), a quantitative questionnaire has been regarded a suitable technique to gather some of the information from respondents in this study.

However, testing instruments such as scales, psychometric testing and other detailed statistical analysis was not applied. A limited amount of quantitative analysis was done. The idea of using this kind of strategy even in research of human phenomenon is justified by Best and Kahn (1993:204), Kerlinger (1986:481) and DeSwardt (1998:32). These writers maintain that in some qualitative research (Human phenomena) a limited

quantification is included viz, counting the number of occurrences of an event. According to Kerlinger (1986:481), all materials are potentially quantifiable. Quantification was implemented in this study. The number of occurrences in each theme or category identified was counted. The categories with high frequency occurrences were regarded as fairly significant to the problem investigated and reflected the major problem with regard to the poor management of SGB in rural public schools of Vhembe District.

### 3.3.2 Qualitative Research

Wimmer and Dominick (1988:19) state that qualitative research describes or analyses a phenomenon without specifically measuring variables. No statistical analysis is involved in qualitative research although the data might be expressed numerically. Qualitative research deals mainly with unmeasurable features of research (Barnes 1992:108). According to Rudestam and Newton (1992:31), qualitative studies imply that the data are in the form of words. This programme is useful in those categories concerning the understanding of human phenomenon and for the investigation and interpretation of the meanings people attach to different events. The implementation of this approach is relevant to this study in the sense that the focus of qualitative falls on the participants which are:

- Principals; and
- The educators
- Parents and SGB

A qualitative approach was used which used interviews with the parent component of the SGB. Informal discussions with various stakeholders were also done. The interviews were conducted to ascertain the level of participation by parents in the SGB and their understanding of their role. An attempt was also made, through questionnaires to determine the level of control by the Principal in the affairs of the

SGB. Mouton and Marais (1990:163) state that in qualitative research, the researcher tends to become involved with the phenomenon. Since in qualitative research the data is in the form of words, the interviews, which will be used as data collection techniques in this research, will be expressed in the form of words. A holistic perspective permits a broader view of the complex issues facing educational researchers. However, some qualitative research includes limited quantification e.g. counting the number of occurrences in an event. Based on the constituents of qualitative research as discussed above, it becomes apparent that the aim of this study namely, to investigate into the capacity and role of school governing bodies in Dzondo Circuit, parent and principal would also be served by a qualitative research paradigm. The techniques for data collection and data analysis therefore fell within this paradigm.

### **3.4 Population**

Donald and Pamela (2003:78), defined population as the group upon which the researcher is interested in making inferences. Population is defined as a set of entities in which all the measurements of interests to the practitioner or researcher are presented. (Powers, Meenaghan and Toomey 1985:235). The population in this study was comprised of school principals, educators, parent's component of SGBs, and stakeholders (parents). The population was composed of one racial group, two nationalities with mixed gender and different age groups. The researcher considered that those selected were directly involved in the implication of the capacity-building of the SGBs. From this population a sample was drawn.

### **3.5 Sample of the study**

A sample can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which researchers are interested. Researchers study the sample in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn and as a means for helping a researcher to explain some facet of the population (Powers, 1985:236). White

(2005:120) describes purposive sampling as sampling based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population.

This study employed purposive sampling taken from members of the SGBs, consisting of 5 school principals, 5 educators, 5 stakeholders and 10 parent component members of the 3 selected secondary and 2 primary schools. Altogether they form a total of 25 people. The criterion that was applied in identifying the two target groups was that all participants were members of the SGBs.

All groups of respondents played a vital role in the capacity-building of the SGBs and were all members of the SGB at the time of the research. Participants were selected from 3 secondary and 2 primary schools in them Dzondo Circuit and the schools are indicated in this study as:

### **3.6 Data collection methods**

The researcher from qualitative research considers that method of collecting data such as interviewing, questionnaires, and others (de Vos 2002:440). The choice of data collection method for the researcher was the questionnaires because were useful in the process of controlling or checking whether the researcher has identified all the constituent element of a concept or not.

Both primary and secondary data was used for this study. Secondary data was obtained from government publications, research publications and reports. Secondary data was collected through literature reviews aimed at identifying attributes, role and function of the School Governing Body in rural schools. Primary data was obtained through questionnaires.

### 3.6.1 Questionnaires survey

The reason for using questionnaires in this research was further based on Schumacher and McMillan's (1993:23) assertion that a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardised questions and can ensure anonymity. The second method used to collect data in this study was through semi - structured questionnaires (Likert-Scale) which were administered to educators and stakeholders (parents). The information obtained through questionnaires was analysed and compared to the information obtained through interviews with SGB members. The information was analysed and correlated to reach generalizations about this study. The information was collated and integrated with the information gathered from the literature review.

