

**CHALLENGES TO PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, **Dimakatso Engeneus Mashamaite**, do hereby declare that this dissertation for Masters of Development studies is my original work in design and execution and that all sources consulted have been duly acknowledged.

Signature: 

Date: 17 May 2006

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family; firstly, my beloved wife Melidah Mailula Mashamaite, who unreservedly supported me throughout my studies. You are really a pillar of strength to me. I also dedicate it to my children: Blessing, Ebenezer, Garrison and Eugene who were missing me most of the time when I was preoccupied with this project.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CASS	Continuous Assessment
DET	Department of Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
LRC	Learners' Representative Council
PDE	Provincial Department of Education
SASA	The South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
SMT	School Management Team
USA	United States of America

## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with view to understand challenges that are faced by the parent components in the School Governing Bodies (SGB) in the Limpopo rural schools. Three schools were selected as sites for the study by means of a purposive sampling strategy. From each of the schools two parents, one learner, one educator and the principal were selected as respondents (a total of 15 respondents). Data was collected by means of two methods of data collection, namely, interviews and document analysis. Results show that parental participation in School is faced with many challenges. These include: participation, representation, eligibility and elections of the parents, lack of expertise and capacity, the level of preparedness by partners to participate in school governance, lack of community participation, lack of incentives, role confusion between parents and educators.

The study recommends that Department of Education launch campaigns on school governance, determine the needs of school governors, introduce proper training of governors and introduce incentives. In addition, affirmative action should apply to redress the historical imbalances based on race and gender and that the composition of parents in SGBs for instance, in schools attended by black and white learners, should be on a pro rata basis. Those responsible for disseminating and implementing policies on school governance should take cognizance of the conditions of the immediate environment of the school. These include values and cultural beliefs of stakeholders. The use of radio, public meetings, and sending documents to schools, should be supplemented or accompanied by personal contact with the various SGBs.

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## CHAPTER 1

### ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The 1994 elections and the adoption and implementation of a democratic constitution ushered in a new era of transformation and democratization of the education system in South Africa. The various sources such as the White Paper on Education and Training (1995:21-22) and the Republic of South Africa's Constitution of 1996 (SA, 1996), state that the principle of democratic governance should be reflected at every level of governance, and this culminated in both the election of the first School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in 1997 and the eventual phasing out of school committees in the same year. Various authors such as Lewis and Naidoo (2004:3); Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:20); Potgieter, Visser, Vander Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997:6) indicate the new South African government's overt agenda of the radical shift from a virtually totalitarian and centralised approach to school governance, to one of school-based governance and decision-making. According to Chair (2004:1) the government argues that the only effective way of bringing educational reform, is implementation by legislation, and this led the new South African regime to promulgate the South African Schools Act no 84 (SASA) and other relevant policies. The Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (2004:5) avers that parental participation in school governance is vital for education success. In other words if parents can form part of the membership of the SGBs, this will undoubtedly demonstrate the value and influence which parents have on the school system.

The Research Triangle Institute (2004:4); Daresh (1998:333), and Mda and Mothata (2000:68); agree that the rationale to devolve power to the schools is to promote broader participation in school governance whereby parents serve as majority members that is, the majority of SGB members should be parents in order to influence decisions in schools. In other words, parents should not be limited to discussions on cleaning the school yards, repairing school fence and other trivial matters, but they should also decide among other



things; admissions, religious and language policies code of conduct for learners etc, and this will enhance effective teaching and learning.

However, it seems that there are still problems in many schools. The Ministerial Review Committee (2004:2) asserts that there are still many challenges facing full participation of parents in school governance, The Report state that “well-known as these realities might be, it needs to be said here that they militate profoundly against the ability to build democratic participation in schools”. Hence, this study wanted to explore how the participation of parents at schools in Limpopo Province was like, and also to check the challenges that face their participation in school governance.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Parents as stakeholders in Kone Kwena Area, seem not to be satisfactorily participating in school governance as expected or envisaged in terms of the provided legislations and policies such as both the Constitution and SASA. A shift from School Committees to School Governing Bodies was an attempt to increase the effectiveness or functionality of parental participation in schools, the goal being to enhance effective teaching and learning in all schools in South Africa. However, despite this attempt, parents are still unaware of problems such as lawlessness among learners, lack of commitment among teachers, misappropriation of funds, and cases of sexual harassment that beset schools. It appears that there is a problem with their participation in school governance.

Many parents in the Kone Kwena area are not willing to participate in school governance and a few of those who are willing to do so cannot make a meaningful contribution towards effective school governance. Lewis and Naidoo (2004:1) state that parents do not understand the role they should play. In addition, there is a general confusion about the roles of the governance and management structures in schools and this often leads to confusion and conflict. The most unfortunate stakeholders are the learners because poor school governance impacts negatively on their learning. Parental participation does not only mean parents to be elected into school governing bodies but should translate into the right to influence decisions.

