

**CAPACITY-BUILDING OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE AREA OF  
POLICY INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, **SEVHA THOMAS MAKHUELE** declare that “**CAPACITY-BUILDING OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE AREA OF POLICY INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**” is my own work and is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a Master Degree in Educational Management to the University of Venda. It has never been submitted before in part or entirety for any degree or examination to this university or any other university. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....  
**MAKHUELE SEVHA THOMAS**

.....  
**DATE**

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to the following people who will always have a special place in my heart:

- My beloved grandmother, Mamayila Nwa-Mthombeni Mabasa, who sacrificed so much in her life so that I can be what I am today. And to her late husband Jim Gezani Mabasa, whose contribution cannot go unnoticed.
- To my late grandmother, Nyanisi Nwa-Mphahlela Makhuvele, who did not live long enough to reap the fruits of her sweat.
- To my parents, Masenyani Mackson and Mafanato Dyna Makhuvele, who offered me their unconditional love and moral support.
- To my wife, Nkhensani and my kids, Tiyiselani, Nhlavutelo, Nseketelo and Xihluke, who continue to give meaning to my life. Your understanding, support and patience during my studies were not in vain.

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I would also like to thank the principals, educators, SGB chairpersons and departmental official who participated in my research with utter enthusiasm and eagerness. This research could not have been a success without their cooperation and keenness.

To all my friends who stood by me when I needed them the most I say, “*Your tireless support and encouragement through my research were so phenomenal. Do it to others as well and may God bless you abundantly*”.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the capacity-building of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. The research was carried out in schools under Klein Letaba Circuit in the Mopani Education District, in the Limpopo Province. This was a qualitative study where the researcher used purposive sampling to select schools and participants and interviews and document analysis to collect requisite data. In analysing data collected, content analysis was used. On the basis of data analysed and interpreted, the research findings revealed that SGBs do not have the necessary capacity to interpret and implement policies in schools. This is as a result of the inadequate training that they receive during their term of office, high level of illiteracy among them and lack of monitoring and support by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). The study therefore recommends that SGBs be adequately trained in their home languages and encouraged to form cluster committees to share experiences to develop their capacity. The DBE should continuously monitor and support SGBs in the execution of their duties.

**Keywords:** school governing body, policy interpretation, policy implementation, decentralisation, capacity-building

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	:	Adult Basic Education and Training
BCEA	:	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
EEA	:	Employment of Educators Act
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology
LRA	:	Labour Relations Act
LTSM	:	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NCS	:	National Curriculum Statement
NEPA	:	National Education Policy Act
PFMA	:	Public Finance Management Act
RCL	:	Representative Council of Learners
RSA	:	Republic of South Africa
SASA	:	South African Schools Act
SGB	:	School Governing Body
SGBs	:	School Governing Bodies

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the general elections of 1994 and with the adoption of a new constitutional dispensation and the phasing in of new educational legislation under the new government, a new system of education was created (Dibete, 2015:3). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) ushered in a new educational dispensation, part of which was a new system of public school governance. This meant that government is committed to the development of a democratic system that provides for participation of all stakeholders with a vested interest in education.

Prior 1994, statutory school level structures, namely, school committees, school boards and management council governed and managed schools in South Africa (Lekonyane & Maja, 2014:2). These structures consisted mainly of parent representatives and had limited decision-making powers because their activities tended to centre on fund-raising (Bagarette, 2011:223). To guarantee stakeholder participation in public education, the South African Schools Act 84 (hereafter referred to as SASA) was enacted in 1996. This legislative framework mandates the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in public schools. In terms of Section 20 and 21 of the SASA, the SGB is expected to carry out mandatory functions to support the effective delivery of the curriculum in schools. These functions include the determination of policies and rules by which schools are to be organised, managed and controlled (Mestry, 2006:28).

The introduction of SASA signalled the South African government's commitment to decentralising certain powers to SGBs. The involvement of the school community and more specifically, the parents is believed to be important because the latter are often in the best position to contribute to the values and culture of their children's education as well as to assist in resolving some of the problems experienced (Naidoo, 2005:13).

However, this model of decentralisation in schools has presented the SGB with an onerous task of turning traditionally authoritarian institutions into democratic centres where every stakeholder participates actively in the decision making processes. Since parents form the majority as members of SGBs, they have been placed in a powerful position to influence the development and implementation of school policies for effective curriculum delivery. The SGBs should ensure that such policies are clear, consistent and reasonable so that they can be implemented and that all stakeholders comply with them in the performance of their duties (Marishane, 1999:84). This responsibility requires SGB members to possess sound knowledge, skills and expertise which many SGB members do not have.

In terms of the new governance model, parents, as the majority in the SGB have been given a major role to be effective and influential in the governance of public schools. As members of the SGB, they have been given greater autonomy to manage resources, determine the delivery of educational services, democratise local control of decision-making and respond to the needs of the community (Naidoo, 2005:18). However, people who usually become members of the SGB, particularly in the rural and less advantaged urban areas, do not have the capacity to interpret and implement governance policies. Studies conducted on the SGB's functionality confirm that the type of training that SGB members are subjected to is irrelevant and inadequate and does not really address the core functions of school governance (Xaba, 2011:201).

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

School governance in South Africa is the single most important factor in education that seems to experience insurmountable challenges (Xaba, 2011:201). The purpose of enacting the SASA (84 of 1996) was to ensure that school governance is effective and efficient. Despite many attempts aimed at training and capacitating school governors, including financial resources for this purpose, very little progress has been made in this regard (Xaba, 2011:201). For effective school governance, the SGB is expected to execute mandatory functions in terms of the SASA (84 of 1996).

In order to give effect to the major tenets of the new democratic order, many aspects of school governance that were formerly administered by the central government were decentralised and shifted to school level (Dibete, 2015:17). In terms of the SASA (84 of 1996), SGBs of public schools must *inter alia*, adopt a constitution, develop the mission statement of the school, adopt a code of conduct for learners, and develop policies pertaining to admission, language and religion. In addition to these policies, the SGB should develop and implement other policies pertaining to HIV/AIDS, educational excursions, finance, learner attendance, health and safety and any policy that will provide guidelines for school managers to use in their day-to-day running of the school. After developing all these policies, SGBs are also expected to implement them to support effective curriculum delivery at the school.

An understanding of the legislative and policy frameworks however, presents a challenge in the majority of public schools in South Africa (Rangongo, 2011: IV). The existing knowledge with regards to the interpretation and implementation of various policies, regulations and acts is a matter of concern. The contents of policies are not always clear to SGB members, particularly to parent and learner members (Lekonyane & Maja, 2014:4). Effective policy implementation requires SGB members to possess the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise. However, basic among the school governance challenges is the incapacity of the SGB members to interpret policies that are expected to be implemented at school level. This can be attributed to the high levels of illiteracy among SGB members and the irrelevant and inadequate training SGB members are subjected to during their term of office (Xaba, 2011:201). The challenges experienced by the SGB in policy interpretation and implementation necessitated the researcher to formulate the aim and objectives of the study as stated below.

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study is to investigate the capacity of School Governing Bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. To achieve this aim, the following objectives had to be attained first as a point of departure:

- To outline key policies that the SGB is expected to interpret and implement in the governance of school.
- To identify challenges that SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies.
- To examine how the Department of Basic Education supports SGBs' role in policy interpretation and implementation.
- To suggest possible capacity-building strategies for the empowerment of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation.

To achieve the above aim and objectives, the following main research question and sub-questions were formulated.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research question of the study is: *How can the School Governing Bodies be capacitated so that they can effectively interpret and implement policies in schools?* The sub-research questions were formulated as follows:

- What key policies are SGBs expected to interpret and implement in schools?
- What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?
- How does the Department of Basic Education support SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?
- What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?

The above main research question and sub-questions guided the researcher in outlining the research plan and conducting an investigation on the phenomenon. This ultimately led to the attainment of the study aim and objectives.

## 1.5 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature helped the researcher to develop a conceptual or analytical framework that serves as a basis for the analysis and interpretation of data that is collected during the course of the research project.

The review of literature covered the following aspects that underpin school governance with specific reference to policy interpretation and implementation:

- Conceptual framework
- Policy interpretation
- Policy implementation
- Policies interpreted and implemented by SGBs
- Promoting the interest of learners through effective policy interpretation and implementation
- Partnership for effective school governance
- Challenges faced by SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation
- Capacity training of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation
- The impact of policies on curriculum delivery in schools
- The impact of policies on school values.

Through the review of literature on the above-mentioned aspects, the researcher gained a deeper and broader insight into the phenomenon investigated. The researcher was also able to determine the significance that a well-informed and capacitated governing and the impact which the lack of capacity by SGBs might have on school governance and management (Maluleka, 2008:9).

## 1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

For a clear understanding of meaning of key concepts used in this study, the following terms are clarified:

### **1.6.1 Policy**

Policy generally refers to a statement of intent, decision, course of action and/ resource allocation and is designed either to achieve a particular goal or to resolve a particular problem (Mabusela, 2016:10). Mestry (2006:35) indicates that a good policy identifies and articulates the values and the basic principles to be applied to address the specific needs of an organisation. According to Torjman (2005:1), a policy is aimed at achieving the desired objectives of all members of society, with the intention to protect, guide and address their concerns. For the purpose of this study, policy means the legislative and policy frameworks developed at national, provincial and school level which SGBs are expected to interpret and implement to improve the general performance of the school.

### **1.6.2 School Governing Body**

In terms of section 16 of the SASA, a school governing body is the lawful structure made up of a group of people responsible and accountable to take and implement decisions on behalf of the school community. Khuzwayo (2007:5) explains that the term school governing body refers to the body elected by the school community to govern the school and composed of parents, educators, non-educators, co-opted members of the community, learners (in cases where the school has Grade 8 and above) and the principal as an *ex-officio* member. The general role of the school governing body is governance, which is defined as the whole process by which education policies are formulated, adopted, implemented and monitored. In this study the term school governing body refers to the school governance structure elected democratically by relevant stakeholders to perform functions allocated to them in terms of SASA.

### **1.6.3 School Governance**

School governance refers to the involvement of relevant stakeholders, such as educators, parents, non-teaching staff and learners (only in secondary schools) in making decisions about the way in which the school should be governed according to

the provisions of SASA (Mavuso & Duku, 2014:454). It is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which schools are to be organised and controlled to ensure that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the applicable legislations (Ndou, 2012:24). For the purpose of this study, governance, within the school contexts, can thus be defined as the power of the SGB to interpret and implement legislative and policy frameworks that will assist SGBs to effectively and efficiently execute their mandated functions for the benefit of learners.

#### **1.6.4 Decentralisation**

The provision of SASA to elect SGBs in schools resulted in changes that ushered in the decentralisation of powers as the state devolved more of its powers to SGB. Decentralisation of school governance is generally understood to refer to the devolution of the decision-making authority from the higher central level to the SGB at local level (Botha, 2014:264). Therefore, decentralisation is about the transfer of decision-making from the Department of Basic Education (*hereafter referred to as DBE*) to SGBs. This helps to reduce bureaucratic control and enhance the democratic participation in the governance of schools since the state alone will achieve little if the people who have the responsibility to ensure the successful implementation of policies are not involved (Selesho & Mxuma, 2012:493).

To sum it up, Marishane and Botha (2011:9) state that in the educational context decentralisation involves the shifting of educational resources as well as the decision-making responsibility for the use of such resources to schools and their communities. For this study, decentralisation would mean interpreting the prescribed legislative and policy frameworks, developing operational governance policies and implementing them for effective school governance by SGBs.

### **1.6.5 Policy Interpretation**

Policy interpretation involves explaining policy, deciding and then announcing what must be done, what can be done and what cannot be done (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011:626). The legal mandate given to SGBs by SASA requires them to be able to interpret legislative and policy frameworks so that they can be able to implement them in schools. Therefore, in interpreting policy, SGBs are expected to read and understand applicable policies for proper implementation.

### **1.6.6 Policy Implementation**

Swanepoel, Erasmus and Schenk (2008:144) define implementation as the execution strategy which entails creating the necessary architectural configuration including structures, systems, processes and policies. According to Fox (2007:272) implementation refers to the tools and techniques which are used for improvement of quality. In this study, implementation means making use of legislative and policy frameworks by SGBs in such a manner that school governance is effective.

### **1.6.7 Capacity-building**

Capacity-building can be defined as a systematic and integrated approach to develop and continuously improve governmental, organisational and individual competencies and capabilities necessary to achieve set goals (Mallick, 2013:3). When SGBs are elected into office, the DBE has a responsibility to ensure that they are capacitated to acquire the knowledge and skills required for effective school governance. For the purpose of this study, capacity-building refers to the training and support that should be given to SGBs to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to interpret and implement policies in schools.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

In order to investigate the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation in schools, the researcher employed a qualitative research design.

### **1.7.1 Research Design**

According to Flick, Von Kardorff & Steinke (2004:146), a research design is a plan for collecting and analyzing data that will make it possible for the investigator to answer questions that he/she has posed. Fouché (2007:272) remarks that in qualitative research, the design is determined by the researcher's choice and actions. To be able to investigate the capacity of the SGB in the area of policy interpretation and implementation in public schools, a qualitative approach was used.

### **1.7.2 Research Methodology**

In order to collect and analyse data for this study, qualitative research methods were employed. Qualitative research is primarily concerned with the view that individuals interacting with the social world construct reality (Mestry, 2006:29). Data was collected by interacting with selected participants through focus group and individual semi-structured interviews. In addition to interviews, selected documents were analysed. Using the identified qualitative methods, the researcher collected rich data that is credible and trustworthy. The researcher was able to understand the phenomenon under investigation and determine the extent to which the participants really understand their roles as SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation.

#### **1.7.2.1 Population**

Population refers to the collection of elements about which one wishes to make inferences (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:163). The population for this study were the principals and SGB members of both primary and secondary schools under Klein Letaba Circuit. In order to triangulate data collected from the identified population, the

departmental official responsible for school governance in the Klein Letaba Circuit also formed part of the study.

### **1.7.2.2 Sampling and sample**

Sampling refers to the process which is used to select a portion of the population for study (Maree, 2007:79). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011:100) explain sampling as a consequence of the entire population not being able to contribute to data generation in a particular research. However, the primary purpose of sampling is to collect specific cases, events or actions that clarify and deepen understanding (Neuman, 2006:219). A purposive sampling method was used to select three primary and three secondary schools for this study.

In each selected school, three participants comprising the SGB chairperson, an educator serving as an SGB member and the principal who is an *ex-officio* member of the SGB were purposefully chosen. For the purpose of data triangulation, a departmental official attached to Klein Letaba Circuit's governance section was included in this study.

### **1.7.2.3 Data collection procedure**

In order to collect requisite data for this research, focus group and individual semi-structured interviews as well as documentary analysis were used. To obtain more candid and reflective responses from the participants, three focus group interviews were conducted. Participants were grouped into three homogenous groups, namely; SGB chairpersons, educators serving as SGB members and principals. The use of focus group interviews provided the participants with an opportunity to build on each other's ideas, perceptions and comments to provide an in-depth view not attainable from individual interviews. Focus group interviews saved the researcher time because participants were interviewed as a group for the same duration as would be used for an individual interview.

In order to triangulate information received from the participants, an individual semi-structured interview was conducted with the departmental official responsible for school governance in the Klein Letaba Circuit. The use of individual interviews provided the researcher with an opportunity to meet with and listen to the participant's views, knowledge and experiences on the problem under investigation.

In qualitative research, documents are also an important means of gathering data. In addition to interviews, selected documents were analysed in order to gain an internal perspective of the organization and clarity on the salient aspects of the SGBs' capacity with regard to policy interpretation and implementation in schools. Selected documents such as legislative frameworks enacted at both national and provincial levels, policies developed by the SGB, policy implementation strategies and minutes of SGB meetings held during policy implementation processes were used as supplementary sources that provided direct information about events relating to the phenomenon under investigation. Findings from the documents were compared to the participants' responses for the purpose of triangulation.

## **1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Trustworthiness in a study is a concept that promotes values such as scholarly vigour, transparency and professional ethics so that the study itself gains high levels of trust and fidelity (Rule & John, 2011:107). In order to ensure the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research procedures, the researcher ensured that the following criteria, namely, credibility, dependability, authenticity and confirmability were met (Freeman, DeMarrais, Preissle, Roulston & St Pierre, 2007:28).

The researcher took strides in making sure that the results of this qualitative study are believable and trustworthy by also taking into consideration the following issues:

- Credible participants with requisite knowledge and experience were sampled for the study;

- The researcher worked closely with three expert supervisors who advised on issues relating to review of literature, research methodology, ethics, research language and data analysis;
- Well established data collection methods were used;
- Content analysis strategy was used to analyse data;
- All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim thereafter;
- Throughout the research process, the researcher suspended personal values and beliefs to ensure objectivity and
- The researcher took the findings back to participants to seek their views on honesty and consistency.

## 1.9 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to identify relevant and underlying issues, data analysis took place concurrently with the data collection process. To finally present a topical, comprehensive and scientific product, a content analysis strategy was used to analyse data collected through interviews and document analysis.

## 1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As a professional educator, the researcher worked for 10 years in different schools as a post level 1 educator. At the time of conducting this study, the researcher was working as a principal in one of the schools within the research's jurisdiction and was serving in the SGB as an *ex-officio* member. He also served as an SGB member representing educators in schools where he worked previously for two successive terms. His experience as an SGB member, contributed to an understanding of the dynamics around the phenomenon under investigation. In 2010, the researcher drafted governance policies for schools after having been requested to do so by the Circuit Manager of Klein Letaba Circuit.

The study aimed to investigate the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation and its findings will be significant for the following reasons, among others:

- The researcher will acquire requisite research knowledge and skills necessary to conduct a study of this magnitude.
- The researcher will be able to write credible research articles and journals for presentation and publication.
- The study will provide a better understanding and insight into the dimensions and complexity of the role of SGBs in policy development and implementation in public schools.
- It will outline key policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement in schools.
- It will also reveal challenges faced by SGBs with regard to policy interpretation and implementation in public schools.
- It will also reveal how the Department of Basic Education supports the SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation.
- Finally, the study will recommend capacity-building strategies to empower SGBs in order for them to interpret and implement school policies effectively.

### **1.11 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The focus of this research was to investigate the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation in schools. The research was conducted in schools under Klein Letaba Circuit in the Mopani Education District in Limpopo Province of South Africa. The study was carried out in three primary and two secondary schools. From each selected school, one principal, one SGB chairperson and one educator serving as an SGB member were sampled to take part in the research. Due to time constraints, learners (only in secondary schools) could not be included in the study.

## **1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Before embarking on the research, the researcher took the following ethical factors into consideration:

### **1.12.1 Permission to Conduct Research**

The researcher sought permission (Appendix D) to conduct the research from both the Circuit Manager and the Acting Head of the Department of Education in Limpopo. Copies of letters of approval (Appendix E) were distributed to all participants and selected schools.

### **1.12.2 Informed Consent**

Informed consent is when the individuals choose whether or not to participate in the study after being informed of the facts that would likely influence their decisions (Rangongo, 2011:92). Before commencing with the study, the researcher sought the informed consent (Appendix B) of all selected participants. Participants were requested to sign a declaration form (Appendix C) to indicate their understanding of the research and its aims. It was explicitly explained to the participants that their participation in the research was strictly voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any given time if they felt uncomfortable. The sampled participants were privileged with interview details two weeks before the interviews were conducted.

### **1.12.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

In compliance with the aspect of privacy as part of the code of ethics, the researcher ensured that the personal particulars of all participants were not revealed during data collection and in the research document.

#### **1.12.4 Securing Data**

Data collected from the participants are kept in a safe place. The researcher will not carelessly discuss such information with any other person.

#### **1.12.5 Feedback**

The researcher ensured that feedback was given to all participants and selected schools interested in the findings and recommendations based on the data collected.

#### **1.12.6 Honesty**

The research findings were reported as a true reflection of the participants' opinions. Under no circumstances has the researcher fabricated data to support a particular opinion.