### 3.7 Data analysis

Miles & Huberman (1994:345) state that data analyses is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcription, field note, and other materials that are accumulated to increase the researcher's own understanding of them and to enable one to present what one has discovered. Analysis of data obtained from individual interviews was done through identifying common themes from the respondent's description of their experiences. Irrelevant information was separated from relevant information in the interviews. The relevant information was broken into phrases or sentences which reflect a single or specific thought. The phrases or sentences were grouped into categories that reflected the various aspects of meanings. The various meanings identified were used to develop an overall description as seen by the respondents (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:464).

The data analysis was grouped into categories. An analysis was done using Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS) immediately after the data has been collected and after the results were interpreted in order to generate research report. The results were

presented in the form of tables and percentages. A brief discussion representing tables was given to summarize the whole data.

### 3.8 Ethical consideration

In a study of this nature, the potential for conflicts of interest, invasion of privacy, inconvenience to respondents and loss of confidentiality are important issues. The ethical aspect was carefully considered and prior to the study. Letters informing and requesting permission to conduct the study were sent to the Vhembe district and Dzondo circuit of the study (Appendix A). Participants were briefed fully on the purpose of the study. Since assurance of confidentiality and anonymity is particularly important, the participants were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary, they had a right to remain anonymous, and to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time without penalty.

In the context of the research, ethics refers to the appropriateness of a behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of the researcher's work or affected by it. Wells (1994:294) defines ethics in terms of code of behavior appropriate to academics and code of research. Permission was applied from the relevant authorities to conduct a research with the school Principals, educators, components SGBs, and other stakeholders to ensure legitimacy of the study.

All information collected was treated confidentially. No names were used or required when answering the questionnaires. Participant's privacy was considered and respected. Participant's consent to participate in the research were voluntary and free of any coercion. The potential participants will be informed as fully as possible of the nature and purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, and the expected benefits to the community.

The participants were to be competent to give consent. If the participant was not competent due to mental status, disease or emergency, a designated surrogate was provide consent if it is in the participant's best interest to participate. The participants were to have full knowledge and information about the structures and division they serve. The participant had to understand what has been explained and will be given an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by the researcher. The participant's personal dignity and autonomy was recognized. (Human dignity is also emphasized in our Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1996.

### 3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the research methodology has been discussed for this study. The researcher concluded that the population and sampling procedures as well as research instruments, data collection techniques and data analysis were more appropriate in the methodology. Population and sampling procedures indicated all respondents involved in the research and how they were selected to form a sample. Questionnaires were used as data collection instrument to guarantee the success of this research.

Female	13	25
Male	12	22
Total	25	47

The reason for probing in this regard was to determine whether both males and females were equally represented in the SGBs of the local primary schools of Orondo Circuit. (See table 4.1). Table 4.1 show that 13 percent of the respondents were female and 48 were male in the schools of the Orondo Circuit. In all cases, the number of women respondents category, outnumbered those of men respondents. The reason for active participation of the female respondents could be that men are usually working far from home or it could be that women are more involved in the education of their children. Another reason might be that men are more readily available to attend to their children's matters.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present data collected by means of interviews. The research results were presented and data were analysed and interpreted. A one-to-one semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire used was divided into three sections, viz., A, B, and C. Section A entails gender, marital status, number of dependants and educational qualifications of the respondents. Section B focuses on the leadership background of the respondents. Section C seeks to determine the involvement of the respondents in the SGB matters.

### 4.2 Biographical information of the Respondents

**Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percentages
Female	13	52
Male	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

The reason for probing in this regard was to determine whether both males and females were equally represented in the SGBs of the rural primary schools of Dzondo Circuit (See table 4.1). Table 4.1; show that 52 percent of the respondents were female and 48 were male in the schools of the Dzondo Circuit. In all cases, the number of women respondents category, outnumbered those of male respondents. The reason for active participation of the female respondents could be that men are usually working far from home or it could be that women are more interested in the education of their children. Another reason might be that males are not readily available to attend to their children's matters.

**Table 4.2: Marital status of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percentages
Married	20	80
Unmarried	2	8
Widow	1	4
Widower	1	4
Divorced	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that the majority of the respondents were married, i.e. five principals, five chairpersons, two educators and eight parents. Out of the fifty twenty respondents, two respondents were unmarried two were widows and one are divorcee. It can be argued, therefore, that people who are married tend to be responsible people than the unmarried ones. One is then tempted to say that SGBs in Dzondo Circuit are actually governed and managed by responsible managers and leaders. There is also a proof that these respondents have children in the schools they serve as SGB members. In terms of South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, a parent can only be elected to serve in the SGB when he or she has the child in that particular school. This table indicates that, the respondents are that the members of the School Governing Bodies have children in their respective schools they are serving.