It seems that currently, parents are not accorded the opportunity to influence decisions and their children's (learners) education is at risk. The government, and in particular the Department of Education (DoE), wishes to see parents take part in all the decision making processes of schools, thus making a meaningful contribution to the education of their children. Parents are expected to take part in all the decision making processes of schools. It was, therefore, against this background that the present researcher wanted to study the problems faced by these parents vis-à-vis their participation in school governance.

If challenges that face the participation of parents in school governance are not attended to that is, if there are no mechanism or strategies in place that can be employed to encourage parent participation in school governance, the decision making process at schools will continue to be flawed and undemocratic. Lewis and Naidoo (2004:6) state that parents' participation is currently individualistic, sporadic and limited to certain issues determined by a principal and or parents serving as SGB chairpersons. Principals dominate the whole decision making process at the expense of stakeholders. Botha (2004:239) states that studies of effective and excellent principles reveal that the major reason for a principal's failure is the inability to work with people, and this impacts negatively on school governance.

### **3. MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

Over the past seven years, the researcher has observed a trend with regard to South Africa's efforts to provide broader participation and devolution of power in schools, with more emphasis on parental involvement or participation in school governance. The researcher was motivated by the experience gained as an educator in the Limpopo Department of Education since 1983, to investigate, understand and describe the challenges that are faced by parents in their participation in school governance and how these challenges affect the smooth management of the rural schools in Limpopo Province. The researcher has worked 12 years of the 22 years teaching experience as a secondary school principal. The researcher has observed and experienced poor participation by parents in school governance and the extent to which this poor parental participation in school governance contribute towards learners' results and the total collapse of a school's vision.

The study was conducted with a view to investigate challenges that face effective participation of parents in school governance, with regard to decision-making processes at schools. The study was also deemed to be important because the researcher wanted to understand and describe parental participation vis-à-vis the smooth management of the schools, and to attempt to bring to light the true nature of the challenges and to identify solutions towards addressing them. This would encourage the parent community to make a meaningful contribution and participation in school governance.

In addition, the study is significant because it would contribute to policy development and implementation in the National Department of Education (DoE) and the Provincial Department Education (PDE), particularly in schools in Kone Kwena area: given that the researcher would discuss the findings with the circuit managers, and the researcher would also supply the findings and recommendations to the schools to study.

So far, research that has been conducted in this area of focus has only covered a limited scope for example, it has only covered democratization and devolution of power to schools and the involvement of parents as stakeholders in school governance. This study is therefore, located within the discourse on the challenges that face this parental participation in school governance in terms of the decision making processes, their (parents who are SGB members) effectiveness vis a' vis their functions and powers, poor attendance at SGB meetings and their unwillingness to participate or be elected in school governance et cetera, because information in this aspect is scarce in rural areas (in Kone Kwena area).

#### **4. THE AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study was firstly, to investigate, understand and describe the challenges that are faced by parents in their participation in school governance and how these challenges affect the smooth management of the rural schools in Limpopo Province. This is consistent with basic research. Neuman (1997:22) states that "Those who seek an understanding of the fundamental nature of social reality are engaged in basic research. Basic research advances fundamental knowledge about the social world". Therefore, the aim of the study was to understand or have knowledge of school governance as a social phenomenon, investigate



the ineffective parental participation in school governance, their scope of decisions, functions and powers within the SGBs that is, the extent of their influence and functionality in school governance as the national DoE expects. Finally, the study was aimed to come up with recommendations that would address challenges that are faced by the school governors, and thereby enhance effective parental participation in school governance.

#### **4.1. Objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

- 4.1.1. to identify challenges faced by parents regarding decision making processes in schools;
- 4.1.2. to determine the causes of problems faced by parents regarding decision making processes in the SGBs; and
- 4.1.3 to identify possible solutions towards addressing problems that hinder the effective participation of parents in school in school governance.

### **5. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

#### **5.1. Participatory democracy**

Lewis and Naidoo (2004:8) define participation as a “mandate for increasing accountability of school and governing bodies, by making consensual decisions in pursuit of a common interest”. According to Kaunda (2004:8), democratic participation in the educational field refers to “schools becoming environments where democracy is practiced. This allows all the social entities, poor or rich and all the marginalized groups, to participate in the affairs of the schools”. Participatory democracy is not limited to the right to elect representative, but goes beyond that and translates into the right to influence decisions in schools. The Department of Education (2008:8) gave a more elaborate definition of democratic participation by defining it as:

Power sharing where power is shared between two groups which are equally important, namely, the school governing body (SGB) which consists of the principal, educators, learner representatives (in secondary schools) and parents who must be in the majority, and the school management teams (SMT) which usually consists of the principal, deputies, and heads of departments.

I agree with all these authors, and in this study, participatory democracy was used to mean the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making processes of school, that is, parents, principals, learners and other members of the public must participate in the affairs of the schools on an equal and fair basis that is, there should be no discrimination based on age, academic qualifications, economic political affiliation, social status, et cetera.