### **1.13 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The research that was conducted on the capacity of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation was organised as delineated below:

**Chapter 1:** As a point of departure, the first chapter focuses on the introduction, statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the research, research questions, definitions of key concepts, a summary of the review of literature and research methodology, trustworthiness, data analysis and significance, delimitation and limitations of the study as well as ethical consideration and organisation of the study.

**Chapter 2:** A conceptual framework on the information gathered from different sources as well as reviews of previous studies and relevant literature are discussed in this chapter to highlight important issues relevant to the research.

**Chapter 3:** The research design and methodology, including population, sampling, data collection and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter 4:** This chapter provides an exposition of data analysis and interpretation and presents findings of the research from both primary and secondary sources.

**Chapter 5:** This chapter provides the discussions, summaries, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## 1.14 CONCLUSION

The legislative reforms that transformed the education system in South Africa post 1994 were discussed in this chapter. The statement of the problem, aims of the study, research questions and definitions of key concepts were also discussed. The chapter further highlighted aspects to be discussed under the review of literature (chapter 2), research design and methodology, data collection instruments, trustworthiness, data analysis and significance and delimitation of the study as well as ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of literature on the information gathered from different sources in order to highlight important issues relevant to the research. The main purpose of a literature review is to present a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study (Machi & McEvoy, 2009:4), namely; the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies in schools.

Holly, Arhar and Kasten (2005:263) state that by reviewing literature “*we synthesise multiple dimensions of the topic and deepen our understanding of the context of our own research*”. The following section focuses on issues that underpin school governance with specific reference to the capacity of SGBs in the interpretation and implementation of policies applicable within the school environment.

#### 2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For the purposes of this study, school governance and policy decentralization served as frames of reference against which SGBs’ understanding, interpretation and implementation of policies applicable within the school environment could be interpreted and evaluated.

##### 2.2.1 School governance in South Africa

According to the *Reviews of national policies for education* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) 2008:38), the preamble to the SASA, which became law in November 1996, explains its rationale as follows:

*“This country requires a new national system for schools which will redress past injustice in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and, in so doing, lay a strong*

*foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the State".*

Mechanisms then had to be put in place to ensure the accurate and efficient implementation of these acts and policies. Accordingly, the DBE suggested the SGB as a structure through which the schools would operate to put in place the structures, authority, collaboration, coordination and allocation of resources and other activities linked to school management (Mabusela, 2016:5).

Section 16 of the SASA states that *"the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform only such functions and obligations as prescribed by the Act"*. Prior to the establishment of the democratic government in South Africa, school governance was the responsibility of the state which acted in partnership with the statutory parent bodies called management councils or governing councils (Lekonyane & Maja, 2014:2). These bodies were established in terms of subsection 70(1) of the Education and Training Act 90 of 1979 and served as a bridge between the school and the Department of Education through the office of the circuit inspector (Marishane, 1999:38). School governance was then characterised by authoritarian and exclusive practices, while the new policy requires broad and democratic participation by parents, educators, non-educator staff and learners (in secondary schools) in the life of the school through the medium of SGBs (Ndou, 2012:12).

Throughout the whole world, parents have always been stakeholders in the establishment of the school as a formal institution of teaching and learning (Mabusela, 2016:10). School governance was already in existence in England and Wales as early as the 1980S (Ngidi, 2004:260). The aim of introducing school

governance in these countries was basically the same as in South Africa, namely; to bring about broader participation and decision-making at the school level.

The previous education system had nineteen operating departments and each implementing their own regulations (Nong, 2007:7). The democratization of school governance through the enactment of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) was the most significant milestone towards the provision of quality education in South African schools. The SASA (84 of 1996) is regarded as a tool that is aimed at, inter alia, redressing past exclusion and facilitating the necessary transformation to support the ideals of representation and participation in the schools and the country. It is intended at creating a new school governance landscape based on citizen participation, partnerships between the state, parents, learners, school staff and communities and devolution of power towards the school community (Naidoo, 2005:13).

The SGB as calibrated by SASA, is the vanguard through which stakeholders can participate in the affairs of the school to encourage tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making. In other words, school governance in South Africa was the democratisation of schooling based on the core values of democracy identified as follows:

- Representation of all stakeholder groups;
- Participation in active and responsible roles;
- Tolerance;
- Rational discussion and
- Collective decision-making

The new governance model is designed to give schools greater autonomy to manage resources, determine the delivery of educational resources, democratise local control of decision-making and respond to community needs (Naidoo, 2005:21). The introduction of school governance in public schools is meant to encourage the development of democracy and active partnership in which parents take more responsibility in the education of their children in collaboration with government, educators and learners. The SASA empowers SGBs to create vibrant learning

institutions that provide a progressively high quality and meaningful education for all learners.

As legal structures, SGBs are mandated to carry out specific functions in terms of SASA. According to Mncube (2009:2) school governance is an institutional structure that is entrusted with the responsibility or authority to formulate and adopt school policies on a range of issues including, but not limited to, school uniforms, school budgets, developmental priorities; endorsement of a code of conduct for pupils, staff and parents; broad goals on the educational quality that the school should strive to achieve; school community relations; and curriculum programme development. However, all policies formulated and adopted by the SGB must be in line with the constitution of the country or any other applicable laws passed by either the national or provincial government. Marishane (1999:54) lists the following three dimensions of school governance:

- **Sovereign governance** entails full public accountability of the work of the school as a whole to all interested parties and rendered in various forms, including the presentation of the annual reports to parents.
- **Judicial governance** entails accountability for meeting all the legal requirements to which the school is subject, including legislature relating to finances, employment, the curriculum and health and safety.
- **Performance governance** which entails accountability for carrying out the activities of the school and in terms of which the vision of the school regarding the provision of a service to pupils is put into practice. This dimension of governance entails specific and legal obligations, which require particular knowledge, skills and expertise.

The SGB's responsibility is not limited to the development of policies, but they should also interpret and implement these policies. In carrying out this governance responsibility, SGBs must promote the values that underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom (Joubert, 2009:232). However, capacitating SGBs to be acquainted this responsibility remain crucial. SGBs are expected to possess specific knowledge and skills which seem lacking in

most members especially in rural communities. This can be attributed to the DBE's inability to organize adequate capacity development opportunities and workshops for SGBs (Maluleka, 2008:28).

On the basis of the above, school governance implies that all stakeholders, including parents, have a role to play in ensuring that applicable policies are correctly interpreted and implemented. This highlights a genuine handing over and sharing of power with concomitant responsibility and accountability (Mncube, 2009:2).

### **2.2.2 Decentralisation**

South Africa's historical development and political choices made during the political and educational transformation culminated in the concept of decentralisation (Department of Education, 2004:38). School level decentralisation was one of the key approaches for restructuring and promoting social change in South Africa (Mabusela, 2016:11). By establishing SGBs and devolving power to them, the government was putting in place a mechanism for power decentralisation (OECD, 2008:144).

Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008:395) purport that decentralisation of school governance will improve decision-making and more effective use of resources. It will also contribute to more effective practices and outcomes. In essence, schooling in South Africa is aimed at giving greater control to SGB members who have to ensure that decisions are informed by and are more suited to local conditions.

The decentralisation discourse presupposes that all major stakeholders have a clear understanding of what running a school entails (Tsotetsi *et al.* 2008:367). Brown and Duku (2008:432) argue that the broad masses of people, regardless of socio-economic situations and racial divides are now able to have a voice in the decisions that affect them directly or indirectly in school communities. Therefore, the development of democratic, decentralised SGBs is an attempt to devolve more authority over education matters and decisions to individual schools and their communities. This is based on the assumption that governors are in the position to

make decisions that suit the specific needs of the school community as they best understand the context, culture and needs of the school. .

Decentralisation has been a key feature of recent educational reforms in many countries. In the past few decades, numerous school systems around the world have begun forms of decentralisation with local decision making and community participation becoming key policy areas (Naidoo, 2005:20). In Sub-Saharan countries such as Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania, it would appear that context has played an important role in terms of the type, quality, approach and progress of decentralisation (Kathyola & Job, 2011:248). For example, both Botswana and Cameroon adopted devolution as a method of decentralisation, whereas Ghana adopted a strategy of a mixture of political devolution, administrative and sectoral deconcentration.

In South Africa, decentralisation was officially endorsed by the promulgation of the SASA (84 of 1996) that ushered in the devolvement of more authority and responsibility of governance at school level. The reason behind such a move is to widen the scope of accountability to the public by giving responsibilities to those in close contact with the school. In this way, the aspirations and needs of the community will be served, provided those elected to dispatch these responsibilities receive the necessary training (Maluleka, 2008:18). In principle, decentralisation is intended to make the educational system more flexible and responsive to actual needs by giving local authorities, schools, educators and parents more say in educational decision-making.

### **2.3 POLICY INTERPRETATION**

In South Africa, the new education legislation and policy frameworks have significantly changed the way in which schools are governed (Joubert, 2008:243). Governing bodies in South Africa are expected to play an important role in ensuring high quality education in schools as well as in the democratization of the post-apartheid South Africa (Heystek, 2011:455). As legal structures responsible for school governance, SGBs are expected to ensure that policies developed at national, provincial and school level are effectively implemented in their respective

schools. This requires SGBs to be able to read and understand the applicable legislative and policy frameworks.

Coburn (2006:345) posits that how SGBs interpret policy will shape the direction of policy implementation. The way in which SGBs enact policies is influenced by what they understand the meanings and implications of such policies to be. Previous research suggests that local actors in schools actively construct their understanding of policies by interpreting them through the lens of their pre-existing beliefs and practices (Coburn, 2006:344). However, studies have revealed that the majority of SGB members especially the parent component, are not able to read and write. Mncube (2009:85) asserts that, in practice, most parent governors are not participating fully since they lack the skills and knowledge required to perform the duties assigned to them.

## **2.4 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Makinde (2005:63) believes implementation problems occur when the desired result on the target is not achieved and whenever basic critical factors for implementing policy, such as communication, resources, dispositions or attitudes and bureaucratic structures are missing, there is bound to be implementation problems. Dieltiens (2008:287) indicate that much has been written about policy implementation, and among others, the lack of proper implementation as policy-makers concentrate on the '*what*' of policy but tend to ignore the '*how*'.

According to Fox (2007:272), implementation refers to the tools and techniques which are used for improvement of quality in an institution. In order to transform and bring order to any institution, it is imperative for such an institution to effectively implement properly formulated policies, which govern it. In South African public schools, such policies should be based upon the principles, norms and values that underpin the South African Constitution, the SASA (84 of 1996) and any applicable law enacted at both national and provincial levels of government (Nyambi, 2004:24). Therefore, for SGBs to thrive in their policy implementation, they have to monitor school activities and ensure that their schools function in line with the laws and policies of government (Nong, 2007:33).

Heystek (2006:482) states that poorly educated school governors especially parents lack management expertise and find it difficult to interpret the contents of legislative and policy frameworks so that there is effective implementation. For effective policy implementation, policies need to be known, understood and accepted by the people affected. Newly developed or revised policies should be circulated in an open, consistent and timely way to ensure that people, both internal and external to the school environment are made aware of them. Stakeholders should receive training about the background and application of new or revised policies. When a policy is released or revised, it should be dated and a specific person identified as the contact person to respond to questions about the policy. Policy affecting external stakeholders should be accompanied by a strategic communication plan. As a requirement, SGBs must be familiar with the contents of laws impacting on education so that they can implement them and develop their own governance policies from an informed point of view.

## **2.5 SPECIFIC POLICIES INTERPRETED AND IMPLEMENTED BY THE SGB**

School policies interpreted and implemented by the SGB at school level are all policies developed at national, provincial and school level. All these policies provide guidelines to the school managers and other stakeholders to use in their day-to-day running of the school. Below is a discussion of specific educational and governance policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement at their respective schools:

### **2.5.1 National and provincial acts and regulations**

After the establishment of the first democratic government in South Africa, the Education Ministry committed itself to 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. National and provincial policies are those legislative and policy frameworks which SGBs must interpret and implement at their schools. These policies are meant to provide guidance to the SGB in developing and implementing their operational policies. All policies must be in accordance with

the constitution, national legislation, provincial legislation and the relevant regulations (Joubert, 2008:235). Policies are developed and adopted in order to establish a purposeful environment which is committed to the improvement and provision of quality education in schools.

The following table presents national and provincial acts and regulations which were enacted post 1994 to regulate the school environment and to ensure that schools in South Africa provide quality education.

**Table 2.1: Selected Educational Legislative and Policy Frameworks**

Legislative Framework	Year of Enactment	Objective
The South African Constitution Act No. 108	1996	- Provides a framework for transformation and democracy.
National Education Act No. 27	1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outlines the responsibilities of the Minister Education.</li> <li>- Formalises relations between national and provincial authorities.</li> </ul>
South African Schools Act No. 84	1996	- Promotes access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system.
Employment of Educators Act 76	1998	- Regulates the responsibilities and conditions of service of educators.
National Curriculum Statement	2005	- Stipulates policy on curriculum and assessment in the schooling system.
Employment Equity Act No. 55	1998	- Promotes the constitutional right of equality and the exercise of true democracy.

		- Eliminates unfair discrimination in employment.
Labour Relations Act No. 66	1997	- Promotes fair labour practices in the work place. - Eliminates unfair labour practices.
Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75	1997	- Determines basic conditions of employment.
Public Finance Management Act No. 1	1999	- Promotes effective management and administration of funds in government institutions.
Limpopo Provincial Prescripts	2011	- Promotes effective management and administration of funds in public schools in Limpopo Province.

Informed by the apartheid practices which separated learners and teachers along racial or colour lines, these pieces of legislation are aimed at redressing past inequalities by promoting racial integration at school level (Mampane, 2008:83). SGBs are expected to fully understand these legislative frameworks so that they can be able to implement them effectively.

### 2.5.2 School governance policies

In terms of the SASA, policy formulation authority has been allocated to school governing bodies in a number of specific areas (Joubert, 2008:235). SGBs may develop and adopt policies in order to establish a purposeful environment that is committed to the improvement and provision of quality education in schools. Examples of such policies are the policy on:

- HIV/AIDS;

- compulsory school attendance;
- school safety;
- the use of school property, buildings and grounds;
- finance;
- hiring educators and non-educator staff;
- infrastructure maintenance and improvement;
- extra-mural activities;
- the management of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM);
- the payment of school fees.

The development of these policies is informed by SASA (84 of 1996) and other legislative frameworks. All policies developed by the SGB are referred to as governance policies. Therefore for the SGB to develop these policies, it is required of them to be able to interpret national and provincial legislative frameworks to ensure compliance and consistency.

SGBs should take pride in developing and implementing policies because it is through this exercise that they will contribute towards the provision of effective curriculum delivery at their schools. To substantiate the above statement, the table below will show the relationship between the SGB's functions and policies that have to be developed and implemented in terms of SASA (*referred to as 'this Act' in table 2*) and other legislative frameworks. The importance of this relationship is to emphasise that SGBs do not have to interpret and implement policies from a vacuum, but they have to work within the parameters of directives of applicable laws.

**Table 2.2: Sections of SASA and Governance Policies Required**

Sections of SASA (84 of 1996)	What the sections entail	Related policies required
3 (1)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> and any applicable provincial law, every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first	Policy on compulsory school

	school day of the year in which such a learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such a learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever comes first.	attendance
5 (1)	A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way.	School admission policy
6 (1)	Subject to the Constitution and <i>this Act</i> , the Minister may, by notice in the Government Gazette, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers, determine norms and standards for language policy in public schools.	School language policy
7 (1)	Subject to the Constitution and any applicable provincial law, religious observances may be conducted at a public school under rules issued by the governing body if such observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance at them by learners and members of staff is free and voluntary.	Policy on religious observances
8(1)	Subject to any applicable provincial law, a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school.	Learners' code of conduct
8A (1)	Unless authorised by the principal for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a dangerous object or illegal drug onto school premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on school premises or during any school activity.	School safety policy
18 (1)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> and any applicable provincial law, the governing body of a public school must function in terms of a constitution which complies with minimum requirements determined by the Member of the Executive Council by notice in the Provincial Gazette.	SGB constitution
20 (1)(a)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> , the governing body of a public	Mission

	school must develop the mission statement of the school.	statement
20 (1)(g)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> , the governing body of a public school must administer and control the school's property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels.	Policy on the use of school property, buildings and grounds
20 (4)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> , the Labour Relations Act of 1995 and any other applicable law, a public school may establish posts for educators and employ educators additional to the establishment determined by the Member of the Executive Council in terms of section 3 (1) of the Educators' Employment Act of 1994.	Policy on hiring educators
20 (5)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> , the Labour Relations Act of 1995 and any other applicable law, a public school may establish posts for non-educators and employ non-educator staff additional to the establishment determined in terms of the Public Service Act of 1994.	Policy on hiring non-educator staff
21 (1) (a)	To maintain and improve the school's property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable.	Policy on infrastructure maintenance and improvement
21 (1) (b)	To determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy.	Policy on extra-mural activities
21 (1) (c)	To purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school.	Policy on the management of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM)

37 (1)	The governing body of a public school must establish a school fund and administer it in accordance with directions issued by the Head of Department.	School finance policy
39 (1)	Subject to <i>this Act</i> , school fees may be determined and charged at a public school only if a resolution to do so has been adopted by a majority of parents attending the meeting referred to in section 38 (2).	Policy on the payment of school fees

As illustrated above, SGBs are expected to develop, interpret and implement the identified policies in order to regulate the school environment within which they operate and to strengthen the school's role as a legal institution of governance. The role of SGBs in the development, interpretation and implementation of policies is not only limited to the above-mentioned policies. SGBs are also expected to develop other policies that provide guidelines to school managers and governors in their day-to-day school management and administration activities. Other policies that SGBs can develop include among others, visitors' policy, touring policy, library policy, ICT policy, cell phone policy and many others. Therefore, SGBs are compelled to make policies that:

- Are within the ambit of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and other legislative and policy frameworks;
- Allow all South African children to enter the schooling system;
- Promote values of non-racialism and equality among learners;
- Help communities to respect and tolerate all religions and cultures in the country;
- Encourage children to speak a range of the country's languages and
- Respect children's rights and promote non-violent ways of solving problems.

To address the above call would require a clear understanding of the school situation and the legislation which governs the education system. Therefore, the spirit and purpose of all the policies should express the vision and objectives of the school and be in line with education legislation (Maluleka, 2008:27).

## 2.6 PROMOTING THE INTEREST OF LEARNERS THROUGH POLICIES

The SASA has been founded on the democratic principles of South Africa's Constitution. Section 29 of the Constitution protects the right to education and it states: *"everyone has the right to basic education"*. Section 28 (2) of the Constitution stipulates that *"the best interest of the child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child"*. As such, the SGB need to understand that their terrain is not that of the corporate world, not that of political negotiations and power play, not the world of cultural production, not the world of collective bargaining and struggle, but the world of teaching and learning and protecting and promoting the best interest of their children at school (Davids, 2011:36).

Section 11 of SASA requires the establishment of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) in grade 8 and higher. The RCL has a duty to elect learners who must serve on the SGB. This is done to ensure that learners are involved in matters that concern them especially during the development and implementation of the learners' code of conduct. This means that school governance must at all times be in the interest of learners.

Smit (2007:61) proposes that governing bodies identify unifying features and values that do not overemphasise the rights of individual learners; conversely, the communal rights and values of groups of learners should not dominate. SGB's should be able to analyse the facts relating to demography, the majority language and religion of choice, the cultural background of the school and the community it serves. Based on such facts the policies should be interpreted and implemented bearing in mind that diversity of learners should be accommodated as far as practicable.

In order to transform and bring order to schools, it is imperative that SGBs are able to interpret and implement policies for the benefit of learners. In promoting the best interest of learners, SGBs are responsible for the development of a strategy for ensuring the provision of quality education to the learners and its proper implementation thereof (Maluleka, 2008:15). The SGB should try to use its knowledge, skills and expertise to improve the quality of education for learners in

schools (Nyambi, 2004:23). Therefore, SGB members must be prepared to commit themselves towards achieving the vision of the school through active participation in policy interpretation and implementation. This will allow SGB members to be more responsive to governance issues within the school since they will stay focused on the positive aspects and build up a positive climate of support and good relationship among stakeholders (Heystek, 2010:1).