**Table 4.3 Respondents highest qualifications**

	Frequency	Percentages
No formal education	3	12
Primary level	5	20
Secondary level	3	12
Passed std 10	4	16
Tertiary level	10	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were classified in five categories, i.e., those who did not go to school at all, those who received primary education, those who received secondary education but did not pass standard 10, those who passed standard 10, and those who have undergone tertiary level. The table indicates that all principals and all educators have diplomas and degrees. It also indicates that the majority of parents did not pass standard 10. This is supported by the fact that out of ten parents, only three passed standard 10 and four are qualified as educators. It can, therefore, be argued that the educational qualifications of respondents have negative effect on the roles and responsibilities and also on school development of the SGBs of the Dzondo Circuit. This suggested that in some schools parents were electing literate people whom they regarded as knowledgeable and experienced and whom they expected would contribute in improving the quality of teaching and learning at the school by serving in the SGBs.

**Table 4.4: Respondent Age**

	Frequency	Percentages
Under 30	4	16
31-40	10	40
41-50	6	24
Over 50	5	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.2.4 indicates that 16% of the sample, representing SMT members in this study, was less than 30 years of age. Forty percent of the sample, representing SMT members were aged between 31 and 40 year, whilst 24% of the sample, representing SMT members, was aged between 41 and 50 and 20% of respondents were aged of over 50.

The majority of SMT members were younger than SGB members. The age difference might influence the relationship between SGB and SMT. Traditionally older people want to be listened to. There may also be a discrepancy in the pace of decisions and implementation timescales between the two constituencies, with the younger SMT members keen to make progress and the older SGBs keen to first investigate all implications. This may frustrate the two camps. It is also likely that the older average age of the SGB component may also impact on the rate at which change is adopted. It is a long established fact that older people in general tend to resist change.

**Table 4.5: Frequency distribution according governing and management experience**

Year	Frequency	Percentages
Never served in the SGB before	3	12
Served one year in the SGB	6	24
Served two years in SGB	7	28
Served more than two years in the SGB	9	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.5 indicates that 12% of the samples, representing SMT members in this study had never been in management. Twenty-four percent have served in management for one year, whilst 28% had two years experience. A further 13% had more than two years. Five percent of the samples, representing SGB members in this study, had never before served in a governing body. Seven percent had only one year experience, 36% had served two years whilst 8% has more than two years experience. Table 4.5 indicates that there was a lack of experience in governing and managing the school. This can possibly be attributed to the limitation applied to the term that governing body members may serve. In most instances a governing body member may serve at most three years. Continuity and experience are severely compromised in such situations.

### 4.3 Capacity and role of SGBs in Dzondo circuit

**Table 4.6: Attitude towards training is the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	3	12
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.6 indicates that Seventy-two percent of respondents agreed that attitude towards training is the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs, and 4% were uncertain. 24 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement above. Table 4.6 shows some of the respondents felt that there was no need for capacity-building training. Their explanation was because the parents already had experience and so were competent persons who were doing a good job in the SGBs. The majority of the respondents felt strongly that there was a need for the capacity-building training among some of the parents'.

**Table 4.7: Language used in training of the SGBs is the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	5	20
uncertain	3	12
Strongly Agree	5	20
Agree	9	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.7 shows that 56 percent of respondents agreed that Language used in training of the SGBs was the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs, and 12% were uncertain. 32 percent of SGB respondents disagreed with the statement above. Respondents indicated that most of governance materials were published in English and a number of the parent SGB members could not communicate in this language. Table 4.7 indicates that respondents agreed with regarded illiteracy as one of the challenges they met in supporting the SGBs as most of the information sent to schools was provided in English and only parents who could read, would understand the documents.

**Table 4.8: SGB understand their Capacity in functions and roles**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	3	12
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.8 show that 72 percent of respondents agreed that SGB understand their Capacity in functions and roles, and 4% were uncertain. 24 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement above. Table 4.8 indicated that SGB had an understanding of the functions of the SGBs and these correlated with functions and roles stated in section 20 and 21 of the Schools Act. However, some respondents indicated the desire for capacity-building because they were unsure about their roles.

**Table 4.9: SGB understand the Capacity in the responsibilities**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	2	8
Disagree	15	60
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	5	20
Agree	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of respondents (68%) disagreed that SGB understand the Capacity in the responsibilities whilst 30 percent of agreed with the statement. 4% respondents indicated that problems were encountered regarding the responsibility of the SGBs in Dzondo Circuit, but 28% respondents indicated that they had not encountered any

problem	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	3	12
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.10: SGB are the co-partners in decision making**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	3	12
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.10 indicates that Seventy-two percent of respondents agreed that SGB are the co-partners in decision making, and 4% were uncertain. 24 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement above. The respondents indicated that some members of the SGB experienced a sense of having greater power to express their views and take part in decision-making. Some expressed the view that SMT are not happy with this situation. Some principals do not communicate information to SGBs and want to keep or control information. This was identified by some of the parents' component as potential source of conflict in schools, especially where principals struggle to move away from the traditional styles of hierarchical authority.