## **5.2. Stakeholders**

Ranson, Arnott, McKeown and Martin (2002:1), and Lewis and Naidoo (2004:4) define stakeholders as school level actors or those who engage in a dialogic democracy, citizens who have a stake in education and shared tasks of ensuring the smooth running of schools. Mushwana (2000:5) defines stakeholders as “parents, learners, educators, general community, traditional leaders, and potential donors”. According to Dekker and Lemmer (1994:153), parents include the entire parent community of a specified school in a specific environment. Therefore, the term stakeholders was used in this study to refer to the biological parents and other guardians but also include, as Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:35) state “the broader community; that is, businesses, religious organizations, clubs police, health services, local government and libraries”. The term stakeholders was also used to refer to all people in the area or vicinity in which the school is situated: people who have a common defined goal and interests, people whose contribution to schools influences effective teaching and learning.

## **5.3. School Governance**

Authors such as Potgieter et al. (1997:11), and Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:20) define school governance as the formulation, adoption and implementation of policies that will ensure the smooth running of schools and consequently ensure that learners benefit from the education phenomenon. It ensures that school rules are carried out in terms of the law and the budget of the school. Ndlovu (2001:13) asserts that a school governing body (SGB) refers to a statutory body of people called school governors, who have been elected from stakeholders, to determine the policy by which a school is to be organized and controlled. The SGB is composed of the elected parents, co-opted members, educators and learners (in secondary schools only). The term of office of governors is three years for parents, non-

teaching staff and educators, and one year for learners. The number of governors differs from school to school because it depends on the size that is, the enrolment of the school and the number of non-educator staff (clerk, gardener and other labourers at school). The Provincial Gazette of Northern Province (2000:16) specifies the number of members of school governing bodies according to type and size (see appendix 2). Mda and Mothata (2000:71) state that "school governance involves accountability and transparency in the decision making process of the school." I agree with these definitions and thus school governance was used in this study to refer to the stakeholders' participation (with parents being in the majority) in the consensual decision making process of the schools with regard to the formulation, adoption and implementation of school policies, with a view to enhance the teaching and learning phenomenon.

#### **5.4. School Management**

Chabalala (1998:15) defines the term management as social policies through which a manager co-ordinates the activities of a group by means of planning, controlling organizing, guiding, and supervising in order to achieve specific goals. Kotter (2001:2) expresses it well when he writes that:

Management is about coping with complexity. It involves planning, budgeting, organizing and staffing. It also provides control and solves problems. The aim of management is predictability and orderly results. Managers look for the right fit between people and jobs.

According to Potgieter et al. (1997:11) and the White Paper on Education (1996:4), school management refers to the day-to-day administration and organization of teaching and learning and the activities that support teaching and learning. According to the South African Schools Act (SA, 1996) the principal and the SMTs are responsible for the professional management of the school under the authority of the Head of Department of Education. SASA stipulates that the school governing body must support the principal, educators and the other staff at the school in the execution of their day-to-day professional duties. However, Potgieter et al. (1997:13) state that "Everyone must be aware of his or her respective functions and must take care not to interfere with the duties and area of responsibility".

## 6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were aimed at shedding more light on the problem or topic under investigation. In the light of the above, the following questions helped the researcher to thoroughly investigate the challenges facing the participation of parents in school governance, in a systematic and coherent manner:

- What are the challenges facing effective participation of parents in school governance?
- What kind of mechanism or strategy can be employed to encourage parents to participate in school governance?

The researcher used the qualitative approach because firstly, it was relevant to and coherent with the aim of his study. The aim of the researcher study was to investigate, understand and describe the challenges that facing parental participation in school governance from the parents themselves. In other words, the researcher wanted to derive meaning from the stakeholders that is, he allowed the information on the phenomenon; *parental participation in school governance* to flow naturally from parents, educators and learners ideographically. The researcher also observed all ethical considerations namely, voluntary participation, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, avoiding deceiving the subjects and causing no emotional harm to the participants, for example, the researcher sought permission from the respondents to make use of the tape recorder and still assured them confidentiality and anonymity.

## 7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This study is divided into five chapters which are structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 Orientation to the study
- Chapter 2 Participation of parents in school governance
- Chapter 3 Research methodology
- Chapter 4 Results
- Chapter 5 Discussion, recommendations and conclusion

## **8. SUMMARY**

This chapter covered the orientation to the study in terms of the post apartheid South African government's efforts to devolve power to schools with more emphasis on increased parental involvement or participation in school governance. In the statement of the problem, which is linked to the motivation and aim of the study, the challenges and realities that face parental participation in school governance that cannot go unnoticed, were briefly discussed. These include, inter alia; lack of parental participation, lack of authentic consensual decision-making, role confusion among school governors and so forth, hence ineffective teaching and learning is still not realized in most black rural schools. The definition of concepts such as stakeholders, and school governance also form part of this chapter. In addition, the researcher briefly discussed his method of research, the ethical considerations and research questions. Lastly, the researcher also included the structure of the dissertation that is, the division of chapters of the study.