From the above discussion, it can be deduced that the role of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation should be geared towards the benefit of learners. However, in order to promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school, it requires of the SGB members to possess specialised knowledge and skills in the field of school governance (Davids, 2011:36). SGBs should make decisions on behalf of the school and see to it that schools are governed properly and all stakeholders share in the decisions of that body.

## **2.7 PARTNERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

The SASA emphasises the democratic participation of the school stakeholders in education. According to Chaka (2008:16), the SASA (84 of 1996) embraces inclusivity, that is, its intention is to ensure that everyone has equal access to good quality education. Classe, Kok and Van der Merwe (2007:250) indicate that the transformation process from apartheid to democracy in South Africa necessitated the forming of partnerships, including in the field of education. When people become partners, they have something that they value which contributes towards the achievement of a common goal.

Partnerships require a shared sense of purpose and willingness to negotiate shared understanding of what is needed and how it may be achieved and to pursue goals together (Nong, 2007:46). It is therefore imperative of SGBs to create platforms for democratic participation in the decision-making processes so that community members are privileged with the right to shape the direction of the education of their children. However, the problem is that there are no standardised mechanisms and

procedures in place that may help the formation of such partnerships (Mabusela, 2016:9).

In his State of the Nation Address, presented to the joint sitting of Parliament in Cape Town on 3 June 2009, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr JG Zuma said, “*Education will be a key priority for the next five years. We want our teachers, learners and parents to work together with government to turn our schools into thriving centres of excellence*”. This was a clarion call to various stakeholders to work in partnership to provide quality education. The call by the President was to remind the South African citizens that education was no longer the private affair of the state, but a societal issue that has become everyone’s business.

Previously, both parents and learners were not involved in the decision-making processes of the school but with the advent of SASA, they are expected to be part of the decision-making process and its implementation in schools (Nong, 2007:45). In the context of this study, partnership in school governance involves the forging of new relationships between the various role players such as parents, educators, learners, the community, the state, non-governmental organisations and business in such a way that roles and responsibilities are shared between them in the school (Marishane, 1999:12). The notion of involving the broader community in decision-making through school governance structures is of great importance and justifiable since education is everyone’s business.

Partnership in school governance is one of the values enshrined directly or indirectly in the democratic Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). Section 29 of the South African Constitution recognises the right to education and the transformation of the education system as two of the most important values in which the democratic state of the Republic of South Africa is based. The changing education environment has requested democratic participation in schools and that parents as well as the community should be partners in education for the advancement of teaching and learning in schools (Nong, 2007:46).

While the transformation of education in the South African context involves changing education for the better, democratisation of education encompasses the idea of

partnership in which stakeholders such as parents, learners, educators and members drawn from the school community not only play an active role in school activities and functions, but also jointly constitute a body that represents these stakeholders and take decisions on behalf of the school (Marishane, 1999:19). Thus schools should recognise these partners as active stakeholders playing a central role in decision-making and its implementation, perceive them as having equal strengths and equivalent expertise, able to contribute and render effective service (Nong, 2007:15).

## **2.8 CHALLENGES FACED BY SGBs IN POLICY INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

In order to effectively perform their roles, SGBs should, by implication, not only have the political will to effect reforms but also the requisite knowledge and capacity to do so (Mampane, 2008:53). While there is positive contribution made by the SGB in schools, there are constraints which manifest themselves around their policy interpretation and implementation role. Onderi and Makori (2013:65) state that school governors should be people with commitment, competence and experience.

Basic among the school governance challenges is the incapacity of the SGB members to interpret all educational policies that are expected to be implemented at school level. Bagarette (2012:101) sees the ineffectiveness of parents governors caused by the lack of understanding of their roles and functions. This can be attributed to inadequate training that SGBs receive. Moreover, there is already a concern that the DBE does not make provision for training other than the limited initial training soon after the election of the SGB (Heystek, 2004:311).

Another challenging factor is the high levels of illiteracy among SGB members, particularly parents and the irrelevant and inadequate training these members receive during their term of office (Xaba, 2011:201). A large number of the South African population is not sufficiently and functionally literate to meet the requirements of drafting, reading and implementing policies (Heystek, 2011:311). There is therefore, a strong likelihood that many of the parent members of the SGB, even with the assumed training, do not have the necessary literacy level required for them to

develop and implement policies. Mncube (2009:95) suggests that parents who are not able to read and write are unable to keep abreast of new challenges in education and thus, some parent governors tend to delegate their responsibilities to school principals while becoming passive participants in the school governance process

The competency and literacy level of parents serving in SGBs has a profound influence on the functionality of both the SGB and the school in general (Maluleka, 2008:39). Educators in South African public schools especially those in rural areas have a duty of interpreting legislative and policy frameworks to the parent component of the SGB. In carrying out their roles in terms of sections 20 and 21 of SASA, SGBs are expected to give due consideration to the legal requirements pertaining to such roles. However, SGBs are confronted with limited skills, knowledge and expertise when dealing with issues related to policy interpretation and implementation. Consequently, they are manipulated into rubber stamping and adopting other people's decisions and motives much to the detriment of the school. This weakens their confidence, authority and power on their roles as school governors. In support of this, Maluleka (2008:37) asserts that school principals and educators are manipulating parent SGB members into doing things against their wishes. Similarly, Mestry (2004:127) says that some principals use the information obtained from delegated tasks to usurp power and authority from the SGB to pursue their own objectives at the expense of the school.

In some schools in South Africa, parents are not yet playing their full role as governors and as mandated by legislation (Mncube, 2009:82). The unwillingness by parents to participate in school governance is another challenging factor. Brown and Duku (2008:436) confirm that parental participation in many local community contexts tend primarily to involve parents in fundraising and social events, rather than in SGB initiatives. The level of participation of parent governors in schooling is crucial to their ability to perform school governance functions. Parents are not always available to carry out governance responsibilities due to work commitments and the fact that they seem to have a lot of confidence in educators and therefore expect educators to take decisions on their behalf (Diamond, 2015:7).

Findings by Mashele (2009:120) reveal that SGBs of previously disadvantaged

communities experience many problems that prevent them from governing their schools effectively. These include a lack of knowledge regarding:

- The orientation of newly-elected SGB members;
- The formulation and implementation of policies;
- Joint decision-making;
- Communication and conflict resolution skills;
- Changing the negative attitude of educators and learners and
- The fact that schools should be safe places for both educators and learners.

While not exhaustive, the challenges outlined above indicate the difficulty of school governance in South Africa. However, the situation is not confined to South Africa only. According to Chikoko (2008:247), in Zimbabwe, it was evident that although there are legal decentralised school governance structures, the majority of which are parents, still do not have the capacity to function effectively and are still marginalised in school governance and decision-making. In Uganda studies revealed that there were apparent disparities in parental involvement at school level influenced by factors like gender, religion, economic status and educational level (Diamond, 2015:8). These challenges may reduce the parent component SGB members to the role of spectators since it limits their full participation in the decision making processes.

## **2.9 CAPACITY TRAINING OF SGBs IN POLICY INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

In order to restore or improve the culture of teaching and learning in South African schools, a common purpose or mission among learners, educators, principals, parents and the community must be developed, with clear, mutually agreed and understood responsibilities and lines of cooperation and accountability (RSA, 1995:21). According to the SASA, SGB members are elected after every three years. In view of the fact that the concepts and practice of school governance are new to most parents, SGB training is critical.

Effective interpretation and implementation of policies by SGBs require adequate understanding and knowledge. In this regard, Grant-Lewis & Naidoo (2004:112) argue that the bureaucratic listing of SGB roles and responsibilities requires that SGBs be trained to understand the legalese, be familiar with the Constitution, the SASA and various national and provincial legislative frameworks. Therefore, newly elected members are expected to undergo capacity training in order to be able to execute their responsibilities efficiently and effectively. Capacity training can be seen as the assistance course or continuing training provided to SGBs of public schools so that they can perform their required functions effectively in a number of areas.

The new education system encourages community participation in all democratic decision-making processes. However, mere promulgation of policy does not necessarily imply effective interpretation and implementation of legislative and policy frameworks. As regards the capacity of SGBs to live up to the expectations that the state seems to have of them, it could also be argued that there is a link between school governors' understating of legislation on education and their ability to effectively implement such legislation at school level (Mampane, 2008:58).

According to the Report of the Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (RSA, 2004:175), SGBs in South African schools are under-capacitated and not effective in engaging with the business of education. Furthermore, Xaba (2011:201) states that SGBs are not trained before they start their role as governors and this manifests in problems such as unfamiliarity with meeting procedures, problems with the specialist language used in meetings, difficulties in managing large volumes of paper, not knowing how to make a contribution and not knowing appropriate legislation.

In terms of the SASA, the Head of Department in each province is required to provide introductory training for newly elected governing bodies and continuous training to governing bodies in order to promote the effective performance of their duties. Although the Act theoretically provides spaces for democratic transformation, problems arise when the Act has to be transformed into practice. There seems to be a lack of adequate training which prevents SGBs from fulfilling their roles effectively

and this deficiency in training is at variance with the Act as it stipulates enhancement of capacity of governing bodies (Adams & Waghid, 2005:25).

The shift to decentralised school governance and management requires governors, principals and educators to develop a wide range of skills and capacity to deal with the complex issues and tasks they are expected to fulfil. Tsotetsi *et al.* (2008:385) point out that in view of the complex functions prescribed for SGBs in South African schools, sound training should be provided to ensure the proper discharge of the multiple duties bestowed upon them to avoid the so-called “*muddling through approach*”. They further indicate that the report on the challenges faced by school governors with regard to fulfilling their tasks indicated that the training received by governing bodies and the extent to which this training had succeeded in preparing them to carry their functions was not adequate.

The kind of training should be extensive, holistic and integrated in terms of time and content and cannot be supplied through a one day workshop. Literacy levels and educational background of SGBs are also pivotal in making the training a success. It is therefore, the responsibility of the DBE to provide the necessary capacity building workshops for newly elected SGB members in order to eliminate potentially severe problems that could defeat the whole purpose of public school SGBs as a democratic mechanism to localise governance. Training should ensure that all SGB members understand their roles and responsibilities within the school (Tsotetsi *et al.* 2008:387).

On the basis of the above, it is of utmost importance that SGB members are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise to interpret and implement policies in schools. However, the lack of capacity thereof poses serious challenges in the organisation and governance of schools. Fundamentally, transformation and equality demand change in attitude, together with the acquisition of appropriate capacity. While it can be argued that capacity training is not the only factor that can improve SGBs’ abilities to interpret and implement policies, it can be equally accepted that it has a significant role to play in facilitating the understanding of SGBs regarding interpreting and implementing policies. Relevant and adequate capacity building for SGB members remain imperative in ensuring that the SGBs are

competent in the performance of their core functions of school governance. It is important for the department to invest time and resources in the capacity-building activities of the SGBs to ensure that they are well prepared to accept and successfully discharge their delegated powers in the governance of schools. This will make SGB members to be valuable role players in the education system (Maluleka, 2008:43).

## **2.10 THE IMPACT OF POLICIES ON THE CURRICULUM DELIVERY**

A curriculum may be described as planned teaching and learning activities or programmes for which an educational institution is responsible (Quan-Baffour, 2006:11). Curriculum offers a wide range of learning opportunities which the school provides for its learners. It includes everything that is taught and learnt including those activities arranged by the school which take place outside the normal school hours such as matches against teams from other schools and school trips and excursions (Maluleka, 2008:23).

The curriculum forms the core business of the school. A school curriculum covers all that is considered necessary to be taught to learners and represents what society wants from education. It embraces elements that schools undertake to achieve educational goals and objectives, namely; content, teaching and learning, assessment and rules for implementing the curriculum itself. As a partner in the education of learners, the SGB represents the interest of ordinary community members, parents, educators and learners in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the curriculum in schools and ensuring that it is not divorced from the aims of the school (Quan-Baffour, 2006:11). Thus, the role of the SGB in curriculum delivery is to monitor standards, to support plans to meet development pertaining to the curriculum and to cater for parents' needs and expectations on how the school should carry out its curriculum mandate as an institution of learning. Ideally, SGBs are expected to improve the provision of quality education in schools by facilitating the proper implementation of policies and programmes. In this regard, Xaba (2004:316) asserts that SGBs are by their nature critical structures for the delivery of effective teaching and learning in schools.

The SGB members have a responsibility to create a conducive environment that will foster and enhance the attainment of educational goals of the school. The execution of their policy interpretation and implementation responsibilities should be aimed at promoting and complementing the work of educators. School policies that are well constructed and effectively implemented assist in channelling the behaviour, actions, decisions and practices in directions that promote effective curriculum delivery. The SGB should be very much concerned about poor academic achievement of learners as a result of poor quality teaching and learning.

The nature of the responsibilities pertaining to curriculum issues demands that the SGBs should have specific and particular knowledge, skills and understanding of the need of the community, legislation and policies governing the structuring and delivery of curriculum (Maluleka, 2008:24). Therefore, the knowledge, skills and information pool of the SGB members are critical in the successful choice, organisation, management and implementation of the curriculum to satisfy the needs and expectations of the community served by the school.

## **2.11 THE IMPACT OF POLICIES ON SCHOOL VALUES AND CULTURE**

According to Rughubar-Reddy (2012: iii), school policies play a pivotal role in fostering and instilling positive values in learners. Pedro (2009: IV) states that

*“values are usually abstract but sometimes also physical entities to which human beings attach worth. They are common in individuals or groups through physical exposure and genetic make-up. Furthermore, teaching inevitably instils values in learners. Schools often adopt a value system which should be imposed upon any individual learner”.*

SGBs have a responsibility to integrate positive values into all aspects of the school curriculum through effective policy interpretation and implementation. Nieuwenhuis (2007:281) asserts that learning organisations particularly educational institutions should be guided and directed in their functioning by the values they uphold and the policy frameworks they develop and implement. An organisation that is guided by its policies and values is an organisation that has deliberately infused them into its own culture.

The SGBs' role is to support the principal and his/her staff in the performance of their duties as enshrined in the SASA. One way of doing this could be to create a school culture that is conducive to teaching and learning. Schools with effective teaching and learning culture have high achievement rates regardless of the type of community the school serves. The SGB is expected to make, interpret and implement rules that will govern the behaviour of learners. Wayward behaviours that have a negative influence on academic achievement, namely, absenteeism, alcohol and drug abuse, late coming, truancy, bullying or violence must be eradicated through policies that are effectively interpreted and implemented by the SGB.

Everything a learning school does and aspires to be, should transmit messages that learners are valued, their rights are protected and respected and their interests held in high esteem (Nieuwenhuis, 2008:281). Moreover, Pedro (2009:iv) is of the opinion that moral values must be taught in schools because they influence attitudes, priorities, principles, norms, standards, morals and ethics, which in turn influence decision-making, learner performance and behaviour that affect the future of learners. School governance is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled to ensure that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the legislation (Maluleka, 2008:15). Through effective policy interpretation and implementation, the SGB should create an environment where educators enjoy teaching and learners feel at home and enjoy learning. The SGB should work to develop a shared vision that specifies the particular values, culture and beliefs that will guide policy and practice within the school.

Based on the above, stakeholders in education need to come together to establish an informed understanding of legislative and policy frameworks and reconcile the complexity and challenges that surround the transmission of values so that educators will be able to assist learners in a meaningful way (Rughubar-Reddy, 2012:iii). A sound school culture and positive school climate are inextricably linked to good governance. Without school governance processes such as policy interpretation and implementation, the curriculum delivery strategy of the school will not be supported and as such quality education will be compromised.

## 2.12 CONCLUSION

South Africa has made considerable strides in transforming its post-apartheid governance system from one characterised by exclusion and fragmentation to one characterised by inclusion, democracy and uniformity (Chaka, 2008:31). The SGB was introduced by SASA as a legal structure made up of a group of people responsible and accountable for taking and implementing decisions on behalf of the school community (Ndou, 2012:31). Among its responsibilities, the SGB is entrusted with the responsibility and authority to formulate and adopt policies for each public school in terms of national and provincial laws and regulations as prescribed within the national norms and standards (DoE, 1996:19).

One of the key approaches to the restructuring of the South African education system and of promoting social change has been school-level decentralization (OECD, 2008:87) whereby more authority over education matters and decisions are devolved to individual schools and their communities. Section 28(2) of the Constitution stipulates that *“the best interest of the child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child”*. As a partner in the education of learners, the SGB represents the interest of ordinary community members, parents, educators and learners in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the curriculum in schools and ensuring that it is not divorced from the aims of the school (Quan-Baffour, 2006:11).

The interpretation and implementation of policies is still a challenging factor which needs attention by all stakeholders in education. There is a need for the government to attend to the training of SGBs for the effective and efficient performance of their obligations in the governance of all public schools (Ndou, 2012:49). It is imperative that SGBs are adequately trained in policy interpretation and implementation. In this way, they will be able to influence and determine decisions, actions and other curriculum related matters. Well interpreted and implemented policies will be an instrument that gives directions to the day-to-day operations of the school and help create a culture of teaching and learning. In other words, for a school to operate in the best interest of learners and to serve the interest of the community, it needs

policies to guide its SGB members, parents, principal, educators, learners, support-staff and other stakeholders on how to operate in order to achieve educational goals.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The all-encompassing aim of this study was to investigate the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. To achieve this, the researcher endeavoured to collect existing knowledge, analysed it and then generated new knowledge which could make SGBs effective in interpreting and implementing policies. Consequently, in this chapter the researcher strived to operationalise the theme of the research design and methodology used in the study and to substantiate the choices made in the study (Vosloo, 2014:299).

The chapter also discusses sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. All the components outlined in this chapter ensured that the researcher could determine not only the level of understanding of the selected participants but also uncover the hidden predisposition, bias, expectations and fears as regard to the capacity of the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Yin (2003:20) explains a research design as a logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions. Before embarking on a research endeavour, the researcher had to first decide on a research design or plan that will be used to collect and analyse data. The nature and complexity of the research problem, research questions and related research aims called for a qualitative research design to meet the requirements of these research intentions (Vosloo, 2014:317). A research design should be seen as a mixed-bag approach that implies choosing from different alternatives and options to ensure that the research aim and purpose are clarified and achieved (Zikmund, 2010:66).

To be able to investigate the capacity of the SGB in policy interpretation and implementation in public schools, a qualitative research design with a phenomenological perspective was used in this research. This gave the researcher an opportunity to interact with the participants in such a way that they were able to express their views, perceptions or beliefs and experiences on the phenomenon being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:141).

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology refers to the researcher's general approach in carrying out the research project (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12). In order to investigate the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies within the school environment, an empirical research was conducted within a qualitative research paradigm.

#### **3.3.1 The Qualitative Approach**

Qualitative research methods were employed for the systematic collection, analysing and interpreting of extensive data for this study. Qualitative research approaches are those in which the procedures are not as strictly formalised, while the scope is more likely to be undefined and a more philosophical mode of operation is adopted (Delpont & De Vos, 2011:266). In other words, data was collected, analysed and interpreted without using statistical procedures or other means of quantification. As such, a qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods of collective data (Delpont & De Vos, 2011:65).

The purposes of qualitative research are broad in scope and centre around promoting a deep and holistic or complex understanding of a particular phenomenon, such as an environment, a process or even belief (Gary, Mills & Airasian, and 2006:399). Creswell (2009:4) asserts that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. He adds that the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data.

Qualitative research methods are often employed to answer questions on human behaviour, opinion and experience; information that is difficult to obtain through more quantitatively oriented methods of data collection. Qualitative researchers believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon (Maree, 2007:261). By so doing, it seeks to contribute to a better understanding of social realities and draws attention to processes, meaning, patterns and structural features.