**Table 4.11: Develops policies to involve SGB in schools matters**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	3	12
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	12	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.11 show that Seventy-two percent of respondents agreed that they develop policies to involve SGBs in school matters, and 4% were uncertain. 20 percent of SGB respondents disagreed with the statement above. There is a notable contrast in the responses given by the SMT and SGB respondents. Table 4.11 shows that it can be safely deduced that while schools in the Dzondo circuit may have policies to involve SGBs in school matters these policies were not articulated or discussed with SGB members or alternatively, policies may exist on paper, but are not actualised in practice. It is thus, evident that SMTs and SGBs are grappling to establish authentic partnerships imperative for promoting quality public education. In order for quality education to materialize, the gap between policy and practice in relation to SMT-SGB partnerships has to be bridged.

**Table 4.12: Accepts the SGB as a partner in promoting quality education**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	6	24
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	6	24
Agree	9	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.12 indicates that 60 percent of respondents agreed that they accepted the SGB as a partner in promoting quality education, while 4 percent were uncertain. 36 percent of SGB respondents disagreed that the SMT accepts them as partners in promoting Quality education. Table 4.12 shows that respondents indicated that SGBs are involved in promoting partnership in favour of Quality education. This shows that professional leaders are not the only pivotal structures to administer and organize the required processes leading to quality in education sector.

**Table 4.13: Involve the SGB in goal setting for quality education**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	4	16
Disagree	15	60
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	3	12
Agree	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.13 shows that only 20 percent of respondents agreed that SGBs were involved in goal setting to ensure Quality education. 76 percent of respondents disagree with the statement. The lack of involvement of the SGB in goal-setting can significantly undermine SMT-SGB partnerships. Table 4.13 shows that key educational messaging that is espoused in the school will not be reinforced in the home. Key knowledge, values, skills and attitudes demanded by the host community in which the school is embedded may not find articulation in the school curriculum if the SGB is side-lined in goal setting for Quality education.

**Table 4.14: Involves the SGB in planning of school improvement**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
uncertain	0	0
Strongly Agree	15	60
Agree	10	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

It is encouraging to note that SGB respondents agreed that SGBs were actively engaged in school improvement planning. Planning is critical component of school improvement and can help to secure and cement teamwork. Table 4.14 shows that

children learn in schools where there is good parent involvement in the planning of school programmes.

**Table 4.15: SGB involvement in developing school policies**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	5	20
Disagree	10	40
uncertain	5	20
Strongly Agree	3	12
Agree	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.15 indicates that 60% of respondents disagreed that they involve the SGB in developing school policies. 20 percent agreed and 20 percent were uncertain. School policies govern interaction and behaviour in the school. Table 4.15 shows that parent and learners are the parties most acutely affected by these policies and must often ensure compliance and give articulation to the policies. If parents and learners do not have input into these policies they cannot be expected to take ownership of them.

**Table 4.16: SMTs encourage SGB involvement in extra-curricular activities**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	5	20
uncertain	3	12
Strongly Agree	5	20
Agree	9	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.16 shows that 56% of respondents are encouraging the SGB to be actively involved in extra-curricular activities of the school. 32% of the respondents however revealed that SGBs were not being actively engaged in this regard and a disturbing 12% of respondents were uncertain about the validity of the statement. These are very unsettling but may well be a result of a lack of understanding of the concept "extra-curricular activities". That said, there is still clear evidence to suggest that some schools are not involving SGBs in the extra-curricular activities.

**Table 4.17: Due recognition for the knowledge of SGBs**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	2	8
Disagree	15	60
uncertain	1	4
Strongly Agree	5	20
Agree	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.17 reflects that the majority of respondents (68%) disagreed that they recognized and capitalized sufficiently on the knowledge of SGBs. 28 percent of respondents suggested that they recognised the knowledge of the SGB. These suggest that the knowledge and skills of SGBs is not given due value and consequently the knowledge and skills of SGB members are not capitalized on. The intimate knowledge that parents have about their children and the context in which they live is invaluable in constructing a safe and secure learning environment for individual learners.