## CHAPTER 2

### PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, the researcher discussed the orientation to the study on challenges to parental participation in school governance with regard to the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, motivation to the study and also briefly discussed the South African government's efforts to devolve power to schools. In this chapter, the researcher undertakes literature review to build a theoretical framework with regard to challenges facing parental participation in school governance in terms of the, functionality and effectiveness of the governing bodies vis-à-vis their powers and duties as enshrined in the South African Schools Act (SA, 1996). The researcher discussed the experiences of parental participation in other countries and different models for parental participation in school governance.

The South African education system during the apartheid era, did not give room to the teachers, students, school committees and other stakeholders to express their opinions in educational matters. This led to the establishment and perpetuation of an extremely centralized and rigid hierarchical administration of the educational system. However, with the dawn of a new democratic South Africa in 1994 and the New South African Constitution of 1996, serious attempts were made to transform the education system through devolution of powers to the (SGBs). According to Asmal and James (2000:2), the White Paper on Education and Training (1995:506) and Report of the Ministerial Review Committee (2003:9), the move towards greater democracy in schools is legislated well in the Constitution but more concisely in (SASA) which is seen as the cornerstone or epitome of the government's move whereby black parents would also have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to school governance and the education system. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:20), Research Triangle Institute (2004:4) and Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (2004:5) also confirm that the rationale to devolve power to the schools is to promote broader participation in school governance whereby parents serve as majority members.

The Act among other things makes provision for representative governance at schools. This should be in the form of democratically elected (SGBs) in which parents must serve as majority members in decision making processes of the schools. Section 20 of the Schools Act (SA, 1996) and Department of Education (1997) stipulates various responsibilities and functions of School Governing Bodies (SGBs).

### **Functions of governing bodies**

All governing bodies must amongst others function and duties perform certain function and duties. A governing body must:

- ◆ Promote the best interests of the school and try to ensure its development by providing quality education for all learners;
- ◆ Adopt a constitution;
- ◆ Adopt the mission statement of the school: a short document that sets out goals based on shared values and beliefs;
- ◆ Adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- ◆ Encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff to offer voluntary services; and
- ◆ Recommend to provincial Heads of Departments of the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Employment of Educators Act 1998 and the Labour Relations Act 1995.

However, Rivarola and Fuller (1999:506), Lewis and Naidoo (2004:7); Ngcongo (1997:3), Anderson (1998:572), Report of the Ministerial Review Committee (2004:115) agree that despite the promulgation of SASA with its clear stipulation of the core functions of the SGBs there are still many challenges related to the functionality of the participation of parents in the authentic decision making processes of the school. In examining the South African Schools Act (SA,1996), particularly Section 20, which stipulates the core functions of governing bodies, one gets a picture of increased involvement of parents in school governance. However, the practical outcomes of SASA and other policies appear to be ineffective. Sayed (2002) argues that:

The outcomes of governance policies are far more complex and informed by more than a set of limited stated purposes. It is shortsighted to believe that a new policy will lead to the enactment of all changes it beckons.

## **2. INVESTIGATION OF THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE GOVERNING BODIES IN TERMS OF THEIR POWERS AND FUNCTIONS**

### **◆ Appointment of educators, recommendations of educators for appointments and promotions**

This is one of the most sensitive area in which the SGBs need to exercise their authority and powers given to them by SASA. Unfortunately, this has become one of most contested or disputed terrain between the educators' unions and the Department of Education. Report of the Ministerial Review Committee (2004:110) states that:

Many SGB parent members, seem not to know what qualities to look for when recommending appointments, and struggle with the procedures concerning an appointment. The effect is that appointments often become controversial and lead to disputes being declared. A contentious issue is the appointment of principals. Many officials in PDEs and in teacher unions have expressed unhappiness about the state of affairs. The argument made, is that parents lack the expertise and knowledge to determine whether a candidate could be recommended for appointment as principal or not.

This stems from the fact that almost all parent components of SGBs in black schools do not form part of the interviews panels for the principals' posts instead, they request principals from the neighbouring schools to shortlist and interview applicants. Thereafter, the panel would leave the score sheets with the SGB members for them to recommend a candidate for appointment as the principal of their school. The chairperson of the panel clearly tells them that they (the SGB members) are not in any way forced to recommend a candidate who obtained the highest scores, but can take any of the five interviewed candidates. This is exactly where most of the disputes emanate.

### **◆ Adopting a constitution, developing a mission statement of the school and adopting a code of conduct for learners**

I think that most black SGBs nationally have, to date, not adopted a school constitution, developed the mission statement of the school and adopted a Code of Conduct for learners



as expected. The reason is simply that the parents have no capacity to do so. Guskey and Peterson (1996:11) assert that:

The lack of time and work commitments, are possible constraining factors. The meaningful deliberations and carefully reasoned discussions about complex issues require considerable time, and the nature of commitments and the inflexibility of daily schedules do not always make this possible. Lack of expertise and poor education is another real problem in many South African schools, as are personal agendas of individual groupings that seem to take precedence over school interests.