The researcher chose the qualitative approach to collect, analyse and interpret data that is comprehensive and extensive in nature that can yield results that will contribute and form part of the knowledge which future researchers can pursue. In this case, it sought to establish, explore and construct reality regarding the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing governance policies with the view of assessing their effectiveness in creating an atmosphere conducive for providing quality education in schools.

Data was collected by interacting with selected participants through focus group and individual semi-structured interviews. In addition to interviews, selected documents were analysed in order to present a comprehensive research product. Using the identified qualitative methods provided, the researcher had the opportunity to collect rich data that were credible and trustworthy. The researcher was able to understand the phenomenon under investigation and determine the extent the participants really understood their roles as SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation.

### **3.3.2 Characteristics of Qualitative Research**

Qualitative approach was adopted for the study on the basis of those aspects which researchers highlight as recurring characteristics of qualitative research. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:94) and Kumar (2011:13), the following are the characteristics of qualitative research:

- It is usually conducted in natural settings. Natural settings (such as classrooms, schools and sports fields) are the overwhelming preference for qualitative studies.
- The extensive use of descriptive data. Qualitative researchers are likely to describe a phenomenon with words, rather than with numbers.
- The emphasis is on process rather than on product.
- It is often based on inductive logic: going from the specific to the general.
- The search for meaning is often evident. The search for meaning focuses in qualitative research on how people try to make sense of their lives. How it is may be nearly as important in a qualitative study as how the participants think it is.

These characteristics of the qualitative research approach underpin the necessity of carrying out the research as it led to a better understanding of the impact of SGBs' in school governance and its subsequent effect on the functionality of the school in general.

### **3.3.3 Phenomenological Approach**

In order to uncover perceptions of participants on the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies, the researcher adopted a qualitative research design with a phenomenological strategy. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:141) define a phenomenological study as a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation. In other words, a phenomenological approach enabled the participants to state their own opinions, and ideas without being influenced or manipulated.

The study was interactive in nature. Therefore, the approach enabled the researcher to obtain a deep understanding of how participants perceive things during data collection process (Vosloo, 2014:317). The researcher interacted with the selected participants through interviews, namely; focus group and individual semi-structured interviews to collect data. As such, the researcher was able to explain and

understand the experiences and perspectives of the research participants regarding the research phenomenon.

For a successful investigation and to eliminate bias during the interviews, the researcher set aside personal views, prejudices, philosophy of life and suppositions. Relevant documents from sampled schools were analysed to corroborate the opinions and beliefs of the participants. These data collection strategies assisted the researcher to collect comprehensive and valuable data regarding the phenomenon studied.

### **3.4 POPULATION**

Population in research refers to the collection of elements about which one wishes to make inferences (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:163). It must, however, be stated that population in research does not necessarily mean a body of people but refers to all cases about which a researcher wishes to make inferences.

The population for this study comprised principals and SGB members of both primary and secondary schools under Klein Letaba Circuit in the Mopani District. To triangulate data collected from the identified population, a departmental official responsible for school governance in Klein Letaba Circuit was selected to participate in the research.

### **3.5 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE**

After identifying the population of the phenomenon to be studied, the researcher had to further identify individuals who were willing to participate in the study. This is referred to as sampling. Sampling refers to the selection of a subset of persons or things from a larger population with the intention of representing the particular population (Neuman, 2011:241). In qualitative research, there are two types of sampling approaches that can be used by the researcher to select participants, namely; probability and non-probability sampling.

Qualitative researchers are intentionally non-random in their selection of data sources and, instead, their sampling is purposive (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:147). Since generalisation was not the goal of this research and the fact that it was a small scale study, a non-probability approach, namely; purposive sampling was the most appropriate sampling strategy used in the study. Purposive sampling involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and as it does not represent any group apart from itself, it does not seek to generalise about the wider population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, and 2011:113). Hence, the choice of participants in this study was deliberate.

The primary purpose of sampling is to collect specific cases or samples that clarify and deepen understanding. A sample is a set of elements taken from a larger population (Burke & Larry, 2011:216). The question that often confronts novice researchers is just how large their sample for the research should be. In qualitative studies, sample size often consists of a smaller number of knowledgeable informants. The logic of the sample size is related to the purpose of the study, the research problem, the data collection techniques and the availability of the information-rich cases. These criteria had to be considered in order for the researcher to select a sample that was representative of the study population.

Qualitative researchers' concern is to find cases that will enhance what the researchers learn about processes of social life in a specific context (Neuman, 2006:219). In purposive sampling, the sample is selected based on the researcher's judgement and the purpose of the research, looking for those who have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched. The study's aim, objectives and characteristics of the study population helped the researcher to determine which and how many people to select. In this study, a sample size of three key informants was sampled from each selected school to participate in the study. The selection of the informants was on the basis of them being knowledgeable and experienced about the phenomenon under investigation.

### 3.5.1 Selection of schools

Schools that participated in the research were purposefully selected. Through the application of purposive sampling method, the researcher selected three primary and three secondary schools to participate in the study. However, one of the high schools withdrew from the research. Five schools that participated in the research are shown below:

**Table 3.1: Selected Schools**

Selected schools	Type	Quintile	Enrolment	Area	Number of SGB members (Including principals)
School A	Primary school	1	438	Rural	8
School B	Primary school	1	556	Rural	8
School C	Primary school	1	732	Rural	8
School D	Secondary school	1	384	Rural	10 (including learner representatives)
School E	Secondary school	1	850	Rural	12 (including learner representatives)

All schools selected are in the Klein Letaba Circuit under the Mopani Education District of the Limpopo Province. They all fall under quintile 1 because they are situated in the previously disadvantaged rural areas. They are in close proximity with each other and therefore accessible. This allowed the researcher to conduct focus group interviews after school hours and also to quickly analyse documents.

### 3.5.2 Selection of Participants

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:141), in a typical qualitative research sample, there must be between 5 and 25 participants, all of whom have had direct experience of the phenomenon being studied. Participants for this study were purposefully selected. This means that the participants were selected according to

some defining characteristics that made them the holders of the information required for the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:147). In each sampled school, three participants comprising two SGB members, namely; an educator and SGB chairperson and a principal who is an *ex-officio* member of the SGB were purposefully chosen.

Initially, the total number of participants sampled from selected schools was 18, but during the data collection process, some participants could not be able to continue with the study due to situations beyond their control. For instance, school F withdrew all its participants and the SGB chairperson of school E failed to attend a scheduled focus group interview. This situation led to the reduction of the number of participants selected from schools to 14. To corroborate data obtained from SGBs, the departmental official responsible for school governance in the Klein Letaba Circuit was included in the study. Therefore, the total number of participants who finally contributed to the research was 15.

### 3.5.2.1 Principals

The participation of principals in SGBs of public schools is prescribed for in section 23 (1) (b) of the SASA, which states that

*“subject to the Act, the membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school comprises the principal, in his or her official capacity”.*  
According to SASA, section 19 (2), *“the Head of Department must ensure that principals render all necessary assistance to governing bodies in the performance of their duties in terms of the Act”.*

This suggests that the role of school principals in the governance of schools is of paramount importance. It is for this reason that principals were selected to participate in the study to establish their views on the phenomenon studied. Five principals selected to participate in the research are profiled as shown below:

**Table 3.2: Selected Principals**

Participant	Gender	Age in Years	Home Language	Designation	Highest Qualification	Experience in School Governance
Principal A	Male	46	Xitsonga	<i>Ex-officio</i> member of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	10 years
Principal B	Female	49	Xitsonga	<i>Ex-officio</i> member of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	2 years
Principal C	Female	48	Xitsonga	<i>Ex-officio</i> member of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	3 years
Principal D	Female	54	Xitsonga	<i>Ex-officio</i> member of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	5 years
Principal E	Female	48	Xitsonga	<i>Ex-officio</i> member of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	4 years

The above profile reveals that the highest qualification of all principals was a Bachelor of Education degree at honours level. Their age difference ranged from 2 to 8 years. The introduction of the policy on equity recently could be the result of the majority of principals being females hence all women selected to participate in the study were appointed few years ago. The highest experienced woman in the school management position had 5 years of experience.

### 3.5.2.2 Educators

Educators form part of the component in the SGB. They play a significant role in both the education of learners and the governance responsibilities of the school. Their participation in the SGB of public schools, is therefore prescribed for in section 23 (2)

(b) of SASA, which states that “*elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of educators at the school*”. As members of SGBs, five educators were selected to participate in the study and are profiled as indicated below:

**Table 3.3: Selected Educators Serving in the SGB**

Participant	Gender	Age in Years	Home Language	Designation	Highest Qualification	Experience in School Governance
Educator A	Male	50	Xitsonga	Additional member of the SGB	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma	8 years
Educator B	Male	46	Xitsonga	Secretary of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	4 years
Educator C	Female	47	Xitsonga	Secretary of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	8 years
Educator D	Female	47	Xitsonga	Deputy Secretary of the SGB	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	7 years
Educator E	Male	44	Xitsonga	Deputy Secretary of the SGB	Secondary Teachers' Diploma	5 years

Three of the educators were females and two were males. All of them had served as SGB members for more than one term. Three of them had Bachelors of Education at honours level and two had undergraduate diplomas. The majority of them were serving in the SGB as secretaries and deputy secretaries. This may suggest that the majority of parents elected as SGB members did not have the capacity to read and write let alone to keep accurate records of meetings.

### 3.5.2.3 SGB chairpersons

Section 23 (2) (a) of SASA states that “*elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of parents at the school*”. The number of parent members must be more than the combined total number of other members of the governing body who have voting rights and only a parent member may serve as the chairperson of the SGB (DBE, 2012:14). For the purpose of the study 4 parent members serving as SGB chairpersons were selected as participants and are profiled as follows:

**Table 3.4: Selected SGB Chairpersons**

Participant	Gender	Age in Years	Home Language	Highest Qualification	Experience in School Governance
Chairperson A	Male	65	Xitsonga	Grade 9	15 years
Chairperson B	Male	65	Xitsonga	Grade 12	8 years
Chairperson C	Male	34	Xitsonga	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2 years
Chairperson D	Male	47	Xitsonga	Secondary Teachers' Diploma	5 years

According to the table all SGB chairpersons that took part in the research were males. Usually, the chairperson would be the one who is better qualified than the other parent component members. Two of the selected chairpersons were serving as SGB chairpersons for the third term whilst the other two were in their first term. Their years of service as SGB members except for one, were a relatively good record for them to have acquired adequate knowledge in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. Their home language was Xitsonga.

### 3.5.2.4 Profile of the departmental official

In order to corroborate information received from the participants, the departmental official responsible for school governance in Klein Letaba Circuit was selected to participate in the research. The table below provides a profile of the official included in the study.

**Table 3.5: Selected Departmental Official**

Gender	Age in years	Home language	Highest qualification	Work experience in school governance
Male	48	Xitsonga	B. Ed (Hons) Degree	8 years

The table indicates that the official, a qualified professional educator with a Bachelor of Education at honours level, has been working directly with SGBs for the past eight years. The inclusion of the official in the study was necessitated by the monitoring and supporting responsibility of SGBs' attached to the post that he occupies.

## 3.6 DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTATION

In order to yield requisite and comprehensive data for this qualitative investigation, different data collection instruments were employed. In qualitative research, these instruments include different types of interviews, observations and content or document analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:183). In this study, multiple sources of information were sought and used because no single source of information could provide a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon being studied. Given the extent and purpose of this study, the researcher used three types of data collection strategies, namely; individual semi-structured and focus group interviews as well as documentary analysis for purposes of triangulation. Rule and John (2011:109) assert that triangulation refers to the process of using multiple sources and methods to support propositions or findings in qualitative studies.

**Table 3.6: Data Collection Strategies**

Research strategy	Participants	Evidence required
Focus group interview	5 school principals	Responses to 9 research questions
Focus group interview	5 educators serving as SGB members	Responses to 9 research questions
Focus group interview	4 SGB chairpersons	Responses to 9 research questions
Individual semi-structured interview	1 departmental official	Responses to 9 research questions
Documentary analysis	5 selected schools	Analysis of selected documents

The application of a mixed data collection instruments helped the researcher to collect diverse and requisite data from participants. It also enabled the researcher to corroborate data collected to ensure quality, credibility and truthfulness.

### 3.6.1 Interviews

This study was interested in the perspectives of SGB members, namely principals and educator and parent components, on their capacity in interpreting and implementing legislative and policy frameworks in schools. Consequently, the researcher elicited information from selected participants by interviewing them to get to know their thoughts and feelings about their role in policy interpretation and implementation. According to Johnson and Christensen (2011:178), an interview is a data collection method in which the interviewer asks an interviewee questions. The purpose of gathering responses through interviews in this study was to enable the researcher to elicit more knowledge, perceptions and understanding from the participants on the interpretation and implementation of policies and the subsequent functioning of the schools. Focus group and individual semi-structured interviews were conducted.

Pillay (2012:53) noted that one of the disadvantages of interviews is that, interviews sometimes create attitudes because respondents would want to try to manage their impressions in order to maintain their good standing in the eyes of the interviewer. Interviews are also criticised for bringing a foreign element into the phenomena they would describe and they are only accessible to those who cooperate. However, Creswell (2014:190) and Rossman and Rallis (2012:179) consider the following to be the strengths of qualitative interviews:

- They are useful when it is not possible to observe the participants directly.
- Participants are given the opportunity to provide historical information.
- They allow the researcher control over the line of questioning.
- They allow the researcher to obtain large amounts of data quickly.
- They allow the researcher to obtain information that may otherwise be difficult to acquire including first-hand knowledge about people's feelings and perceptions (Mwinjuma & Bin Baki, 2012:75).

De Vos (2005:297) explains that the researcher conducting semi-structured interviews should be armed with an interview schedule with questions that guide the interview process and ensures that the focus of the interview is not lost. The interview schedule for both focus group and individual semi-structured interviews consisted of nine questions. All participants were asked the same questions. The purpose of doing this was to compare the data received from the different groups of participants. The eighth question for SGB chairpersons was the only one that was different from that of principals, educators and departmental official since it directly referred to their specific role in policy interpretation and implementation.

Questions were designed in such a manner that participants were able to provide requisite information that enabled the researcher to draw valuable conclusions on the phenomenon under investigation. The schedule was first discussed with participants. It started with easy questions and then proceeded to more difficult ones. This helped to build the confidence of the participants. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the data collection process, all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim afterwards. Tape recording interviews gave the researcher an

advantage of accessing full record of rich source of data. While taking notes, the researcher highlighted the most significant points made during the interviews.

During both the focus group and individual interviews, the researcher jotted down brief notes. The brief notes assisted the researcher to later remember a great deal of what transpired during the interviews. Note taking was done in such a way that it did not derail the attention of the researcher from concentrating more on the discussions and responses provided by the participants. The length of both interviews was between 20 and 30 minutes. In this way, the researcher was able to collect valuable data that addressed the aims and objectives of the research.

### **3.6.1.1 Focus group interviews**

In order to elicit more candid and diverse responses from the participants, semi-structured focus group interviews with open-ended questions were employed. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:430) state that a focus group interview is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that relies upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting. The element of synergy and interaction between group members play a significant role in generating data. These interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to gather descriptive data in the participants' own words. This developed more insight on how they interpret their capacity in terms of policy development and implementation.

During the focus group interviews, the researcher kept in mind factors such as homogeneity or heterogeneity, gender and literacy level. Participants were grouped into three homogenous groups, namely principals, SGB chairpersons and educators serving as SGB members at the schools. Three focus group interview sessions were conducted at a neutral venue with the identified three groups. The interview sessions saved the researcher's time because participants were interviewed as a group for the same duration as would have been used for an individual person's interview.

The use of focus group interviews provided the participants with an opportunity to build on each other's ideas, perceptions and comments to provide an in-depth view

of the phenomenon under investigation. According to Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson (2001:65) the criteria for using focus groups include the following:

- As a standalone method, for research relating to group norms, meanings and processes;
- In a multi-method design, to explore a topic or collect group language or narratives to be used in later stages;
- To clarify, extend, qualify or challenge data collected through other methods and
- To give feedback results to research participants.

During the interview, the researcher facilitated the group discussion, keeping it focused without leading it and guarded against the discussion being dominated by one member. Participants had ample time to contribute to the discussion. They were asked the same questions and where applicable, questions were supplemented with specific probes to uncover hidden motives and/or bias. Questions that persuaded, evaluated or judged specific individuals, promoted false expectations were avoided. Participants were interviewed in the language that they best understood. Principals and educators were interviewed in English whereas SGB chairpersons were interviewed in Xitsonga, their home language. Questions were prepared and distributed to all participants well in advance.

### **3.6.1.2 Individual semi-structured interviews**

In order to triangulate data received from the participants, a semi-structured individual interview was conducted with the departmental official responsible for school governance in the Klein Letaba Circuit. The official was included in the study because the researcher considered him to be better placed to explain the capacity of the SGBs in interpreting and implementing governance policies in schools since he worked directly with SGBs.

The purpose of gathering information through an individual semi-structured interview was to enable the researcher to elicit more knowledge, perceptions and understanding from the departmental official on the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing school policies. Face-to-face interviews provide the greatest

opportunity for researchers to obtain responses that cannot be obtained through any other data collection strategy (Slavin, 2007:106). This interview provided the researcher with an opportunity to meet with and listen to the participant's views, knowledge and experiences on the problem under investigation.

### **3.6.2 Documentary Analysis**

A document analysis requires that data obtained from written sources be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009:27). Documents provide valuable information in helping researchers understand central phenomenon in qualitative studies, represent a good source of text data; they provide an advantage of being in the language and words of the participants, who have usually given thoughtful attention to them; and are ready for analysis without the necessary transcription. In qualitative research, documents are also important means of gathering data, but they have to be handled with care.

The researcher requested permission from the participating schools to examine selected documents. A list of documents to be analysed was provided to the selected schools two weeks in advance. After conducting focus group interviews, the researcher visited selected schools to analyse official documents related to school governance in the presence of both the principal and SGB chairperson. Yin (2009:102) lists the following as the advantages of using documents as a way of collecting data:

- They may be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher and are an unobtrusive source of information;
- They represent data that is thoughtful in that those compiling such documents would have given attention to their compilation;
- As written evidence, documents save the researcher the time and expense of transcription and
- Documents are stable in that the researcher may review them repeatedly.

Documents that were analysed for the purpose of this study included national and provincial acts and regulations, governance policies developed by the SGB, minutes

and attendance registers of SGB meetings as well as policy implementation strategies. This was done in order for the researcher to gain an internal perspective of the schools and clarity on the salient aspects of the SGBs' capacity with regard to policy interpretation and implementation. These documents served as supplementary sources that provided direct information about events relating to the phenomenon under investigation. Before commencing with document analysis, the researcher checked the availability and non availability of the documents. Documents that were available were indicated by a tick (√) and a cross (X) indicated the unavailability of the documents on the provided checklist.

### **3.6.2.1 National and provincial acts and regulations**

School environment is regulated by pieces of legislation that aim to promote and advance constitutional values, principles and human rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights (Mampane, 2008:61). During the visit to the selected schools, the following legislative frameworks were checked if available and then analysed: the Constitution Act (Act 104 of 1996), National Education Act (Act 27 of 1996), South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998), Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998), Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1997), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 5 of 1997), Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999) and Limpopo Provincial Prescripts (2011). SGBs are expected to fully understand these legislative and policy frameworks so that they can be able to implement them effectively.

### **3.6.2.2 School governance policies**

This refers to policies developed at school level and are divided into mandatory and non-mandatory policies. Mandatory policies that were analysed include policies on admission, religion, language and finance as well as the SGB constitution, mission statement and learners' code of conduct. Non-mandatory policies that were also analysed included policies on compulsory school attendance, school safety, the use of school property, buildings and grounds, hiring educators and non-educator staff, infrastructure maintenance and improvement, extra-mural activities, the management of learning and teaching support material, HIV/AIDS, procurement of goods and services, visitors, touring, uniform and the management of assets. The intention was to establish if policies do exist and whether they were consistent with

existing national and provincial acts. Document analysis also sought clarity on why available policies were structured in a particular way.