**Table 4.18: The SGB informs the SMT about their expectations**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	5	20
Disagree	1	4
uncertain	16	64
Strongly Agree	2	8
Agree	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.18 reflects that 24 percent of respondents disagreed that SGBs inform the SMTs about their expectations. 64 percent of respondents were uncertain. 12 percent of SGB respondents agree with the statement. These suggest that not sufficient emphasis is placed on SGBs articulating their educational expectations of schools. This is very disconcerting since a primary function of the SGB is to be a barometer of communal requirements of and attitudes to the education offered by the school. There should be no doubt about what knowledge, skills, values and attitudes the community that the school services most dearly prizes and would like to see included in the schooling of their youth.

**Table 4.19: The SGB relies on information provided by the SMT for discussion**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
uncertain	2	8
Strongly Agree	18	72
Agree	5	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.19 shows that Ninety-two percent of respondents agreed while 8% of respondents were uncertain. This table indicates that the agenda of joint SGB-SMT meetings are driven by the SMT and rarely, if ever, does the parent learner grouping play a dominant role in establishing these meetings. It is also clear from this results that the SMT serves as an important conduit for information between the Department of Education and the parent's learners. This vests an incredible amount of power in the SMTs as they control the flow of information. This makes it imperative that SMTs are representative and responsible.. This suggests that SMT members are of the opinion that SGB members need to do more to promote quality education than is currently in evidence.

**Table 4.20: The SGB has a negative attitude towards the SMT**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	20	80
Disagree	2	8
uncertain	2	8
Strongly Agree	1	4
Agree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.20 reflects that four percent of respondents agreed that SGBs have a negative attitude towards to the SMTs. 88 percent disagreed, whilst 8% were uncertain. It is clear that more SGB members are aware of negative feelings toward SMTs than SMT members themselves are. It would be interesting to investigate the perceptions of SGB members in more detail as it may expose more on the power relations between the two bodies and issues in the actual implementation of partnerships between these groupings.

**Table 4.21: The SGB feels free to participate in decision-making**

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	5	20
Disagree	0	0
uncertain	4	16
Strongly Agree	15	60
Agree	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.21 shows that Sixty-four percent of respondents agreed that the SGB feels free to participate in decision-making of schools, 20% of respondents disagreed while 16% were uncertain about how free they felt to participate in decision making.

The majority of respondents indicated that SGBs feel free to involve themselves in decision-making in schools. More SMT members than SGB members perceive restrictions limitations in how free SGB members feel to participate. This may be due to discrepancies in practice. SGB members may feel free to participate in decision-making but may not avail themselves of the opportunity as often as is expected. Table 4.21 shows that SGB members at some schools do not feel free to participate in decision-making. This may be due to intimidation or authoritarian management styles.

**Table 4.22: The school reflects SGB-SMT partnerships when addressing school matters**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
uncertain	0	0
Strongly Agree	0	0
Agree	25	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.22 reflects that all respondents agreed that their schools reflected a solid SGB-SMT partnership when addressing parent meetings about school matters. It is heartening to see that SGBs and SMT put on a single, united front in communicating with various constituencies.

**Table 4.23: The school has established SGB sub-committees**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Disagree	3	12
Disagree	2	8
uncertain	3	12
Strongly Agree	12	48
Agree	5	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.23 shows that Sixty-eight percent of respondents agreed that the school has established SGB sub-committees. 20 percent of respondent disagreed, while 12% were uncertain. Fifty-four percent of SGB respondents agreed with the statement. Table 4.23 suggests that sub-committees, as structures to assist SMT-SGB partnerships, have not been established in some schools. Sub--committees can

strengthen the SGB-SMT relationship by easing the work-load and ensure task distribution. It also allows for proxy members should principal members become unavailable or merely overburdened.

## 5.1 Introduction

### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter provides a summary of the findings that emanate from the empirical study.

This chapter identified one main concept of special significance to the study: findings from the research. The findings were sorted and categorized into sections and subsections, bringing out its relevance to the topic of the research, namely the capacity of the SGBs.

## 5.2 Major Findings

- School managers have not developed significant partnerships with SGBs. SGBs are involved fully in non-teaching and learning activities such as fundraising or building maintenance however not core learning and teaching issues such as curriculum development or learner academic performance. SGBs are also used as their competencies are deemed questionable.
- The majority of parent SGB members were above the age of 50, which was an indication that school governance was seen to be handed over to the hands of senior citizens. Despite the fact that the majority of the SGB members were female, the positions of the chairpersons were held by male figures. Females held the positions of secretary and treasurer in both schools. The data revealed that the majority of parents in SGB have secondary education. There were few parents who had only primary education in the SGB.
- Though the majority of respondents indicated that the SGB is composed of teachers, parents, educators and non-teaching staff members, there were respondents who seemed not to be aware of the composition of the SGB. They included the deputy chairperson, deputy secretary, organizer and coordinator which SABA

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings that emanate from the empirical study outlined in the previous chapter. A thorough analysis of the results was discussed in chapter four. Chapter five provides recommendations as to how to resolve the issues raised in chapter four, which also included conclusions on the study as a whole.