The main reason why the SGBs do not fulfill the above-mentioned function is that most parents are not educated and hence lack the necessary expertise.

#### ◆ **Language and religious policies**

Most SGB parent components are not authentically involved in the development of religious and language policies. It seems that their views are not regarded as important in these matters; yet they are directly affected by the decisions in this regard. Lewis and Naidoo (2004:5) put this issue as follows:

Teachers view parent participation as interference by people who are not educated. Tensions between educators and parents are exacerbated by some educators' references to the SGB as the parent body, an act that sidelines the SGB, setting it apart from the real work. This raises questions about what is meant by participation and its connection to spheres of influence in school.

This indicates that participation of parents in school governance is not dependent on membership of the SGB alone or attending meetings; but it also depends on who has power and to what extent the parents are given platform by educators in particular; principals. Brijraj (2005:4) writes that the principal plays a vital role in the SGB. This role is not uncontroversial. The principal is the focus of this controversy and sometimes also the cause of great tensions that plays itself out in the SGB.

From literature cited in the preceding paragraphs it becomes clear that most SGBs, particularly in the historically disadvantaged schools (that is, ex-DET schools), have to date, not yielded the expected results vis-à-vis the functions of the SGBs as stipulated in SASA. Consequently, this compels one to question the authenticity of parental participation in school governance with regard to consensual decision making. Carelse (2000:1) states that most governing bodies, particularly in black schools, still lack practical implementation of positive consensual decisions. Asmal and James (2002:4) write: the gap between constitutional mandate and social reality is, not surprisingly, still wide.

### **3. EXPERIENCES IN OTHER COUNTRIES**

In order to shed more light on the challenges faced by parental participation in school governance, we need to study the experiences, that is, issues and challenges in other countries. Hendricks (2000) writes that:

The problems and issues experienced are not unexpected or unique to the South African context. Many similar issues arose in other countries and contexts where decentralization was favoured as a transformative approach to education management at school level.

According to Chisholm (1997:50), education policies for a new South Africa show a remarkable congruence with international trends. DoE (2000:5) states that governments of countries all around the world (Australia, India, Britain, Holland, and others) are promoting school-based management. The trend is to move away from centralized bureaucratic control of education towards self-managing schools. This policy assumes that it is better for schools and communities to control their own affairs. This will be demonstrated by explaining experiences in the following countries: the United States of America (USA) Australia, New Zealand, Tanzania, Malawi and Ivory Coast and Gambia.

#### **United States of America**

Daresh (1998:325) states that in the United States of America (USA), parental participation in site-based management was often limited to discussions on new playground equipment, the appearance of a school building, a need for new stop signs to assist pupils in crossing busy

streets, and so forth. But now, the site-based management engages in matters that were traditionally reserved for professional staff (that is, educators) namely, reviews of curriculum instructional materials and programs evaluation.

Poston Jr. (in Fraser, 1994:7) explains that representation in the boards is usually by males, white, married, highly educated, employed in professional or managerial jobs paying nearly twice the average salary nationally, financially established and affluent. Therefore, in contrast to most schools in RSA, in USA, only parents with good education, high social and economic status, capacity and expertise are members of the governing bodies.

## **AUSTRALIA**

Dunstan (1995:123) writes that democratization of schooling in Australia was concerned with the locus for control for certain key areas of decision making from the center to the school site. He, however, alludes to suspicions related to the motives for devolution of power from the state to schools that have been far more related to issues of productivity, efficiency, value for money and power than they have been to democracy. He states that these are all tenets of economic rationalism in education based on World Bank structural adjustment programmes. The rationale or motive of all governments across the globe to devolve power to schools is generally perceived to be increased stakeholders' participation in school governance.

The situation in Australia, as observed by Dunstan, is characterized by lack of authentic participatory democracy that is, the school governors do not influence decision in key areas of school matters such as curriculum change, employment of educators and other crucial matters. Jones (1997) mentions the idea of increased user accountability and responsibility for education processes as an important trend in World Bank policies on education. The Australian government has devolved power and democracy to schools in principle but not in practice in order to succumb or rather satisfy the economic pre-conditions (financial assistance to countries based on productivity, zero- tolerance on corruption, efficiency and value for money, that is, delivery of quality services to the general populace) in the public service of the World Bank.