### **3.6.2.3 Minutes of meetings**

Minutes of SGB meetings held during policy interpretation and implementation processes were accessed and studied.

### **3.6.2.4 Attendance registers**

Attendance registers of meetings held by the SGB were also analysed. These records which normally form part of minutes of meetings gave the researcher an idea on the frequency of meetings held to deal specifically with policy issues.

### **3.6.2.5 Policy implementation strategies**

All policies developed by the SGB have to be implemented for the purpose which they were developed for. Governance policies are not supposed to be developed for compliance purposes, but they have to be effectively implemented. To determine the implementation of policies developed by SGBs, policy implementation strategies of each selected school were studied.

The main aim of analysing the above-mentioned documents was to ensure credibility and truthfulness by comparing the interview responses with the actual relevant documents that relate to the phenomenon being investigated. The researcher compared findings from the documents with those from interviews and then drew conclusions.

## **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

In qualitative research, data analysis is usually based on interpretative philosophy that is aimed at establishing how participants make meaning of specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon (Maree, 2007:261). Broadly conceived, qualitative data analysis is *“an action of making sense of understanding data by means of a range of measures that facilitates working back and forth between data and ideas”* (Schwandt, 2007:267).

Schutt and Check (2012:303) posit that the majority of approaches to qualitative data analysis include the following five steps, namely:

- Documentation of the data and the process of data collection;
- Organisation/categorisation of the data into concepts/themes;
- Examination of relationships to show how one concept may influence another;
- Authenticating conclusions by evaluating alternative explanations, disconfirming evidence, and searching for negative cases and
- Reflexivity.

In order to finally present a topical, comprehensive and scientific product, the researcher used the content analysis approach. Cohen *et al.* (2011:476) state that content analysis involves coding, categorising and comparing data thereby drawing theoretical conclusions from the text. Content analysis was the appropriate method for this study as it allowed the researcher to study the contents of the documents and transcribed interviews critically and then analyse them. In analysing data, the researcher recursively adhered to the following steps:

### **3.7.1 Preparing Data for Analysis**

Data collection for this research was done through interviews and document analysis. The data from the interviews was transcribed verbatim from the audiotape and then coded. The process of transcription, while it may be seen as time-consuming, frustrating, and at times boring, can be an excellent way to start familiarizing oneself with the data. The researcher had to immerse himself in the data to the extent that he was familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. This involved repeated reading of the data in an active way searching for meanings and patterns. During this phase, the researcher started taking notes for coding that would then be used in the subsequent phase.

Using the information from the transcripts and documents, the researcher then analysed the information from the participants' own perspectives. The documents were studied carefully in order to obtain a general view of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. After comparing data from the interviews and the

documents, the researcher coded the data with the view to forming categories and sub-categories.

### **3.7.2 Coding as a Data Analysing Technique**

After having read and familiarised himself with the data, and generated an initial list of ideas about what is in the data and what is interesting about them, the researcher was then involved in the production of initial codes from the data. This is referred to as data coding. Cohen *et al.* (2011:559) define coding as the ascribing of a category label to a piece of data and that has either been decided on in advance or in response to the data that has been collected. This is strengthened by Rule and John (2011:77) when they state that coding provides a good opportunity for getting close to the data.

When developing the codes in this study the researcher used prior coding as a way of analysing the data. In other words, the researcher had developed the codes before the actual examination of the data which had been collected. The researcher derived the codes from the conceptual framework, research questions and literature review. The responses from the transcribed interviews were grouped according to the questions asked as per the interview schedule and which had been informed by the research questions. These codes were then grouped into categories and sub-categories which were then used as headings and sub-heading when the researcher interpreted the data.

### **3.7.3 Producing the Report**

This is the final phase in which the researcher was involved in analysing data for this study. The researcher conducted the final analysis of the data and wrote the research report that provides a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting account of the study.

### 3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Rule and John (2011:107) offer a concise explanation of trustworthiness when they state that the concept promotes values such as scholarly vigour, transparency and professional ethics in the interest of qualitative research, gaining high levels of trust and fidelity. The concepts of reliability and validity are similar to the concept of trustworthiness and are crucial aspects in quantitative research. When qualitative researchers speak of validity and reliability, they are referring to research that is both credible and trustworthy (Maree, 2007:80). Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2014:201).

In order to achieve the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research procedures, the researcher ensured that the following criteria were met (Freeman *et al.* 2007:28):

- **Credibility:** In order to ensure the credibility of the study, engagement with the data (recordings, notes and transcripts) was done intensively to demonstrate clear links between the data and the interpretations. Credible participants were selected based on the requisite knowledge and experience they possessed on the phenomenon investigated. The researcher also conducted membership checking with the participants. In other words, the researcher returned to the participants to check the accuracy and completeness of the data collected to ensure the information collected was not distorted during the data interpretation. However, in line with the suggestions of Maree (2007:114), this was done in such a way that the researcher was not able to indicate specifically whether member-checking had been either formal or informal. While this was being done the researcher ensured that all ethical considerations were adhered to.
- **Dependability:** The researcher achieved dependability by using more than one data collection strategy to collect data. This allowed the researcher to triangulate the results obtained from interviews and the document analysis.

The researcher combined the results from the interviews and documents analysis in order to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. According to Silverman (2011:369), if the findings obtained using different methods correspond and result in the same results or similar conclusions, then this ensures the trustworthiness of such findings and the conclusions drawn. Care was taken to ensure that the research process was logical, traceable, and clearly documented in a reflexive manner by giving a detailed account of the research process.

- **Authenticity:** The development of the question items was based on a substantial conceptual basis as described in chapter two. The interview schedule was first discussed with participants so that they understood what was expected during the interviews and to ensure the yielding of reasonable, unbiased and trustworthy data.
- **Conformability:** According to Rangongo (2011:87) conformability refers to the degree to which the research findings are the focus of the inquiry and not the researcher's bias. The study was carried out in public schools in Klein Letaba Circuit and, thus, as a principal in one of the schools, the researcher tried to keep his feelings, experience and understandings to himself and, therefore, detached himself as far as possible from the participants in order to avoid the risk of bias affecting the study.

To further enhance conformability, an audit process was implemented by working forward, as well as backward through the research process, to ensure that the data and interpretations of the findings were sound and confirmed findings. The intention during the interpretation process was not to generalise findings to a population, but to identify accepted principles and trends related to the research topic.

Assessing the trustworthiness of a study is a vital component of the data analysis, findings and conclusions in any qualitative research. Thus, trustworthiness is of the utmost importance in qualitative research.

### 3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All researchers, regardless of research designs, sampling techniques and choice of methods are subjected to ethical considerations. Creswell (2007:44) claims that

*“throughout all phases of the research process we are sensitive to ethical considerations because as researchers we are asking participants to expose intimate, personal thoughts about their life experiences and to give off a lot of their personal time to our projects”.*

Rule and John (2011:112) therefore claim that research ethics, which are developed and embraced by a community of scholars, govern and guide the practices of researchers. As such, it is now normal practice for institutions of higher learning that engage in research to fulfil ethical considerations. The following ethical considerations were taken into account while carrying out the study:

#### 3.9.1 Permission to Conduct Research

The researcher sought permission to conduct research from the Circuit Manager of Klein Letaba Circuit and the Acting Head of the Limpopo Department of Education. Permission to conduct research was granted and it was made clear how the department expected the research to be undertaken. Copies of letters of approval were distributed to all participants and selected schools. Permission was also sought from selected schools to examine documents and the information obtained was thus treated with confidentiality.

#### 3.9.2 Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Informed consent is when the individual choose whether or not to participate in the study after being informed of the facts that could likely to influence their decisions (Rangongo, 2011:92). Before commencing with the study, the researcher informed the participants about the purpose, nature and data collection methods. Participants were also informed that their participation was free and strictly voluntary. They were requested to sign a consent form that indicated their understanding of the study, their free choice to participate in the study as well as their freedom to withdraw from the study at any given time should they feel uncomfortable.

### **3.9.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

In this study, confidentiality and anonymity were of prime significance and highly protected in so far that the identifiable features of place, setting, participants' names and other identifying features were substituted with false names and identities. To ensure confidentiality, participants signed consent forms to protect them from being exposed in public or in print. Participants were also protected from the invasion of their privacy. Therefore, the privacy of the participants was not violated.

Anonymity was in the process ensured by means of utilising letters of the alphabet instead of the real names of the participants. All information obtained from the participants pertaining to the research was treated as confidential. Before commencing with each interview and document analysis, the researcher reminded participants about privacy. The participants' identities as well as that of the selected schools were not revealed during reporting.

### **3.9.4 Securing Data**

Records of data in the form of recorded interviews and transcripts and information from document analysis collected from the participants were kept in a safe place. The researcher did not carelessly discuss such information with any other person.

### **3.9.5 Feedback**

The researcher will ensure that feedback is given to all participants and selected schools interested in the findings and recommendations based on the data collected. Copies of the research will be made available electronically to all participants including schools that were selected to participate in the research and the Limpopo Department of Education.

### **3.9.6 Honesty**

The research findings were reported as a true reflection of the participants' opinions. Under no circumstances did the researcher fabricate data to support a particular opinion.

### **3.9.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided a discussion of the qualitative research methodology and design that the researcher utilised to investigate the capacity of SGBs in developing and implementing school governance policies in schools under Klein Letaba Circuit. The data collection strategies such as focus group and individual semi-structured interviews and document analysis were also outlined. Furthermore, the chapter described how data analysis was conducted as well as addressing issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from interviews conducted with fifteen participants and documents from 5 selected schools.

#### 4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The results of the study were generated from data collected through individual and focus group interviews as well as document analysis.

##### 4.2.1 Themes from Interviews

The findings of this study are organised under the themes that emanated from the data obtained from the participants in response to research questions.

##### 4.2.1.1 Knowledge of key governance policies

SGBs are legally and juristically mandated to implement policies in schools so that they can execute their responsibilities effectively. It is therefore required of them to be conversant with relevant policies so that they can interpret and implement key policies for effective school governance. These legislative and policy frameworks are developed to regulate the education environment to ensure that learners receive quality education. Such policies should be based upon the principles, norms and values that underpin the South African Constitution, the SASA and any applicable law enacted at both national and provincial levels of government (Nyambi, 2004:24).

During the three focus group interviews, participants were asked, “*What are the key school governance policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement?*” This question required participants to mention the names of such policies. Participants were asked this question to establish their knowledge of key governance

policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement at school level. The responses that participants gave showed that they have limited knowledge of policies that SGBs are expected to know and understand so that they can effectively implement them.

- **Limited Knowledge of Key Governance Policies**

For policy implementation to be effective, policies need to be known, understood and accepted by the people affected. As legal structures, SGBs are expected to understand educational policies that are related to governance so that they can effectively implement them. According to Ahrens (2002:131), the SGB as a governance structure is effective if it ensures that policies are properly implemented and enforced. SGBs are also mandated to develop policies that are in line with the Constitution of the country or any other applicable legislation passed at both national and provincial levels of government.

In terms Section 19 (2) of the SASA, principals of schools and other officers of the DBE should be fully capacitated to render all the necessary assistance to the governing bodies in the performance of their functions. When asked about their knowledge of key governance policies, they responded to the question in the following way:

**Principal D:**

*“Policy like finance policy because there is no way the school can run without managing the funds...”*

**Principal C:**

*“To add on what Principal D has said...eh...I can say that all the policies are very much important and they need to be interpreted by the SGBs...eh...I mean the policies from the national government, the policy from the provincial government and even these policies which they are expected to develop in schools...they have the responsibility to interpret and implement them. We can give an example of this...err...EEA. The SGB are expected to recommend educators when they have to be*

*employed...so they need to understand this Act and also the policies...the mandatory policies I mean policies like HIV/AIDS, teaching and learning...err...let's say language policies and religious policies...they need to...to...to understand and also to...to interpret them."*

**Principal A:**

*"The SGB must know the language policy because it impacts on the teaching and learning...as well as the...the code of conduct for learners in order for schools to run smoothly so that there is teaching and learning..."*

**Principal B:**

*"I want to add...like the religious policy..."*

Principals are legally and juristically mandated to provide guidance and advice to SGBs so that they can execute their responsibilities effectively, particularly with regard to policy interpretation and implementation. They are expected to play a leading role in setting the tone of the school through effective leadership by guiding and capacitating the SGB in knowing and understanding key policies. In responding to the question, principals managed to mention only five of the policies. Principal C was the only one who managed to mention more than one policy. This response is an indication that SGBs are not properly guided. It further suggests that SGBs have limited knowledge of key governance policies in relation to their governance roles.

The educators who are also serving as SGB members are expected to assist the rest of the SGB group that predominantly comprise parents in knowing and understanding the policies. They responded in the following way:

**Educator E:**

*"Finance policy"*

**Educator A:**

*"HIV/Aids policy"*

**Educator D:**

*“School policy”*

**Educator A:**

*“Educator Employment policy”*

**Educator B:**

*“...even trip”*

**Educator E:**

*“Constitution”*

**Educator D:**

*“SASA”*

Educator C nodded silently as the other educators responded to the question. The policies mentioned by the educators are seven. Only Educators A and B were able to mention more than one policy between them. Their responses are a far cry if one takes into consideration a myriad of educational and governance regulations and policies that are in existence.

As the torch bearers of school governance, SGB chairpersons are expected to possess adequate knowledge of governance policies. When asked about key governance policies, they responded in the following manner:

**Chairperson C:**

*“Thank you for giving me the time. I will mention the policies such as the finance policy, HIV/AIDS policy, admission policy....”*

**Chairperson B:**

*“Eh...we have the code of conduct and the school constitution”*

**Chairperson D:**

*“There is an admission policy.”*

**Chairperson C:**

*“I want to add the health and safety policy.”*

**Chairperson A:**

*“...we have security.”*

**Chairperson D:**

*“Religious policy.”*

SGB chairpersons were able to mention about seven policies between them. This suggested that departmental officials who are supposed to assist SGBs do not have the necessary capacity to perform their mandated roles. The departmental official responsible for school governance also mentioned key governance policies in the following way:

**Departmental official:**

*“Eh...they must be able to interpret...I mean the Learners’ Code of Conduct. That is the first policy...Another important policy is the admission policy...Some of the policies...they must be able to interpret their own constitution...Another one is the finance policy which they must on their own draw or craft. It is a very important document that includes even the procurement procedures which they must be able to follow...Another one is the safety policy...Those are a few, they are not all but a few important policies. I mean I should think SGBs should basically be able to understand and have.”*

The departmental official was able to mention only 5 policies. He however could not mention even a single policy developed at both national and provincial level of government. The responses provided above revealed that participants have limited knowledge of key governance policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement.

**4.2.1.2 Challenges experienced by SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation**

The major purpose of school governance as a function of the SGB is to set the tone and ethos that will drive the vision and mission of the school (Maluleka, 2008:79). The SASA being the legal document that forms the fulcrum around which SGBs perform their functions, places a mammoth task on the very SGB, that of providing support and assistance to principals and all staff members so that they can effectively execute their professional responsibilities.

The participants were asked the question, *“What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?”* The question was asked to

find out if ever SGBs are experiencing problems in interpreting and implementing policies in schools. In responding to the question, it became apparent that there are indeed challenges that SGBs are faced with when they have to provide adequate assistance and support through the interpretation and implementation of policies in schools. Challenges involved high level of illiteracy among the SGB members especially the parents' component and inadequate monitoring and support by the departmental officials.

- **High Levels of Illiteracy**

The research revealed that one of the challenges that confront SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies correctly is the high level of illiteracy among them. Their inability to read and write has a potential of handicapping them from acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding needed to execute their roles and responsibilities in an effective way.

During the focus group interview held with principals, they gave the following responses:

**Principal A:**

*“They have serious challenges. Serious challenges. If you take somebody who has gone up to standard 5 and you put that person in a workshop that gives him/her this policy of this magnitude and you expect them to know and implement them, instead of being trained they get confused....”*

**Principal E:**

*“....in the first place we talked about language. Even if they would want to sit down and look at the document, they find it difficult to read and understand it because it is written in English.*

**Principal B:**

*“In addition to that...you will find that it is difficult for them to cope with the language that is being used. They end up sleeping...you see the*

*problem...they are bored because they don't ...eh...they don't understand what is happening there...."*

Educators had almost similar responses to those of principals:

**Educator E:**

*"I think the word challenge to us as SGB members, is that the... you find that... 75% of members of SGB are illiterate, that is the challenge."*

**Educator A:**

*"Jaa, I think I can add that it is difficult for us to interpret and implement these policies, because...eh... you find that these policies are written in English as teacher B has indicated... so most of the members who are serving with us in the SGB are not educated...so they don't understand these things...so it becomes difficult when we want to implement them and even interpreting these policies."*

SGB chairpersons also concurred, saying:

**Chairperson C:**

*"The challenge facing the SGB is the translation of the language used. In most instances you find that they are written in English. Unfortunately, in rural schools, people are just elected to serve as SGB members by virtue of them being parents of learners in a particular school. Most parents were not fortunate enough to acquire education, therefore I end up not understanding what I should explain or implement because I didn't understand anything. This means that it is important that when electing SGBs we need to look at the language issue...what language is being used."*

Chairperson A nodded silently after chairperson C's response. Responses given by chairpersons B and D did not actually address the question asked. Generally, responses by participants clearly reveal that the majority of SGB members are not

literate and this poses a threat to SGB as they are unable to cope with the reading and writing required by the job.

#### **4.2.1.3 SGB training in policy interpretation and implementation**

According to the SASA (Act 84 of 1996), SGB members are elected after every three years. In view of the fact that the concepts and practice of school governance are new to most parents, SGB training is critical. In terms of SASA (RSA, 1996b), the Head of Department of education in each province is required to provide training to newly elected SGB members. Such capacity training should be continuous and should focus on different aspects of the SGB roles and responsibilities to ensure effective school governance.

To find out if SGBs are indeed trained for capacity-building in the area of policy interpretation and implementation, participants were asked the question, *“What is your assessment regarding the type of training received by the SGBs?”* The participants’ responses revealed that the kind of capacity training that SGBs receive in the area of policy interpretation and implementation is inadequate.

- **Inadequate Training**

It is of utmost importance that SGBs must be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise to interpret and implement policies in schools. However, the lack of capacity of the SGB members in this regard poses serious challenges in the organisation and governance of schools.

Principals who are expected to guide SGBs in the execution of their responsibilities responded in the following manner:

**Principal A, E and D** responded at once and said:

*“It is not adequate.”*

Principals B and C nodded in support of what the others had said. No further elaborations were provided. This startling research finding suggests that principals who are SGB members seen as people who possess immense knowledge in the

area of governance, require extensive capacity training so that they can effectively provide guidance and advice to the SGB.

In their response to the same question, educators C, A and E voiced their frustrations in the following way:

**Educator C:**

*“Jaa, the training is not adequate...for the three year cycle, we are trained once. For the first time I am being a member of the SGB. I am new to that position I don’t know what to do. At least they can do it more than once. I think that would be the best...”*

**Educator A:**

*“Jaa...it is not enough.”*

**Educator C:**

*“Jaa....I can add on...no...err...being a member of the SGB, I am a treasurer; it is a critical position in the school. What do you call them...this...eh...budgeting, income and expenditure, I have to...jaa ...I have to reconcile you know it gives us a lot of problems...that is why when it comes to this monetary things is a problem. That is why once off training is not enough because there are lot of things that are critical.”*

**Educator E:**

*“I think even if...those who do the training, if they can select among the members, more especially the treasurer and the secretary even the chairperson... they can do more training on them because they are the key of the executive.”*

The SGB chairpersons B, C and D responded while chairperson A nodded in agreement.