### 5.2 Major Findings

- School managers have not developed significant partnerships with SGBs. SGBs are involved fully in non-teaching and learning activities such as fund raising or building maintenance however on core learning and teaching issues such as curriculum development or learner academic performance, SGBs are side-lined as their competencies are deemed questionable
- The majority of parent SGB members were above the age of fifty which was an indication that school governance was seen to be better left in the hands of senior citizens. Despite the fact that the majority of the SGB members were female, the positions of the chairpersons were held by male figures. Females held the positions of secretary and treasurer in both schools. The data revealed that the majority of parents in SGB have secondary education. There were few parents who had only primary education in the SGB.
- Though the majority of respondents indicated that the SGB is composed of parents, educators and non-teaching staff members, there were respondents who seemed not to be aware of the composition of the SGB. They included the deputy chairperson, deputy secretary, organizer and coordinator which SASA

- does not include. This means that some parents are not knowledgeable about the composition of the SGB.
- Regarding the calling of meetings, the majority of respondents indicated that it is the principals who call SGB and parents meetings. This, as it emerged from the data, happens after the principal has called the SGB chairperson. On chairing the SGB and parent meetings, the majority indicated that it is the role of the chairperson to chair school meetings. However there were respondents who indicated that it is the role of the chairperson and the principal.
- From the data that were collected from the two schools it was apparent that parents are involved in the formulation of school policies. However, it emerged that the methods of initiating the formulation of school policies are different. Some indicated that the educators initiate policies and bring them to SGB others reported that it is the SGB that initiates policy formulation. SASA prescribes that the SGB of the school must adopt a school policy. All the respondents reported that it is the role of the SGB to formulate school policy.
- It has emerged from the data from both principals and SGB members that finance committees deal mainly with comprising financial reports. It also emerged that the business of procuring assets is handled by educators.
- Interviewees were of the view that problems occurred during training, because the SGBs did not properly understand or apply SASA;
- Interviewees confirmed that in some instances during the training of the SGBs facilitators communicated in the language of the participants;

- The SGB members reported that unemployed members were not available for training due to the family commitments such as attending various social and religious gatherings as dictated by their culture;

### 5.3 Conclusion

- From the interviews conducted, it became clear to the researcher that there was a matter of concern in terms of supplying food and transport for the district or circuit workshops. Participants reported that there was no provision for food and transport to serve the SGBs during the training;
- Interviewees reported that there were no report back to other SGB members after training unless if there was a problem;
- Interviewees indicated that no minutes had been recorded or had been written in minute books during the SGBs training;
- Handling of out-of-pocket expenses to the members of the SGB during the time of training appeared to be the most sensitive area of concern to some of the interviewee. Interviewees confirmed that there were no standing policy for such provision in all primary and secondary schools;
- Participants were not satisfied with how the facilitators handled their questions. They were too harsh. Interviewees complained that facilitators indicated that they were not in the workshop to solve problems;
- Participants also complained about being undermined or sidelined by the facilitators as being too old to participate in the new era of the SGBs;
- In view of being given too many responsibilities, parents indicated that this kind of authoritarian attitude by the facilitators reflected past attitude and was

contradictory to the notion of participatory democracy underpinning school governance;

### 5.3 Conclusion

- This study has helped the researcher deduce that parent participation in school governance is important, however, parent SGB members need to be engaged in some form of intensive training by the Department of Education. This training might increase the parent SGB member's motivation and this might in turn bring about increased effectiveness in school governance. This research was conducted in schools which are in historically disadvantaged rural areas and the study reflects the rural perspective of school governance.
- The conceptual and theoretical framework that was raised in chapter two was helpful in this study, in that, the researcher was able to know what the parents do when they are tasked with policy related matters. The data reported by the respondents reflected the concepts discussed in chapter two. The theory discussed in chapter two served as lenses when the researcher was exploring the roles of the parent SGB members. The data revealed that there is a level of learning that has taken place due to exposure to the operations of the SGB.
- The knowledge that the parent SGB members have acquired due to their exposure to SGB is in line with Bruner's Cognitive development theory. The respondents reported that due to short workshops that they have undergone have learned some of the things regarding school governance. For instance those who are still new in the SGB have little to explain on some of the SGB issues.
- SASA introduced the idea of the parent component members' involvement in the functioning of the SGB as a democratic right but also a responsibility.

Although this right of participation has long been demanded as part of the democratic struggle in education, the ability to elect and run SGBs in the area where this research was conducted, presented a huge challenge to many SGBs who were not fully prepared and some of them inexperienced to take on such responsibilities. The setting up of the SGBs was very difficult and even a contentious process.