## NEW ZEALAND

The stakeholders' participation in New Zealand is comparatively, one of the developed systems in the world. However, there are some challenges that the stakeholders are facing. One of these challenges is what Sallies (1988) refer to as "sham participation", because the higher authorities take decisions, while the stakeholders at the school are only expected to implement or endorse these decisions. In other words, devolution of power is limited to managerialist effectiveness, and authentic empowerment or school governance is not filtered down to parents, as it should be. The participation of stakeholders, that is, school level actors, is never engaged in a dialogic democracy in which the decisions on school matters are taken by consensus. Instead, the education authorities take decision on behalf of the stakeholders who only rubber-stamp those decisions. There is no real decentralization or devolution of power from the center to the periphery, but what reigns is authoritarianism and elitism disguised as participatory democracy. This is contrary to one of the tenets or principles of democracy upon which school governing bodies are based. Engle and Ocha (1988:9) express it well when they write that:

A second important tenet of democracy is the right of individuals and groups to participate in decisions within the society as a whole. Without such participation, respect for the individual is meaningless and democracy becomes unworkable. In a modern, populous, and pluralistic society, participation has been extended to mean the right to vote and to have one's vote count. This also includes the right to be fairly represented through the mechanisms provided by the political system (committees, councils, legislatures, executive officials, and the like)

This is indeed, sham participation because stakeholders, including parents, are not influencing decisions, as they ought to but are just there to contain parental discontent. Higher authorities do not view them as being indispensable partners in education. The right to influence decisions in schools is still restricted to institutional and bureaucratic roles defined by the most powerful actors or those knowledgeable in school matters. Kaunda (2004:8) writes well when he states that democratic participation in the educational field refers to schools becoming environments where democracy is practiced. This allows all social entities, poor or rich and all the marginalized groups, to participate in the affairs of the schools. Participatory democracy or democratic participation is not limited to the right to elect

representative, but goes beyond that and translates into the right to influence decisions in schools.

## **TANZANIA**

Sumra (1997:17) points out that even though teachers and school administrators participate actively in school governance, there is, however, no practical evidence of parental participation despite the fact that the Tanzanian government does encourage participation of various stakeholders in school governance. The fact that the Tanzanian government encourages various stakeholders' participation shows that there are some policies on school governance that need to be implemented effectively by all parties in schools. However, it appears that parents are just made to think that they are participating actively in school governance when they are actually not. In other words, there is no tangible or practical participatory democracy in terms of broad consensual decision-making between educators and school administrators. Cleaver (1999) points out that the evidence for empowerment and democratization is often partial, tenuous and reliant on the rightness of the approach rather than on proof of outcomes.

## **MALAWI**

Kaunda (2004:13) shows that community participation in the management of schools in Malawi, from Independence in 1964 to the democratic type of governance, left much to be desired. He states that:

There was a conspicuous demarcation line that existed between the teachers and the community. The two groups had each, a class of its own. The teachers were looked upon by the communities as untouchables, intelligent and the know-it-all, while the teachers looked down upon communities as the know - nothing that always need to be told and guided.

Kaunda goes on to show that community participation in the management of schools in Malawi in the New Multi-party Democracy (1994 – 2004) was not as successful as one could expect. The new government introduced a policy aimed at reversing the previous regime's

autocratic and exclusivist rule that did not involve parents and the broader community in school management. Kaunda (2004:13) makes a startling revelation by stating that:

However, some overzealous politicians did not understand this policy. They still wanted to impress the communities and promised the moon to the people in their areas. The situation was aggravated by the fact that during multiparty campaigns rallies, the pro-multiparty groups branded any self-help (community participation) work as Thangata (slavery) and promised liberty if the people elected them into power. This temporarily killed the spirit of self-help (community participation) in the minds of the people.

This means that, parents as stakeholders, do not satisfactorily govern schools in Malawi because to be a member of SGB requires sacrifice and commitment, and in cases where the government promises to do everything for the people, they sit back and contribute minimally to school governance. The politicians had to rescind their campaign messages and the government involved the Non-Governmental Organizations to revitalize the school governing bodies, and the situation improved because parents participated meaningfully in school governance.

## **IVORY COAST AND GAMBIA**

Gilbert and Tounkana (in Kaunda, 2004:23) state that “community participation in school governance in Ivory Coast and Gambia is seriously hampered by poverty, illiteracy, lack of jobs for graduates and ignorance of the concept, free school”. In other words, if parents are illiterate they cannot contribute effectively to school governance because all duties such as those stipulated by SASA require capacity and expertise. Mothata and Mda (2000:79) write well by stating that “these and other duties require high levels of literacy and relevant expertise. The apparent problem is that where governing bodies lack such expertise governance is inhibited”.

Though the government must supply learning materials and build classrooms, this does not mean that parents should not contribute something to schools. Unfortunately, some parents and communities perceive free schooling or free education as freedom from responsibility in

school matters. Poverty has serious implications on the parental participation in school governance. These include, inter alia, low school enrolments, parents may lack time to attend to school matters because most of them do small jobs such as collecting and selling firewood, hunting, digging toilets holes, minor repairs to other households and many other trivial jobs related to the informal sector, in a bid to make ends meet. So, conflict of interests creeps in because the welfare of the family takes precedence over school (that is, community matters). Lack of jobs for graduates make some parents to lose interest in educational matters, and this hinders parental participation in school governance. Guskey and Peterson (1996:11) make a startling revelation when they mention that:

The lack of time and work commitments are possible constraining factors. The meaningful deliberations and carefully reasoned discussions about complex issues require considerable time, and the nature of commitments and the inflexibility of daily schedules do not always make this possible. Lack of expertise and poor education is another real problem in many schools, as are personal agendas of individual groupings that seem to take precedence over school interests.