**Chairperson B:**

*“The training that we receive as SGB members is not enough. Firstly, we are trained once in 3 years. In these 3 years you find that we are only trained for 3 hours. We should be trained for 2 or 3 days.”*

**Chairperson C:**

*“...I think the training that we receive as SGBs is not enough. I want to make a request that they hire private service provider because it seems the department does not have enough time to train SGBs. The service provider will have ample time to train us and they will give us material for note taking during training and assess us to check if we indeed understood what we were being trained about. In this way they will be able to see that we are able to do what we are expected to do.”*

**Chairperson D:**

*“...to show that we did not understand...the one who manages school finances...when the officials visit the school, they find that some of the things are not in order. What does this indicate? It indicates clearly that what we have been trained about for few hours, it is not enough. I also suggest that after each training officials should go to schools for support.”*

The research revealed that SGB members during their term of office do not receive adequate training. The training that they receive is not enough to equip them with knowledge and skills that empower them to execute their roles effectively. Without adequate training, SGBs will not contribute in a meaningful way towards the provision of quality education to learners.

- **Language Barrier**

According to the Report of the Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (RSA, 2004:175), SGBs in South African schools are under-capacitated and not effective in engaging with the business of education. It is therefore critical that SGBs are indeed capacitated in the language that they understand so that they can

confidently carry out their responsibilities without having to rely solely on one individual. However, the research revealed that SGB members seem to continue to experience barriers towards accessing critical information for discharging their fundamental responsibilities due to the language used in training manuals and during presentation of the training.

Principal E and B responded in the following way:

**Principal E:**

*“...in the first place we talked about language. Even if they would want to sit down and look at the document, they are unable to understand it because it is written in a different language.”*

**Principal B:**

*“In addition to that...you will find that it is difficult for them to cope with the language that is being used. They end up sleeping...you see the problem...they are bored because they don't ...err...they don't understand what is happening there...”*

One educator also mentioned the issue of language as barrier when SGBs have to interpret and implement policies.

**Educator E:**

*“...they don't understand the language ...”*

One of the SGB chairpersons also raised the language barrier as an impediment to the SGB's effectively executing its roles and responsibilities.

**Chairperson C:**

*“The challenge facing the SGB is the translation of the language used. In most instances you find that they are written in English...this means that it is important that when electing SGBs we need to look at the language issue...what language is being used.”*

The issue of language has been cited in a number of responses as one of the major challenges that continue to render the SGBs ineffective. If training is done in a language that is foreign to the majority of the SGB, obviously the training would be a futile exercise.

#### **4.2.1.4 The impact of training on the functioning of SGBs**

SGB training remains a cornerstone of empowering governors to effectively execute their duties. The SGBs cannot be expected to effectively execute their duties as mandated by SASA if they are not provided with continuous quality training. This will obviously have a negative impact on the SGBs as the functionaries of the state. During the focus group interviews, participants were asked the question, *“How do training impact on the SGB’s functioning with regard to policy interpretation and implementation?”* This question was asked to find out if SGBs view the training that they receive as a contributing factor to their functioning as governors.

The responses of some participants revealed that the training does not add much value to the capacity of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation. But other participants indicated that if the training was done in a proper way, it would of course contribute positively to the role of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation.

- **The Negative Impact of Training on Policy Interpretation and Implementation**

Although the main purpose of the SASA and other related legislation is to increase the democratic control and quality performance of schools, this will not be achieved unless serious interventions are made in capacitating SGBs (Maluleke, 2008:87). The responses by some of the participants revealed that such training is impacting negatively on what they are expected to do. Participants said:

#### **Principal A:**

*“The impact would be negative because if you don’t know something then you can’t implement it.”*

**Principal B:**

*“Yes, I just want to add on that. It depends on the situation or the type of the SGB. For instance, SGBs in townships are far better than those in rural areas. I mean they have all the knowledge of education...that is why I would say it is situational, but to those who are maybe outside or who are unlearned, there is nothing we can achieve on that type of an SGB.”*

**Educator A:**

*“I think they have got a negative impact...as we are trained once...it means we will automatically fail to implement these policies and even to understand them. That being the case it means we will not be able to implement the policy.”*

It is therefore imperative that SGB training is done in such a manner that it has a positive impact on their work. If the training provided is not afforded enough time, it would not empower the SGBs with knowledge, skills and expertise to function effectively.

- **Positive Impact of Training on Policy Interpretation and Implementation**

The education system is based on a myriad of policies to ensure that the education that learners receive is of good quality and that everything that the school does is always in the best interest of the learners. Some participants agree that if SGBs are made to know and understand educational and governance policies that are in existence, SGBs would be able to render effective service to schools.

Some of the participants said:

**Chairperson D:**

*“I will start with the one for religion. I think it is a good policy because when learners pray in the morning whilst listening to the word of God, I think it is relevant to their behaviour...this would reduce teenage pregnancy.”*

**Departmental official:**

*“In schools where members of the governing body attended meetings that is where you see a smooth running of a school.”*

Some educators also agreed that if SGBs are able to understand and implement policies, learners stand to benefit.

**Educator A:**

*“I think if these policies are well interpreted and implemented, they can assist in making sure that curriculum delivery is done in a proper way.”*

**Educator D:**

*“Language policy...hmm...err...I will give an example. In terms of curriculum, you find that ...err...err...if it is indicated in the policy that the language of communication for our learners is English...err...it will assist because the teachers will stick to the language of communication as stated in the policy.”*

SGBs should be empowered extensively during their term of office so that policies interpreted and implemented add value towards teaching and learning. It remains a challenge however, that after more than a decade after SGBs were introduced, we still see SGBs not benefiting from the training that they receive. This suggests that it is true that other than the initial training that SGBs receive after being elected into office, there are no other capacity building workshops that are organised for them so that they become effective governors.

**4.2.1.5 The impact of the language used in training manuals and presentations**

SGB training is meant to disseminate information so as to fully empower SGBs with relevant information so that they can function competently within their sphere of mandated governance roles and responsibilities. Training should instil confidence in the SGB members that they are operating within the legal parameters which they fully understand. Given the situation that the majority of the SGBs are illiterate, it is therefore fundamental that SGBs are trained in the language they understand.

To determine the impact of the language used in training manuals and presentations in their role as policy interpreters and implementers, participants were asked the question, “*What is the impact of the language used in training manuals and presentations?*” The research findings revealed that the language used has a negative impact on the SGBs’ role since the training manuals, policies and presentations are in English, a language which the majority of the SGB members are not able to read, speak and write.

- **The Negative Impact of Language on Policy Interpretation and Implementation**

When SGBs receive any form of training, the objective is to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to function properly. It is therefore critical to take into consideration the type of language that is suitable for the trainees lest the training will not achieve its objectives.

Participants raised concerns regarding the issue of language used in training manuals and presentations. Principal E said:

**Principal E:**

*“...the language that is used and the manuals that are there for the training of the SGB...err...it’s not effective to what they should be doing as SGBs because usually you find that the documents are prepared in a language which they do not understand. The presenters and facilitators try during that time to translate and try to do it in their language, more especially with the rural schools. So you find that some of the meanings are lost on the way when they are trying to translate.”*

Educator B indicated that the language used to train SGBs indeed has a negative impact on the functioning of the SGBs.

**Educator B:**

*“Yes, I...think they have a negative impact because as I said earlier, many of us are not that fluent in English, and the...the policies are written in English and the training manuals are in English and we are not English speaking people.”*

The research revealed that the majority of the SGB members are not able to read and write. This renders the SGBs ineffective. SGB chairpersons and the departmental official also shared their concerns regarding the language problem.

**SGB Chairperson D:**

*“The language is in English. The presenters translate into English. I want to indicate clearly that after the training, not all of us are able to understand what is supposed to be done by simply reading. It depends on how educated a particular person is to be able to read and implement.”*

**Chairperson B:**

*“...in all SGB members, educated people are few. Some were elected simply because they have children. Sometimes the parent is not able to read. You find that after presenting in English or providing us with manuals written in English...when we get home we don't bother to read the manual.”*

**Departmental official:**

*“Yes, correct...hence I said in my initial response that the language used in the writing of policies impacts negatively in relation to interpretation because those parents are illiterate. Majority of them have not gone beyond standard five or Grade 7. So it therefore has a negative impact when it comes to interpretation because it is written in other words...foreign language.”*

Language and illiteracy remain the major barriers for most of the SGB members to access the much needed information to ensure their effectiveness in school

governance, particularly in the rural areas (Maluleka, 2008:74). It remains essential that any training that SGBs are subjected to is beneficial to them so that they can be effective in their work.

#### **4.2.1.6 The role of the Department of Education in supporting SGBs**

In order to ascertain that SGBs are effectively executing their roles, there is a need to constantly monitor and support them in their activities. Constant monitoring and support will ensure that the quality of education that learners are supposed to receive is not compromised and that the school effectively operate to the full benefit of the learners. To establish the role of the DBE in supporting SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation, the researcher posed the following question to the participants: *“What is the role of the Department of Basic Education in supporting the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?”*

- **Monitoring and Support**

The majority of the SGBs are elected as members without knowledge of what governance entails until they are trained and have received follow-up monitoring and support in the performance of their duties. Principals are the representatives of the Department of Basic Education in schools and in collaboration with the departmental officials should provide continuous training, monitoring and support to SGB members.

Principals B, C, D and E nodded in support of Principal A while responding to the question posed in the following way:

**Principal A:**

*“The department is just guarding their money; the norms and standards. They are more interested in finances only. The running of the schools, you know if you take a challenge to the governance that needs their attention, they will summersault, but give them a problem that has to do with finance, they will come running. So what is the department interested in our schools; they are only interested in finances”.*

Principals are juristically expected to guide and support governing bodies in performing their functions. From the previous discussions, principals seem to require extensive training in order to fulfil their monitoring and supporting role.

Educators serving as SGB members are also expected to provide support to the SGB. In responding to the questions, educator B and C indicated that there is not enough monitoring and support of SGBs. They responded in the following ways:

**Educator B:**

*“I think the Department of Basic Education has to do induction and must also monitor...eh...induction is done only once and from there...there is no monitoring”.*

SGB chairpersons are expected to play a leading role in helping other SGB members to perform their tasks. They must speak out when things are not done properly. SGB chairpersons do not have to wait for the principals or departmental officials to support other SGB members. One chairperson said:

**Chairperson A:**

*“What we are expected to do in supporting SGB members is to effectively implement policies, always advise and encourage during meetings to discuss how to implement policies developed by the school. We encourage colleagues to carry out our roles as prescribed”.*

The departmental official indicated that indeed the role of the department is to build capacity in the SGB and provide them with the necessary support. The official responded in the following manner:

**Departmental official:**

*“The department of education has got a very special or a big role hence it has for example in Limpopo appointed deputy managers for school governance. The duty of these people is to build capacity in the members of the School Governing Body. After we shall have*

*conducted...I mean the capacity building workshops we also move to schools for support. We don't just train them and leave them. We move to schools for support".*

The above responses indicate that SGBs do not receive adequate monitoring and support especially from the DBE. The main focus of the department when doing monitoring and support is on the management and administration of finances while ignoring other aspects of governance like policy interpretation and implementation. It is imperative that departmental officials who are tasked with monitoring and support should be knowledgeable of the functions and the legal obligation to assist the SGBs in performing their roles and responsibilities.

#### **4.2.1.7 Capacity-building strategies to empower SGBs**

During the interviews, participants were asked the question, *"What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?"* This question was asked to find a way forward from participants in terms of addressing challenges that they raised during the interview.

- **Adequate Training**

The research findings revealed that SGBs are not adequately trained in the different aspects of their work in particular, the interpretation and implementation of policies. This has a negative impact on their performance of governance roles as mandated to them in terms of SASA and any other applicable legislation. The participants suggested that for the training given to SGBs to be effective, it must be continuous and be given enough time.

Principal C, educator D and SGB chairperson D said:

#### **Principal C:**

*"I think it is very much important for...for the government itself to make sure that effective workshops are set up for the SGBs and enough time is given to those workshops so that the SGB could understand each and every interpretation on policies".*

**Educator D:**

*“They should give more training to SGBs and also schedule time to visit these SGBs for monitoring. I think they should support the SGBs on a regular basis”.*

**Chairperson D:**

*“They should be given enough time and days for training. At the end the department officials should come to schools for support”.*

Conducting continuous training and also affording such training enough time will equip SGBs with sound knowledge, skills and expertise to effectively interpret and implement policies in schools. Currently, the situation is not conducive for SGBs to effectively interpret and implement policies because they are not given enough training in this regard.

- **Effective Monitoring and Support**

It is imperative that SGBs receive continuous monitoring and support from the departmental officials. This would ensure that SGBs remain on course. In this way, challenges will be quickly identified and resolved. In support of effective monitoring and support of SGBs, participants said:

**Principal C:**

*“...effective monitoring of the implementation and also interpretation of the policies, it is also necessary or required”.*

**Educator D:**

*“...they should also schedule time to visit these SGBs for monitoring...err...I think they should support the SGBs on a regular basis”.*

**Educator A:**

*“...and one more other thing I think necessary assistance should also be given to us as members of the SGB whereby they should not just*

*wait for problems to occur and then come up when there is a problem.  
They should always keep on visiting schools...*

Continuous and effective monitoring and support as suggested by participants will enable SGBs to carry out their responsibilities in terms of SASA.

- **Address the Language Barrier**

The issue of language has been cited by participants during the interviews as one of the problematic areas that impede the effectiveness of SGBs. It is therefore suggested that the DBE should also look at alternative ways of addressing the problem. In suggesting how the issue of language can be addressed, participants responded as follows:

**Educator B:**

*"They also have to assist with the...I can say is language barrier to interpret those terms".*

**Educator A:**

*"...I think it would be good if policies are translated in all the eleven official languages, so that each member of the SGB could understand what is that they are expected to do in implementing the policy".*

**Chairperson B:**

*"The language which people understand should be used especially during meetings.As mentioned earlier, some of us are not educated the sameway. We sometimes don't understand English...But if there is someone to interpret in Xitsonga, Sesotho and Tshivenda, we would be able to understand because if only English is used, some of us won't be able to understand".*

**Chairperson C:**

*"The issue of language is equally important. English could be used during our gatherings. But I have a proposal that the workshops be*

*done in groups whereeach section would be in the SGB's own language. This would be easy since we would be trained in a language that we understand".*

If members of the SGB do not understand the language that is used during workshops or in training manuals or legislative and policy frameworks, obviously they will have a problem in understanding what they are being trained about. As a result, SGBs will not be able to effectively interpret and implement policies.

- **Enrol Illiterate SGB Members into ABET Centres**

The research findings revealed that the majority of the SGB members are illiterate. The roles and responsibilities of SGBs as mandated by SASA and any other applicable legislation demand of the SGB to be able to read and write. To try and address this problem, the departmental official commented:

**Departmental official:**

*"...but if possible they may suggest that for members of the School Governing Body within that period of three years...should be encouraged to enrol with ABET. When they enrol with ABET they will be able to become literate. And when they become literate they will be able to read those policies. And another one important thing is for the department to write policies in the language which is best understood by the members of the SGB. Obviously when we say they should enrol...I mean with ABET, it means...I mean for three years a member of a Governing Body should at least be able to read and write".*

The inability of the majority of SGB members to read and write means that they depend on verbal information communicated by few members within the SGB or the departmental officials. Verbal communication has a challenge of passing distorted and misconstrued information. This could lead to a situation where SGBs would operate from an ill-informed point of view. If SGB members are able to read and

write on their own, they will be able to find time to appraise themselves with applicable legislation frameworks and could need assistance with clarification on certain issues.

- **Set New SGB Election Criteria**

The current situation allows all parents and guardians to elect and be elected as SGB members without consideration of their level of education. This creates a situation where the majority of elected parents or guardians are illiterate especially in the rural areas. These barriers should be addressed by the recruitment and election processes which should embrace clear guidelines towards attracting skilled and knowledgeable people into governing bodies. This is a proposal that was made by Principal A during the focus group interviews.

**Principal A:**

*“...there is a need for government to set out guidelines for the elections of SGBs, that SGBs who have a certain qualification should be elected”.*

Electing parents or guardians who are knowledgeable and literate to serve in the SGBs would go a long way in improving the performance of SGBs in schools. Such SGBs would be able to understand very clearly what they are required to do in the different aspects of school governance including policy interpretation and implementation.

- **Employ more Governance Officials**

The current number of departmental officials appointed to monitor and support SGBs in their governance functions in schools in the Limpopo Province is one per circuit. In Mopani District which has 24 circuits, 24 officials are employed to provide continuous support and monitoring to more than 700 schools. This suggests that the officials have a lot of work and to expect them to be effective in their responsibilities towards

the SGBs is unfair. To address this problem, more officials should be employed as proposed by Principal A:

**Principal A:**

*“...for the capacity I would like to concur with my brother. The government must employ people who have the capacity...they must not rely on governance...err...deputy managers in the circuit, for one person to run 31 schools or 36 schools it’s not an easy thing...they have to appoint people who have got the...the expertise to workshop these people”.*

The research findings revealed that SGBs are really not adequately empowered to confidently execute their responsibilities. There is, therefore, a need to equip SGBs with adequate knowledge and skills for them to perform their duties in a responsible manner.

#### **4.2.2 Documentary Analysis**

In order to contextualise, verify and corroborate data collected through interviews, the researcher visited sampled schools to examine and analyse documents that would shed light on the capacity of the SGBs to interpret and implement policies. Findings from the analysis were compared to the participants’ responses from interviews. Documentary analysis also helped the researcher to gain an internal perspective of the organisation and clarity on the salient aspects of the SGB’s capacity with regard to policy interpretation and implementation in schools.

The following documents were examined and analysed:

- National and Provincial legislative frameworks and prescripts
- governance policies developed by the SGB
- minutes of meetings held during policy development and implementation
- attendance registers of SGB meetings and
- policy implementation strategies

These documents obtained from selected schools were accessed and studied as supplementary sources. They provided direct information about events relating to the phenomenon under investigation.

#### 4.2.2.1 National and provincial legislative frameworks and prescripts

The school environment is regulated by different pieces of legislation. The table below shows national and provincial legislative frameworks and prescripts that relates to the governance role of SGBs.

**Table 4.1: National and Provincial Legislative Frameworks**

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
The South African Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996	√	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	√	<b>X</b>
National Education Act No. 27 of 1996	√	√	√	√	√
South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996	√	√	√	√	√
Employment of Educators Act No.76 of 1998	√	√	√	√	√
National Curriculum Statement of 2005	√	√	√	√	√
Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998	√	√	√	√	√
Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1997	√	√	√	√	√
Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997	√	√	√	√	√
Public Finance Management Act No.1 of 1999	<b>X</b>	√	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	√
Limpopo Provincial Prescripts of 2011	√	√	√	√	√

Of the five selected schools, three do not have copies of the Constitution. The Constitution remains the supreme law of the country and any other law or policy developed must be consistent with it. Finances of all government institutions are managed according to the Public Management Act 1 of 1999. Three schools out of five did not have the document. All available documents were found in one policy file called *The Policy Hand Book* provided by the DBE to all educators.

#### 4.2.2.2 Mandatory policies developed by SGBs

In order for the SGBs to carry out their functions stipulated in various sections of SASA, they have to correctly interpret policies that have to be implemented at school level. The following table presents mandatory policies that SGBs are expected develop, interpret and implement:

**Table 4.2: Mandatory Policies**

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
School admission policy	√	√	√	√	√
School language policy	√	√	√	√	√
Policy on religious observances	√	√	√	√	√
Learners' code of conduct	√	√	√	√	√
SGB constitution	√	√	√	√	√
Mission statement	√	√	√	√	√
School finance policy	√	√	√	√	√

The analysis revealed that all schools have mandatory policies. All these policies were found to be consistent with applicable laws. However, these policies are identical and seem to have been developed by other people and not the SGBs.