- The lack of parental participation is a great problem. It stops development of democratic governance in the local school community. It also holds up the overall development of democratic values and practices in rural areas. Illiteracy is an important part of this problem, but SGBs also seemed ignorant about ways they could be involved. SGBs did not seem to realize that every parent can make a significant contribution or that every parent has the right to be represented. Every SGB, especially those in rural areas, needs in-service training.
- It may be concluded from the research that the results with regard to the management of schools and achievement of learners in schools of the LPDE will be improved if principals in various schools attain proper management skills. Mastery of these skills will make it easier for principals to involve members of the SGBs in the governance of schools.
- The study concluded that some SGBs did not have access to copies of SASA. Parents who live in the deep rural areas found it difficult to obtain copies of the Act. Some SGBs perceive this as a means of shutting the out of the school governance because they have no knowledge of the Act, which was only available to some principals. The research concluded that there is a need for sufficient copies of the Act, because the Act recognizes that in many communities, stakeholders that could be elected to serve on the SGBs may be in need of the Act to perform the functions required by the school.

- It is important for all the SGBs to include members with expertise and skills. SASA states that SGBs have power to co-opt members. Therefore, there is a widespread realization that there is a demand for practical help and capacity-building in the form of appropriate experience and skills, workshops or training manuals to serve the SGBs.
- There cannot be effective governance without a properly organized SGB. The power to make policies that develop a school cannot be exercised if there is no properly working organization as regard basic duties. Duties of the SGBs are therefore important because it sets out the practical steps by which the SGBs can organize themselves and function day to day in an efficient and accountable way. This starts with having a constitution, a mission or purpose, holding regular meetings, keeping proper records and having the sense of duty to report back to the parents. This proper functioning of the SGB also depends on using the powers given by SASA to share responsibilities through office-bearers and portfolios and to form sub-committees.
- Parents' component revealed that principals often viewed the participation of parents in the governance of the school as an erosion of their authority. The study concluded that principals actually seem to feel threatened by parents' participation.

#### 5.4 Recommendations

- Principals as the management leaders should involve parents in developing partnerships with schools. Parent engagement must be transparent, demonstrate respect, encourage active participation and be underpinned by democratically decision-making. SGB meetings must address real issues and have agendas circulated well before meetings are scheduled. The parent and

learner component must be polled for items that they wish to have tabled on the agenda. Established processes should be made explicit and should not be circumvented without due mandate from the entire SGB.

- The SGB should be the conduit to the community which should be constantly polled about what they want for their children in terms of educational needs and aspirations. SGB members should convene regular meetings with the general parent population and the entire community to provide feedback on the school's development, to solicit ideas on school improvement and to ensure synchronization between the school's curriculum and the community's educational requirements. Information should be fed back to the school and considered in curriculum design and programme offerings.
- It is recommended that uniformed members of the SGBs be given the opportunity to be instructed by governance facilitators regarding the composition of the SGBs. This could be made possible by the LPDE or by private companies and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). The study recommended that wherever capable people in the community are already working effectively in the local SGBs, these people should be used more widely by the Department at circuit and/or district level to build capacity around the composition of the SGBs.
- It would be advisable for the facilitators to include a section in their training manual for the SGBs in helping principals, to understand the difference between their roles as managers and as participants in the shared governance of the school. It is recommended that principals should be helped to understand how certain policies such as the composition of the SGBs can lead to the break down of trust and damage good governance if not properly implemented.
- It is advisable to create effective and harmonious working relations between principals and the SGBs; it is therefore recommended that LPDE makes copies

of the Act available as well as any other suitable and relevant material to members of the SGBs. It is further recommended that principals or chairperson of the SGBs have to give a good account of them and to consult with the Circuit Managers to avoid taking the wrong decisions based on SASA.

- It is recommended that every SGB of the public schools should use the opportunity for the benefit of their schools and the community at large, by making sure that they invite community members who have the required capacity and needed skills to serve even for shorter period on the SGBs. Such participation will strengthen the SGBs by giving them skilled inputs, even though the co-opted member does not have voting power. This is especially applicable in rural communities where the parent body may not include the type of expertise needed for a specific decision or task.
- It is recommended that a qualified or experienced expert in finance should be co-opted to serve on the SGB for one or two school terms to help the school in organizing its financial record keeping or set up the budget. When the task is completed, the activity of the expert lapses because such an expert is not elected for a full term of office. Educators who have necessary knowledge of governance should be recognized and encouraged to be involved in the SGBs, possibly even to the extent of using them in the training or capacity-building portfolio. This strategy could enable parents to be accepted as partners, not to be regarded as intruders in the school.
- Perhaps the first priority of every SGB should be to evaluate themselves against the requirements of SASA and decide in what areas they need to ask for help. At the same time the educational authorities, as well as school principals, should look for ways of helping local SGBs to analyze their capacity and make decisions about self-development. It is recommended that the SGBs should promote the best interests of the schools and the provision of quality education.