Given the preceding discussion on the experiences of school governance in other countries, one realizes that may similar issues and challenges that arose in contexts where decentralization was favoured as a transformative approach to school governance, are closely related to the South African context for example, there is a lack of authentic parental participation in school governance because the right of parents to influence decisions in schools is not yet realized, lack of knowledge to execute their duties properly, and so forth.

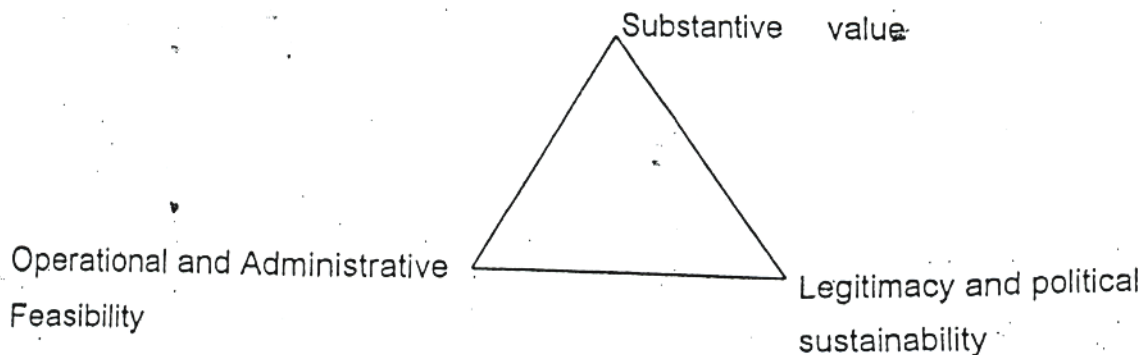
#### **4. MODELS OF PARTICIPATION**

All countries across the globe follow different models of parental participation in school governance and each particular model determines the success or failure of parental participation in the education of learners. The issue of models of participation is relevant in this study because, by highlighting different models of participation in school governance, one would be able to understand and analyze the merits and de-merits of the model that South Africa is following. It is, therefore, against this background that in this section the researcher highlighted four different types of models of participation in school governance, namely, Moore's strategic triangle, professional, advocacy and partnership models.

◆ **Moore's Strategic Triangle Model**

Moore (1995) states that "one way of achieving efficient and effective participation is by utilizing the cooperate strategy that the private sector uses in order to guide, create and sustain value to the institutions". Moore developed what is known as Moore's Strategic Triangle model as shown in the following diagram. He developed the model for the community participation in school governance in Malawi. (See diagram1 below)

**Diagram 1: Mark Moore's Strategic Triangle Model**



Moore's model emphasizes the need to address substantive values of clients. Substantive value means that the Ministry of Education formulates the community participation policy to address educational needs and value of parents and society as a whole. The School Management Committees and Parents Teachers Associations should ensure that they have the capacity to produce things of value to clients and beneficiaries at low cost in terms of money and authority.. Substantive value means the School Management Committees and Parents Teachers Association should ensure that they have the capacity to produce things of value to clients and beneficiaries (learners). This model can be used to improve school governance in SA schools in that the SGBs and SMTs can work together as a unit and thereby collectively or consensually improve the teaching and learning phenomenon, especially in black rural schools.

The other models of participation have been highlighted by other authors like Keith and Girling (1991:256-259), namely, professional/client model, advocacy and partnership models.



#### ◆ **Professional / client model**

The model resembles a seller/buyer relationship in the business world, where the seller sells goods to the buyer (customer). In the same way, according to this model, educators are regarded as professionals while learners and parents are treated as clients. The duty of educators as professionals is to transfer knowledge to their clients that is, learners and parents. This kind of interaction implies that the educators play a more active role as they transfer or sell their knowledge to clients while others clients are passive or are without any question when receiving knowledge from professionals (that is, educators). In this model the role of parents as legitimate partners and decision-makers in school matters is not acknowledged and therefore parents are relegated to the background.

#### ◆ **Advocacy model**

According to Keith and Girling (1991:256-259) this model, stakeholders' participation, and particularly parental participation, involves protecting or safe guarding decisions, which they feel, are against the interest of learners. The decision may range from employing educators, curriculum, and the use of funds and code of conduct for learners. This group does not attend school meetings at which issues that are in the interest or development of the community or school will be discussed, instead, it serves as a pressure group because they only participate when there are problems at school, or when there are issues that they feel will disadvantage learners and the community. For instance, when there is a meeting on rumours about misuse of funds or any kind of corruption, the group will come and participate in that meeting and from there they disappear until other problems surface or emanate. According to me this is not a good model because it is segregational and learner-centric in nature and does not take the interests of educators on board; the recipe which is ideal for both effective teaching and learning (not learning only).