#### 4.2.2.3 Non-mandatory policies developed by SGBs

SGBs may develop and implement non-mandatory policies in order to establish a purposeful school environment which is committed to the improvement and provision of quality education in schools. The development of these policies is however informed by SASA and other legislative frameworks and must be consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

**Table 4.3: Non-mandatory Policies**

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Policy on compulsory school attendance	√	X	X	X	X
School safety policy	√	√	X	X	√
Policy on the use of school property, buildings and grounds	√	√	X	X	√
Policy on hiring educators and non-educator staff	X	X	X	X	X
Policy on infrastructure maintenance and improvement	√	√	√	√	√
Policy on extra-mural activities	X	X	X	X	X
Policy on the management of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM)	X	√	√	√	X
Policy on HIV/AIDS	√	√	√	√	√
Policy on procurement of goods and services	√	√	√	√	√
Visitors policy	√	√	√	√	√
Touring policy	√	√	√	√	√
Uniform policy	√	X	X	√	X
Policy on the management of assets	X	X	X	X	X

Sampled schools did not have the majority of non-mandatory policies. The worse affected policies were on compulsory school attendance, hiring of educators and non-educator staff, extra-curricular activities and on the management of assets. The unavailability of policies may suggest that some decisions on the management and governance of schools were taken based on common sense as there was no reference to legislative and policy frameworks. However, all non-mandatory policies examined were found to be consistent with applicable legislations but also showed a pattern of similarity.

#### 4.2.2.4 Minutes of SGB meetings

For every formal meeting held by the SGB to discuss any issue pertaining to school governance, minutes of such meeting must be recorded and kept in a safe place for future reference. The minutes of formal meetings provide vital evidence that the SGB is meeting its statutory obligations, fulfilling its strategic role and is actively contributing towards the raising of performance standards at schools. The following table provides a summary of the researcher's findings on the availability of minutes in selected schools.

**Table 4.4: Minutes of SGB Meetings**

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Minutes of meetings held by the SGB during policy implementation processes	√	X	X	X	√
Policy issues discussed	Refusing to admit a learner repeating Grade 12	X	X	X	Expelling a learner from school for being pregnant

The table reveals that only two schools out of five selected had minutes of meetings held to deal with policy issues. The minutes were signed and dated by both the SGB chairperson and the secretary for authenticity purposes. These minutes were recorded during meetings held to deal with learner admission and learner pregnancy.

#### 4.2.2.5 Attendance registers

Attendance registers which serve as a record of attendance must be completed and signed by all those present during formal SGB meetings. They serve as an instrument of checking members who attended or failed to attend the scheduled

meeting. The record of attendance like any other school record must be kept in a safe place for future reference. The following table gives a synopsis of the availability of attendance registers of meetings held to discuss policy issues at schools.

**Table 4.5: Attendance Registers**

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Attendance registers of meetings held by the SGB during policy interpretation and implementation processes	√	X	X	X	√
People attended	Principal, SGB members, a parent and a learner	X	X	X	Principal, SGB Members, a learner and her parents

The research revealed that only two schools out of the five selected had attendance registers of meetings held by SGBs to discuss policy issues. This may suggest that the sampled schools did not hold meetings to deal with policy issues or they do not record such meetings.

#### **4.2.2.6 Implementation strategies**

For policy implementation to be effective, an implementation strategy needs to be developed. Policies cannot be implemented in vacuum. Such a strategy should consist of an action plan that outlines how a particular policy has to be implemented to address a particular problem. This will ensure that policies are implemented in a consistent manner.

**Table 4.6: Implementation Strategies**

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Policy implementation strategies of school governance policies	X	X	X	X	X

The table reveals that all selected schools did not have policy implementation strategies. This may suggest that policies were not implemented procedurally, correctly or consistently in the selected schools.

### 4.3 SYNCHRONISATION OF DATA

Data collected from interviews and document analysis is synchronised in relation to the literature review as shown in the following table:

**Table 4.7: Synchronisation of Data**

Research Questions	Data Collected from Interviews	Data Collected from Document Analysis	Literature Review
a) <i>What key policies are SGBs expected to interpret and implement in schools?</i>	-SGBs have limited knowledge of policies	-Most schools have both national and provincial legislative framework -All schools have mandatory policies None of the schools have all the non-mandatory policies	-Through decentralisation, SGBs should know applicable legislative and policy frameworks so that they can be able to implement them

		<p>-Both mandatory and non-mandatory policies showed a pattern of similarity in most schools. However, they are consistent with applicable legislative framework</p>	<p>-SGBs are also expected to formulate their own policies which are consistent with applicable legislative and policy frameworks</p> <p>-Through policies, SGBs are expected to promote the interest of learners, support the delivery of curriculum and foster and instil positive values in learners.</p>
<p>b) <i>What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of policies?</i></p>	<p>-High levels of illiteracy</p> <p>-Inadequate training</p> <p>-Language barrier</p>	<p>-Inability to read and understand policies</p> <p>-Inability to formulate policies</p> <p>-Inability to implement policies</p>	<p>-Lack of understanding of their roles and functions.</p> <p>-Inadequate training</p> <p>-High levels of illiteracy.</p> <p>-Limited skills, knowledge and expertise in dealing with issues related to policy interpretation and implementation.</p> <p>-Inadequate capacity training</p>
<p>c) <i>How can the</i></p>	<p>-Effective</p>	<p>-Adequate training</p>	<p>-Adequate capacity</p>

<p><i>Department of Basic Education support SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?</i></p>	<p>monitoring and support -Continuous training</p>	<p>in policy interpretation and implementation -Adequate training in policy formulation</p>	<p>training -Ineffective partnership in school governance.</p>
<p>d) <i>What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?</i></p>	<p>-Adequate training -Effective monitoring and support -Address the language barrier -Enrol illiterate SGBs into ABET centres -Set new SGB election criteria -Employ more governance officials</p>	<p>-Adequate training in policy interpretation and implementation -Adequate training in policy formulation</p>	<p>-Adequate capacity training -Promote partnerships in school governance.</p>

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

To ensure that data collected, analysed and interpreted is credible and truthful, a combination of data collection strategies was used. These strategies were focus group and individual semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The responses provided by the participants were verified and corroborated through document analysis. The data collection process revealed both similarities and contrasts among the views of the participants as expressed in the interviews.

The research revealed that SGBs have limited knowledge of key governance policies that they have to interpret and implement as legally mandated by SASA. The participants' responses indicated that SGBs are not conversant with policies that will help them to execute their duties. Policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement consist of a number of national and provincial legislative frameworks and mandatory and non-mandatory policies that relate to school governance.

One of the challenges that confront SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies correctly is the high level of illiteracy among them. The inability to read and write has a potential of handicapping SGBs from acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding needed to execute their roles and responsibilities in an effective way. Another challenge is that SGBs are not provided adequate training for them to know, understand and implement governance policies. The training that they receive in the different aspects of their roles and responsibilities to ensure effective school governance is inadequate.

In view of the above, it is important that SGBs receive appropriate training that will address different aspects of their roles and responsibilities. Such training should be continuous to ensure that SGBs are kept abreast with new information that comes to the fore within their three year period of office. The issue of language should never be ignored. It is critical that the information provided to SGBs is in the language that they are familiar with. The DBE should also provide constant monitoring and support so that SGBs remain a relevant structure to ensure that parents have a voice in the governance of schools.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION, SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings presented and interpreted in the previous chapter are discussed and summarised in this chapter. Furthermore, based on the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations are made and suggested respectively.

Requisite data collected during the research process led to the achievement of the research aim and objectives outlined in chapter 1. Such a milestone was also driven by discussions that ensued in chapter 2 to 4 that focused on the following:

- A literature review on the information gathered from different sources as well as reviews of previous studies and relevant literature was conducted to highlight important issues relevant to the research;
- The presentation of research methodology, including the research design, population, sampling, data collection and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations and
- The exposition of data analysis and interpretation and presenting findings of the research from both primary and secondary sources.

The following section seeks to provide the discussion and summaries of findings. It also provides conclusions and makes recommendations for improving the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation.

#### 5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The SGBs' capacity in the area of policy interpretation and implementation was always the main focus during the review of literature and data collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation. During the research process the researcher always kept in mind the main aim of the study. The findings presented in the

previous chapter emerged from the requisite data collected through individual semi-structured and focus group interviews as well document analysis. Data from interviews and document analysis were triangulated in order to arrive at the salient major findings that addressed the research questions.

### **5.2.1 Interviews**

Data collected from participants through focus group and individual semi-structured interviews are discussed in the following section:

#### **5.2.1.1 Key policies interpreted and implemented by SGBs**

Amidst the myriad legislative frameworks and policies enacted in South Africa post 1994 with the aim of transforming the education system, SGBs are expected to know and implement these frameworks and policies. Therefore, SGBs' ability to interpret and implement legislative frameworks and policies is a fundamental pre-requisite for effective school governance. The research however revealed that the majority of the SGB members do not have adequate knowledge of policies that they are expected to interpret and implement at school level.

Most participants were unable to identify policies related to the roles of school governing bodies. This indicates that SGBs, including principals, are not well informed about such policies other than those that are required in terms of SASA (84 of 1996). Even the departmental official could not mention the National and Provincial legislative and policy frameworks in his response to the question. Some members of the SGB have served in the structure for more than one term such that it would be expected of them to have adequate knowledge and experience in this regard.

#### **5.2.1.2 Challenges experienced by SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation**

Policy interpretation and implementation requires deliberate efforts to understand what and how a policy means. It involves explaining policy, deciding and the announcing what must be done, what can be done and what cannot (Ball *et al.*, 2011:626). However, the study revealed that SGBs are faced with challenges when

they have to interpret and implement policies in schools. One of the major challenges that overwhelm SGBs is the high levels of illiteracy among them. A large number of the South African population is not sufficiently functionally literate to meet the requirements of drafting, reading and implementing policies (Heystek, 2011:311).

The study further revealed that SGBs are not adequately capacitated. During their term of office, SGBs do not receive adequate training regarding what policy interpretation and implementation is all about, how it will benefit the school in general and learners in particular and why it remains one of the critical roles of the SGBs. The irrelevant and inadequate training that SGB members are subjected to during their term of office remains a challenging factor (Xaba, 2011:201). This finding was however, refuted by the department official who indicated that SGBs are adequately trained to effectively interpret and implement policies in schools.

#### **5.2.1.3 SGB training on policy interpretation and implementation**

SGB training is directed at disseminating vital information essential for effective school governance. The DBE has a responsibility to provide the necessary capacity building workshops for newly elected SGB members in order to eliminate potential problems that could defeat the whole purpose of public school governance. However, the research revealed that challenges regarding the training of SGB in the area of policy interpretation and implementation are surmounting.

In most instances, inadequate training of SGBs was cited as one of the major problems which curtail effective governance in schools. This suggests that the DBE is not taking the issue of capacitating SGBs seriously in terms Section 19 (1) of SASA. It remains imperative that for SGBs to be effective in the execution of their responsibilities, they should be given continuous training to keep them informed about new developments in the area of school governance.

Another problem around SGB training as revealed by the research is the language barrier. The language used during training and in training manuals and presentations was found to be far beyond the basic literacy level of most of the parent governors. This makes it difficult for SGBs to understand what is written in the manuals and other documents that are related to the functions of the SGBs.

#### **5.2.1.4 The impact of training on the functioning of SGBs**

The objective of any SGB training initiative is to impart knowledge, skills, attitude and values that would translate into effective school governance. However, it remains to be seen if the kind of training that SGBs undergo during their term of office can achieve such objectives. The research revealed that SGBs are not able to carry out their mandate effectively in terms of SASA (84 of 1996) because they are not provided with continuous quality training. This obviously has a negative impact on the SGBs as the functionaries of the state. In this sad state of affairs, SGBs end up messing up with policies due to improper interpretation and implementation of legislative and policy frameworks. For training to be meaningful and has an impetus on the work of the SGB, it should be adequate and done on a continuous basis.

#### **5.2.1.5 The impact of language used in training manuals and presentations**

The research has revealed that the language used in the training manuals and presentations has a negative impact on the functioning of the SGB particularly in relation to policy interpretation and implementation. This is the case because the language used is foreign to the majority of the SGB. The problem seems to be exacerbated by the fact that the majority of the SGB members especially parents, are not able to read and write. The inability to read and write means that SGBs rely heavily on verbal information from facilitators during training and they cannot read to broaden their understanding. These challenges should be addressed by attracting skilful and knowledgeable people to serve as SGB members.

#### **5.2.1.6 The role of the Department of Basic Education**

In order to ascertain that SGBs are executing their roles effectively, there is a need to constantly monitor and support them in their activities. This is done to measure progress made and problems encountered so that a continuous change in activities can be introduced with a view of improving the effectiveness of the system. Research revealed that the department is not doing enough to support the SGBs in the performance of their duties. The kind of support that SGBs ever receive is only focused on the financial management of the school while other aspects of governance are neglected.

The appointment of one department official per circuit responsible for school governance by the Limpopo Department of Education was a step towards the right direction. However, these officials are faced with a mammoth task of providing effective monitoring and support to all schools under their jurisdiction. Each of the officials is faced with not less than 25 schools inclusive of both primary and secondary schools that have to be monitored and supported. Lack of proper monitoring and support is likely to render SGBs ineffective. With regard to policy issues, SGBs will not make informed decisions consistent with applicable legislations because they are not monitored and supported.

#### **5.2.1.7 Capacity-building strategies to empower the SGB**

Research has revealed that SGBs are not adequately capacitated to interpret and implement policies in schools. While it can be argued that capacity-building is not the only factor that can improve SGBs' abilities to interpret and implement policies, it can be equally accepted that it has a significant role to play in facilitating the understanding of SGBs regarding interpreting and implementing policies. Relevant and adequate capacity-building strategies for SGB members remain imperative in ensuring that the SGBs are competent in the performance of their core functions as school governors.

The fact that SGBs need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise cannot be overemphasised. It is therefore important for the DBE to invest time and resources in the capacity-building activities of the SGBs to ensure that they are well prepared to accept and successfully discharge their duties as school governors. This will make SGB members to be valuable role players in the education system. The study revealed that SGB training should be a continuous process and in the language understood by the majority of the members. It further indicated that the kind of training should be extensive, holistic and integrated in terms of time and content. Therefore in this way, potential problems likely to impede the effective governance of schools will be eliminated.

## 5.2.2 Documentary Analysis

In order to supplement, contextualise and verify data collected through focus group and individual semi-structured interviews, specific school governance documents were requested from selected schools and analysed. These documents provided direct information about events relating to the phenomenon under investigation.

### 5.2.2.1 National and provincial legislative frameworks

SGBs are expected to fully understand national and provincial legislative frameworks for proper implementation. During the focus group interviews with participants, the question “*What are the key governance policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement in schools?*” was asked. The main reason for asking this question was to establish if participants know the existence of these policies even before the researcher could go to schools to examine documents. All participants except for one could not mention all listed policies. During the visit to the schools, seven of the listed legislative frameworks were found in one policy file called *The Policy Hand Book for Educators* provided by the DBE to all educators. However, three schools were not in possession of the Constitution and another three did not have the Public Finance Management Act (1 of 1999).

The inability of the participants to mention policies when asked about them may suggest that these policies were never introduced to SGBs. It remains a worrying fact that after 24 years into democracy, SGBs are still not acquainted with legislative and policy frameworks that are directly linked to governance. This could also mean that SGBs are not well capacitated to carry out their duties effectively. To be able to develop their own policies, mandated or not, SGBs must know and understand such legislative and policy frameworks so that they can premise their policies on them to ensure consistency.

### 5.2.2.2 Mandatory and non-mandatory policies

SGBs are expected to play an important role in promoting quality education in schools. This can be achieved by ensuring that mandatory and non-mandatory governance policies are correctly developed, interpreted and implemented. The findings of the research regarding governance policies is a cause for concern

because responses of participants suggested that the SGB is not hands on with regard to policy development, interpretation and implementation. Policies that are supposed to be developed by the SGB are outsourced elsewhere by principals and kept in files for compliance. SGBs are not adequately capacitated to know and understand legislative and policy frameworks that are related to governance let alone to know the relationship between these frameworks with policies that they have to develop and implement in schools.

#### **5.2.2.3 Minutes of SGB meetings**

The document analysis process revealed that selected schools have minutes of SGB meetings that dealt with other governance issues. Few schools were found to be also having minutes of meetings that were convened to deal with policy matters, namely; learner admission and teenage pregnancy. The unavailability of minutes of this nature in some of the schools may suggest that proper procedures were not followed or policies were never implemented when dealing with policy issues.

#### **5.2.2.4 Attendance registers**

Data collected from the analysis of attendance registers revealed that the majority of selected schools did not have registers for meetings held during the discussion of policy issues. This may suggest that either meetings were not held or stakeholders were never involved in meetings of this nature.

#### **5.2.2.5 Implementation strategies**

For policy implementation to be effective, policies need to be known, understood and accepted by the people affected. The analysis of documents proved that none of the schools selected have policy implementation strategies. This could mean that policies were not implemented procedurally.

### **5.3 SUMMARIES OF CHAPTERS**

The summary of important issues raised in Chapter 1 to 4 is presented below:

### **5.3.1 Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study**

The research background and statement of the problem were discussed. The researcher was interested in investigating the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. Therefore, the overarching aim as well as the practical objectives of the research was outlined. This was followed by clarification of concepts. A brief review of literature and the research design and methodology were also discussed. The researcher also explained the delimitation and significance of the study as well as the ethical considerations. The chapter concluded by outlining the organisation of the study.

### **5.3.2 Chapter 2: The Role of the SGBs in Policy Interpretation and Implementation**

South Africa has made considerable strides in transforming its post-apartheid governance system from one characterised by exclusion and fragmentation to one characterised by inclusion, democracy and uniformity (Chaka, 2008:31). The democratisation of school governance through the enactment of the SASA was the most significant milestone towards the provision of quality education in South African schools. The introduction of SGBs in public schools is meant to encourage the development of democracy and active partnership in which parents take more responsibility in the education of their children in collaboration with government, educators and learners.

The interpretation and implementation of policies is still a challenging factor which needs attention of all stakeholders in education. There is a need by government to attend to the training of SGBs for the effective and efficient performance of their obligations in the governance of all public schools (Ndou, 2012:49). It is imperative that SGBs are adequately trained in policy interpretation and implementation. In this way, they will influence and determine decisions, actions and other curriculum related matters.

Well interpreted and implemented policies will be an instrument that gives directions to the day-to-day operations of the school and help create a culture of teaching and

learning in schools. In other words, for a school to operate in the best interest of both learners and the community, it needs policies to guide its SGB members, parents, principal, educators, learners, support-staff and other stakeholders on how to operate in order to achieve educational goals.

### **5.3.3 Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

In this study, the researcher used qualitative research design and methodology to investigate the capacity of SGBs in interpreting and implementing governance policies in schools under Klein Letaba Circuit. The data collection strategies used in the study, namely focus group and individual semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis were also outlined. Furthermore, data analysis procedures were described and issues of trustworthiness and ethics were outlined.

### **5.3.4 Chapter 4: Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Findings**

The research revealed that SGBs have limited knowledge of key governance policies that they have to interpret and implement as legally mandated by SASA. The responses that participants provided when asked to mention such policies are an indication that SGBs are not conversant with policies that will help them to execute the duties. Policies that SGBs are expected to interpret and implement consist of a number of national and provincial legislative frameworks and mandatory and non-mandatory policies that relate to school governance.

One of the challenges that confront SGBs in interpreting and implementing policies correctly is the high level of illiteracy among them. Their inability to read and write has a potential of handicapping SGBs from acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding needed to execute their roles and responsibilities. Another challenge is that SGBs are not provided with adequate training by DBE for them to know, understand and implement governance policies. The training that they receive in different aspects of their roles and responsibilities to ensure effective school governance is inadequate.

## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The research findings revealed that SGBs do not have the necessary capacity to interpret and implement governance policies in schools. This was expressed by participants during the focus group and individual interviews. These findings were verified and corroborated by the selected governance documents that were analysed by the researcher. The research further revealed that in trying to capacitate the SGBs, it is important that they receive appropriate training that will address different aspects of their roles and responsibilities. Such training should be continuous to ensure that SGBs are kept abreast with new information that comes to the fore within their three year period of office. The issue of language should never be ignored. It is critical that SGBs are provided with information in the language which they are familiar with. The DBE should also provide constant and regular monitoring and support to SGBs.