- SASA gives SGBs a number of important areas of school life for which the SGBs can make individual policies that can develop and improve the quality of education. This offers SGBs the opportunity to be part of the democratic transformation of schools and to furnish solutions to problems in schools. If people are part of governance at local level they are more accountable to one another.
- The study recommended that where the LPDE is aware of the SGBs or groups of individual members of SGBs that function effectively, these capable persons could be used to network or provide training sessions for the weaker SGBs.
- It is recommended that workshops for more members be conducted and with regular follow-up visits to the SGBs where critical areas like school finances could be addressed. District coordinators need to find creative way of ensuring and sustaining the participation of the SGBs in matters of school governance.
- As was discussed in chapter 4, principals are the most literate members of the SGBs, and often take a leading role in the SGBs. It is important that their influence and power should be properly directed, classes to provide principals and the SGBs with information on governance and management skills and to help them acquire skills could be organized during holidays or week-ends. This study recommended that there is a particular need to single out principals for specifically designed capacity-building programme or training to help principals to adjust from management pattern to one of sharing powers through democratic governance.
- The study recommended the fact that there is a need for continued capacity-building of parents and principals in order to bring about a shift in mindset in terms of governance.

- The study recommended the coordinators should support the SGBs on an ongoing basis and they should be available and accessible to the local schools.
- The study recommended the notion that there has been a drastic change in the attitude, training and participation of the SGBs, which can only be attributed to the SGBs training that, was also conducted by the trade unions, such as South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), Professional Educators Union (PEU) and the LPDE.
- There was an overall strong support for any form of capacity-building programme. The research definitely observed a positive desire from all interviewees, they are eager to learn more about the possible roles and responsibilities on how to function effectively and efficiently.

## 5.5 Recommendations for future research

In this section the recommendations that are derived from the findings are outlined. The purpose of outlining these recommendations is to stimulate future research.

- On the basis of these findings the researcher recommends that clear national or provincial guidelines in the form of an SGB constitution be established to define the specific roles of each member of the SGB.
- The Department of Education should conduct an intensive training course for the parent SGB members on issues of school governance.
- The Department of Education should increase the period of the term of office of the SGBs to five years to allow for stability in school governance.

- In ensuring policy implementation the Department of Education should develop a manual for the SMTs in ensuring the implementation of school policies so that the line of operation of the SMTs and that of SGBs is clear. This could assist in improving the relationship between the SMT and the SGB and what Heystek (2004) referred to as 'power plays' would be addressed.

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Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents

Female	
Male	

Table 4.2 Marital status of the respondents

Married	
Unmarried	
Widow	
Widower	
Divorced	

Table 4.3 Respondents highest qualifications

No formal education	
Primary level	
Secondary level	
Passed std 10	
Tertiary level	

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## SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

**Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents**

Female	
Male	

**Table 4.2 Marital status of the respondents**

Married	
Unmarried	
Widow	
Widower	
Divorced	

**Table 4.3 Respondents highest qualifications**

No formal education	
Primary level	
Secondary level	
Passed std 10	
Tertiary level	

**Table 4.4: Respondent Age**

Under 30	
31-40	
41-50	
Over 50	

**Table 4.5: Frequency distribution according governing and management experience**

Year	
Never served in the SGB before	
Served one year in the SGB	
Served two years in SGB	
Served more than two years in the SGB	

**Section B: capacity and role of SGB in Dzondo circuit**

**Please complete all questions Mark with an "x" Mark from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree**

Statement	Strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	Strongly disagree
Attitude towards training is the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs					
Language used in training of the SGBs is the limitations to the capacity-building of the SGBs					
SGB understand their Capacity in functions and roles					
SGB understand the Capacity in the responsibilities					
SGB are the co-partners in decision making					
Develops policies to involve SGB in schools matters					
Accepts the SGB as a partner in promoting quality education					
Involve the SGB in goal setting for quality education					
Involves the SGB in planning					

of school improvement					
SGB involvement in developing school policies					
SMTs encourage SGB involvement in extra-curricular activities					
Due recognition for the knowledge of SGBs					
Due recognition for the knowledge of SGBs					
The SGB relies on information provided by the he SMT for discussion					
The SGB has a negative attitude towards the SMT					
The SGB feels free to participate in decision-making					
The school reflects SGB-SMT partnerships when addressing school matters					
The school has established SGB sub					

**Thank you for your Participation**