In order for the participants to provide relevant information that was crucial in achieving the research aim and objectives, data collected came from the responses that addressed the following questions:

- *What key governance policies are SGBs expected to interpret and implement in schools?*
  - Lack of basic knowledge regarding legislative frameworks that are applicable in school governance.
  - Lack of adequate knowledge of mandatory and non-mandatory policies that SGBs have to develop and implement in schools.
  
- *What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?*
  - High level of illiteracy among the SGB members especially the parent component.
  - The use of language which the majority of the SGB members are not familiar with during capacity training workshops and in policy documents and training manuals.

- Inadequate training that SGBs receive during their term of office.
- Lack of proper monitoring and control by the Department of Basic Education.
  
- *What is the role of the Department of Basic Education in terms of supporting SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?*
  - The DBE has to play a leading role in ensuring that SGBs are properly and adequately capacitated with knowledge and skills to be able to interpret and implement governance policies in schools.
  - It also has the responsibility to provide quality monitoring and support on a continuous basis.
  - It should appoint additional staff responsible for school governance.
  
- *What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?*
  - Training SGBs in all policies that relate to school governance, namely; national and provincial legislative frameworks and mandatory and non-mandatory policies.
  - Provision of continuous monitoring and support by the DBE.
  - Using appropriate language during capacity training workshops and in policy documents and training manuals.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is imperative that SGBs possess sound knowledge and understanding of policies and legislation relevant to school governance so that they can effectively interpret and implement them. On the basis of the pertinent issues revealed by the research findings, the following recommendations are made believing that they will assist in ensuring that SGBs remain a relevant structure to interpret and implement governance policies in schools:

### **5.5.1 SGB's Lack of Knowledge of Key Policies**

In order to enable SGBs to acquire knowledge about key policies that they have to interpret and implement at schools, SGBs need to be trained continuously.

#### **5.5.1.1 Continuous training**

The DBE should organise continuous training to capacitate SGB members in acquiring knowledge and understanding on policies and legislation relevant to school governance. Such training should be extensive and holistic. It should be allocated adequate time to cover the detailed scope of roles and responsibilities that SGBs have to carry out during their term of office.

The capacity building programmes tailored for SGBs should cover the following critical areas:

- Aspects of the Constitution which impact directly or indirectly on the functioning of SGBs and those whose achievement could in turn impact on the SGB in a school setting;
- Aspects of the SASA (84 of 1996), in particular those sections which provide directly for particular facets of the functioning of governing bodies. These include mandatory and optional functions;
- Various policies and regulations and
- Certain national and provincial specific provisions on policies.

### **5.5.2 Challenges of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation**

As revealed by the research, the majority of SGBs particularly the parent component, are unable to read and write. As a result, this makes it difficult for SGBs to read and understand policies that have to be implemented.

### **5.5.2.1 Enrol SGB members in Adult Basic Education and Training**

Most of the SGBs' duties require them to be able to read and write. This becomes a challenge because the majority of the SGB members especially in rural areas are illiterate. The DBE should, during their term of office, enrol SGB members who are illiterate in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres to improve their reading and writing skills.

### **5.5.3 Monitoring and Support by the Department of Basic Education**

The level of monitoring and support given to SGBs by the DBE has been found to be inadequate. It is therefore imperative that for SGBs to effectively carry out their mandate in terms of policy interpretation and implementation, the DBE should monitor and support them on a continuous basis.

#### **5.5.3.1 Continuous monitoring and support**

The research revealed that SGBs are not effectively monitored and supported by the DBE. It is therefore, recommended that continuous monitoring and support be provided to SGB members to ensure that they remain on track and are held accountable for what they do. The departmental officials should visit schools once per term and have meetings with SGBs to discuss challenges and successes in interpreting and implementing policies. This will enable the department of detect challenges facing SGBs and address them as soon as possible.

### **5.5.4 Capacity-building Strategies**

To address some of the challenges facing SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation, the following capacity-building strategies should be implemented:

#### **5.5.4.1 Address the issue of language**

The issue of language was raised by the participants as one of the stumbling blocks for the SGBs to effectively interpret and implement policies. It is therefore, recommended that policies, legislation and training manuals that SGBs have to interpret and implement should be in the language that they understand. Capacity-

building workshops should be presented in the language best understood by the majority of SGB members.

#### **5.5.4.2 Compensate SGB members**

SGB members are currently not compensated for attending meetings or doing some odd jobs for the schools they serve. This makes SGBs not to always commit themselves in the performance of their duties. To encourage and motivate them to always actively participate in school governance activities, SGB members should be compensated for the time spent attending to school activities and for performing certain tasks.

#### **5.5.4.3 Introduce cluster governance committees**

To be relevant, SGBs should be encouraged to form cluster governance committees. These committees should meet at least once per term to share experiences and develop capacity among themselves since they will be learning from each other. The establishment of such committees will mean that the burden of interpreting and implementing policies effectively is shared amongst SGBs of different schools.

### **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

During conducting the research, especially during data collection process the research further identified the following gaps in knowledge that necessitate further research:

- The impact of SGBs on the delivery of curriculum in schools.
- Recruitment of SGB membership as an aspect of school effectiveness.
- Cluster governance of SGBs in pursuit of replicating good governance in public schools.

### **5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Although the strength of qualitative research lies in its focus on extracting meaning, it still has serious limitations. In particular, these limitations include prejudice, bias and observer effects (Pillay, 2012:11). There were a number of challenges that limited the researcher from collecting the most relevant data. The study was concentrated

on 3 primary and 2 secondary schools in Klein Letaba Circuit in Mopani Education District. The study did not include schools in neighbouring circuits. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to the whole of Mopani Education District but may be an indication that there are serious challenges in the functioning of SGBs in the district and possibly in the whole of the Limpopo Province.

Initially, the researcher selected three primary and three secondary schools to participate in the research. However, one secondary school withdrew from the research before interviews commenced. The school cited its hectic intervention programme for Grade 11 and 12 learners as the main reason for pulling out of the research. During the focus group interviews it was considerably difficult to get the people together on time. Interviews for SGB chairpersons had to be postponed twice to accommodate those who could not make it due to various reasons. One of the SGB chairpersons selected for focus group interviews failed to honour the invitation due to work commitments. Arrangements were made to involve him telephonically in the interview but this could not materialise because of network problems. This resulted in the researcher missing set deadlines.

Transcribing responses was time-consuming since the researcher had to listen to the tape recorder after each interview. Fear of the participants to expose the Department of Basic Education's lack of support to SGBs was also a limiting factor. They were however, ensured of confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher, fearing that participants might not interpret questions as expected due to different levels of literacy, first explained what was required in each question. This too, was also a time-consuming factor.

## **5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The intention of the study was to investigate the capacity of SGBs in the area of policy interpretation and implementation in schools. The study focused on public schools situated in rural communities. It has been indicated in the study that prior 1994, schools were governed and managed by school committees, school boards and management council that had limited decision-making powers. However, after the dawn of democracy in the country, the wheel of educational transformation was

set in motion. The new government then realised that education is a societal issue which requires the involvement of all stakeholders. To guarantee stakeholder participation in public education, the SASA was enacted.

The study indicated that the SASA mandates the establishment of SGBs; a structure which is expected to carry out mandatory functions to support the effective delivery of quality education in schools. One of the SGBs' functions is to determine school policies and rules which must be consistent with the legislative and policy frameworks passed at both national and provincial levels. In order to effectively do this, it is incumbent upon SGBs to be able to interpret and implement such policies. It has been revealed by the study that SGBs are faced with a number of challenges that impede them from being able to effectively interpret and implement the required policies. Among the challenges facing SGBs in this regard, include the SGBs' lack of knowledge of key governance policies, high level of illiteracy, inadequate training, lack of proper monitoring and support and the language barrier. In order to address these challenges, the study made recommendations.

On the final analysis the study is appropriate and relevant as it addresses a very pertinent issue in the area of school governance in South Africa. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the effectiveness of SGBs if its recommendations are taken into consideration by the DBE.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

#### A1: Focus Group Interview Questions: Principals and educator component Of SGB

##### PART ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age in years: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Home Language: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Designation: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Highest educational Qualification \_\_\_\_\_
6. Experience in teaching and school management: \_\_\_\_\_

##### PART TWO: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY'S CAPACITY IN SCHOOL POLICIES (PRINCIPALS AND EDUCATORS)

1. Researcher: What key governance policies are SGBs expected to interpret and implement in schools?
2. What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?
3. Researcher: What impact do policies they are expected to implement have on the delivery of curriculum in schools?
4. Researcher: How often are they trained in policy interpretation and implementation?
5. Researcher: How do these trainings impact on their functioning with regard to policy development and implementation?
6. Researcher: What is your view with regard to language used in training manuals and presentation?
7. Researcher: What can you say regarding the type of training they receive?
8. Researcher: What is your role in terms of supporting SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?
9. Researcher: What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?

## 0A2: Focus Group Interview Questions: SGB Chairpersons

### PART ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender: -----
2. Age in years: -----
3. Home Language: -----
4. Designation: -----
5. Highest educational Qualification -----
6. Experience in SGB chair: -----

### PART TWO: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY'S CAPACITY IN SCHOOL POLICIES

1. Researcher: What key governance policies are you expected to interpret and implement in schools?
2. What challenges do you experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?
3. Researcher: What impact do policies you are expected to implement have on the delivery of curriculum in schools?
4. Researcher: How often are you trained in policy interpretation and implementation?
5. Researcher: How do these trainings impact on your functioning with regard to policy development and implementation?
6. Researcher: What is your view with regard to language used in training manuals and presentation?
7. Researcher: What can you say regarding the type of training you receive?
8. Researcher: What is the role of Department of Education in supporting SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?
9. Researcher: What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?

### **A3: Individual Interview with Departmental Official**

#### **PART ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. **Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Age in years:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Home Language:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Designation:** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Highest educational Qualification:** \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Experience in school governance:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **PART TWO: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY'S CAPACITY IN SCHOOL POLICIES (DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIAL)**

1. Researcher: What key governance policies are SGBs expected to interpret and implement in schools?
2. What challenges do SGBs experience in the interpretation and implementation of school policies?
3. Researcher: What impact do policies they are expected to implement have on the delivery of curriculum in schools?
4. Researcher: How often are they trained in policy interpretation and implementation?
5. Researcher: How do these trainings impact on their functioning with regard to policy development and implementation?
6. Researcher: What is your view with regard to language used in training manuals and presentation?
7. Researcher: What can you say regarding the type of training they receive?
8. Researcher: What is your role in terms of supporting SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation?
9. Researcher: What are the possible capacity-building strategies necessary to empower SGBs to interpret and implement policies effectively?

## A4: Document analysis

### Part 1: National and Provincial Legislative Frameworks and Prescripts

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
The South African Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996					
National Education Act No. 27 of 1996					
South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996					
Employment of Educators Act No.76 of 1998					
National Curriculum Statement of 2005					
Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998					
Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1997					
Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997					
Public Finance Management Act No.1 of 1999					
Limpopo Provincial Prescripts, 2011					

### Part 2: Mandatory Policies Developed by SGBs

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
School admission policy					
School language policy					
Policy on religious observances					
Learners' code of conduct					
SGB constitution					
Mission statement					
School finance policy					

### Part 3: Non-Mandatory Policies Developed by SGBs

Schools Policies	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Policy on compulsory school attendance					
School safety policy					
Policy on the use of school property, buildings and grounds					
Policy on hiring educators and non-educator staff					
Policy on infrastructure maintenance and improvement					
Policy on extra-mural activities					
Policy on the management of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM)					
Policy on HIV/AIDS					
Policy on procurement of goods and services					
Visitors policy					
Touring policy					
Uniform policy					
Policy on the management of assets					

### Part 4: Minutes of SGB Meetings

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Minutes of meetings held by the SGB during policy implementation processes					
Policy issues discussed					

## Part 5: Attendance Registers

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Attendance registers of meetings held by the SGB during policy interpretation and implementation processes					
People attended					

## Part 6: Implementation Strategies

Schools	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Policy implementation strategies of school governance policies					

## APPENDIX B: CONSENT LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

**To: Principals, educators, SGB chairpersons and departmental official**

P O Box 4889

GIYANI

0826

08 March 2016

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**Enq: Makhuvele ST**

**Contact No.: 083 735 1549**

ATT: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr \_\_\_\_\_

### RE: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH: YOURSELF

1. 1, Sevha Thomas Makhuvele (11607170) a Master of Education student at the University of Venda in the School of Education have been given permission by the Department of Education to conduct research in schools under Klein Letaba Circuit.
2. I have therefore sampled your school to be part of the research that I want to undertake on the following topic: **“Capacity-building of School Governing Bodies in the area of Policy Interpretation and Implementation”**. The purpose of the study is to investigate the capacity of the School Governing Bodies in policy interpretation and implementation.
3. I hereby request for your consent to participate in the research interview. The interview will be in the form of focus group and will be tape recorded to ensure the quality of data capturing. You will be interviewed by the researcher together with other five sampled participants from other schools. The interview will be conducted after school at a date, venue and time that will be confirmed to you in advance
4. Your participation in the study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The information obtained from the interview will

be treated as confidential and your identity will not be revealed. Anonymity is guaranteed as no personal details that could identify you or your school will be excluded from the study. I do not anticipate putting you as a participant at any risk by taking part in the study. The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal.

5. Should you need more information about the research, you may contact my supervisor, Dr NF Litshani at 079 341 9936. Attached herewith please find letters of permission to conduct research from the Klein Letaba Circuit Manager and Limpopo Department of Education.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

---

Makhuvele ST (Student No.: 11607170)

---

## APPENDIX C: DECLARATION

1, \_\_\_\_\_ (Full names of participants) hereby declare that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **“Capacity-building of School Governing Bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation”**. The details of the researcher were also explained to me.

I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage of the study. My confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed as I will not be required to provide my name, the name of my school or give any personal details that could identify me or be traced back to me.

Thanking you in advance.

---

Participant's signature

---

Witness's signature

---

Date

---

Date

## APPENDIX D: APPLICATIONS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

### D1: Letter to the Circuit Manager

#### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 4889  
GIYANI  
0826  
20 November 2015

Enq : Makhuvele S.T Cell no. : 083 735 1549 Email: [sevhamakhuvele@webmail.co.za](mailto:sevhamakhuvele@webmail.co.za)

The Circuit Manager  
Klein Letaba Circuit  
P/Bag X9654  
GIYANI  
0826

Dear Madam

#### Re: APPLICATION FOR A PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

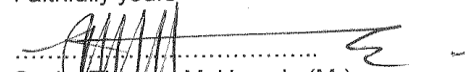
I, Sevha Thomas Makhuvele (11607170) a Master of Education student at the University of Venda in the School of Education, request permission to conduct research in public primary and high schools in Klein Letaba Circuit within the Mopani Education District.

The subject under research is **Capacity- building of school governing bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation**. The aim of the study is to investigate the capacity of School Governing Bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. To attain this aim, the following objectives need to be attained first as a point of departure:

- Outlining key policies that the SGB is expected to interpret and implement in the governance of schools.
- Identifying challenges that SGBs experience in the interpretation and in implementation of school policies.

Thanking you in anticipation for a positive response.

Faithfully yours



Sevha Thomas Makhuvele (Mr)



University of Venda

PRIVATE BAG X5050 THOHoyANDOU, 0950  
LIMPOPO PROVINCE SOUTH AFRICA  
TELEPHONE (015) 962 5318 FAX (015) 962 5050  
E-MAIL: [deeducation@univen.ac.za](mailto:deeducation@univen.ac.za)

*"A quality driven, financially sustainable, rural-based comprehensive university"*

## D2: Letter to the Acting Head of Department (Limpopo)

### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 4889  
GIYANI  
0826  
20 November 2015

Enq : Makhuvele S.T Cell no. : 083 735 1549 Email: [sevhamakhuvele@webmail.co.za](mailto:sevhamakhuvele@webmail.co.za)

The Acting Head of Department  
Limpopo Department of Education  
P/Bag x9489  
POLOKWANE  
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

#### Re: APPLICATION FOR A PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

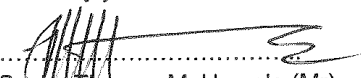
I, Sevha Thomas Makhuvele (11607170) a Master of Education student at the University of Venda in the School of Education, request permission to conduct research in public primary and high schools in Klein Letaba Circuit within the Mopani Education District.

The subject under research is **Capacity- building of school governing bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation**. The aim of the study is to investigate the capacity of School Governing Bodies in the area of policy interpretation and implementation. To attain this aim, the following objectives need to be attained first as a point of departure:

- Outlining key policies that the SGB is expected to interpret and implement in the governance of schools.
- Identifying challenges that SGBs experience in the interpretation and in implementation of school policies.

Thanking you in anticipation for a positive response.

Faithfully yours

  
Sevha Thomas Makhuvele (Mr)




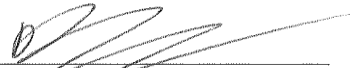
University of Venda

PRIVATE BAG X5050, THOHoyANDOU, 0950  
LIMPOPO PROVINCE SOUTH AFRICA  
TELEPHONE (015) 962 8318 FAX (015) 962 8050  
E-MAIL: [deaneducation@univenda.ac.za](mailto:deaneducation@univenda.ac.za)

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## APPENDIX E: PERMISSIONS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

### E1: Letter from the Circuit Manager

	<b>LIMPOPO</b> PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA			
<b>DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MOPANI DISTRICT</b>				
<b>KLEIN LETABA CIRCUIT</b>				
Enq : Machumele, M.M. Cel. 082 808 9085				
29 February 2016				
<b>Mr S.T. Makhuvele</b> <b>P.O. Box 4889</b> <b>GIYANI</b> <b>0826</b>				
<b>REQUEST TO CONDUCT M.ED RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS: YOURSELF</b>				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The above matter refers:</li><li>2. We acknowledge receipt of your letter which we received on 26 February 2016,</li><li>3. The circuit has approved your request on condition that your research should not disturb teaching and learning.</li><li>4. The chosen school's names should be submitted to the circuit and permission sought with individual schools/educators in advance.</li><li>5. The circuit wish you well and hope you will share your research findings with the department.</li></ol>				
 MACHUMELE, M.M : Circuit Manager	<table border="1"><tr><td>DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE CIRCUIT MANAGER KLEIN LETABA CIRCUIT M.M. MACHUMELE</td></tr><tr><td>2016 -02- 29</td></tr><tr><td>SIGNATURE:..... P. BAG X9654 GIYANI, 0826 LIMPOPO PROVINCE</td></tr></table>	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE CIRCUIT MANAGER KLEIN LETABA CIRCUIT M.M. MACHUMELE	2016 -02- 29	SIGNATURE:..... P. BAG X9654 GIYANI, 0826 LIMPOPO PROVINCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE CIRCUIT MANAGER KLEIN LETABA CIRCUIT M.M. MACHUMELE				
2016 -02- 29				
SIGNATURE:..... P. BAG X9654 GIYANI, 0826 LIMPOPO PROVINCE				
<small>SHAMAVUNGA CIRCUIT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MOPANI DISTRICT, Private Bag X 573 GIYANI, 0826 Tel 015 812 1274 / 015 812 1793 Fax No. 015 812 1141</small>				
<i>The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people</i>				

## E2: Letter from the Acting Head of Department (Limpopo)



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

---

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ref: 2/5/6/1

Enq: MC Makola PhD

Tel No: 015 290 9448

E-mail: [MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za)

Makhuvele ST  
P.O. Box 4889  
GIYANI  
0826

---

#### RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

---

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **“CAPACITY-BUILDING OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE AREA OF POLICY INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.”**
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
  - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

*Request for permission to Conduct Research: Makhuvele ST*

---

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

*The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!*

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



MUTHEIWANA NB  
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (ACTING)

26/11/15

DATE

*Request for permission to Conduct Research: Makhuvele ST*

CONFIDENTIAL