#### ◆ **Partnership model**

According to this model, the principle of inclusivity must be seen as an indispensable element in public education where all stakeholders, namely parents, learners, educators and the broader community participate as partners. The model is what the SASA aims to achieve, namely, the inclusive decision making and democratic participation in education. Ngcongco

and Chatty (in Mda and Mothata, 2000:73) express the value of partnership model by stating that:

The basis for reconstructing the system of public education in a way that creates a partnership between government and the community, between the community and the school and between the school and its stakeholders.

It is related to what Cohen and Prusak (in Kaunda, 2004:7) refer to as social capital. They state that:

Social capital consists of the stock of the active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviours that bind the members of human networks and communities and make cooperative action possible.

However, there are challenges that are related to the adoption of this model. Paterson and Fataar (1997:2) highlight these challenges by stating that the participatory process is often flawed and only serves to maintain exploitation and exclusion of other partners. Currently, albeit without tangible success because of the challenges that cannot be ignored, the model that South Africa is following is the partnership model where the various stakeholders in a particular school are expected to work as partners in pursuit of a common goal: effective teaching and learning. I think this is an ideal model for the South African schools particularly in black rural schools where participatory democracy in schools have for many years been a white elephant.

## **5. CHALLENGES**

The challenges highlighted or mentioned hereunder are not exhaustive, but are just some challenges that the authors who conducted the studies on school governance have found. All these challenges impact on the functionality of the SGBs with regard to their core functions as stipulated in SASA.

### **◆ Participation**

Lewis and Naidoo (2004:5), Hale and Moorman, (2003:7), Fitzgerald (2000:1), and Carelse (2000:1) indicate that participation by parents is individualistic and sporadic, depending entirely on what principals allow them to do, their inputs are undermined by teachers serving in the SGBs. Parents are just there to contain parental discontent, but are not viewed by principals and teachers as being indispensable for advancing democratic decision making in schools. Principals and teachers chair SGB meetings in most schools in the rural areas, including Limpopo Province but most SGB chairpersons do not. The reasons given by principals and educators relate to incapacity due to low education or literacy level. Consequently, parents are relegated to the position of mere observers and are used like pawns in the chess game. The principal and educators manage the consultation process, but parents as stakeholders are not equal participants and decisions are not reached through consensus. Mda and Mothata (2000:73) express it well when they write that:

Representative symbols or tokenism, that involves stakeholders for merely show-casing a physical presence of stakeholders, are contrary to the principle of representativity and serve as a smokescreen for autocratic participation

### **◆ Representation**

The exact membership of governing bodies varies from one school to another, depending on the size and type of school. More than 90% of school in Kone Kwena area, for example, has enrolments of less than 600 learners and, therefore, according to the guidelines on the election of governing bodies, the membership of SGB of most schools qualify for seven (7) parents, two (2) educators and one (1) learner (in case of secondary schools), principal and two (2) or three (3) co-opted members. The term of office is three years for a member, other

than a learner. Clearly, the parents' representatives should outnumber other stakeholders and they are supposed to influence the decisions in the SGB meetings for the three years they spend in the SGB, however, the Report of the Ministerial Review Committee (2004:117) asserts that:

There are clear instances where the SGBs are not meeting the requirements of functionality. In the case studies, one school had operated without its chairperson for a period of 18 months with little attempts, it seemed, to replace him/her or call him/her to account. The other members had fallen by the wayside.

John (2004:3) writes that parents are not just made to feel welcome at our schools; they are expected to participate as actual partners in teaching and learning. In other words, they are not supposed to serve as rubber stamps of decisions at schools but they should be part of that decision –making process.

#### ◆ Election process

There are other problems that exacerbate hindrances to parental participation in school governance, which are related to the process of electing the SGB (parent component). The problems range from the lack of training of electoral officers, election procedures irregularities, parents attending election meeting that do not form quorums, lack of facilities and the cost of elections. Report on the 2003 School Governing Body elections (2004:20) highlights some issues and challenges related to the election process thus:

Poor management of the vetting of parents to ensure that they are all eligible to vote. Principals pretending to hold election meetings but in fact, either due to lack of community interest or due to contrived marginalisation of parents, handpick the SGB. None of the schools visited had made use of the proxy voting provision. This is likely so, because parents do not understand how it works. There are some problems that revolve around the definition of a parent used by different provinces and even within a province and it does apply.



A Report of the Ministerial Review Committee (2004:107) reveals that:

A third, (33%) of SGBs, claimed to have used constitutions developed between 1997 and 2000. Six percent of ex-DET schools did not have constitutions. Reasons provided, were that SGB's had been using the 'school policy' as their constitutions. It was unclear what was meant by 'school policy'.

◆ **Lack of expertise and capacity**

Most parents have a low level of literacy, and as such cannot contribute effectively on issues such as formulation and adoption of policies, namely, religious policies, admission policies, code of conduct of learners, SGB constitution, developing the mission statement recommendation and appointments of educators, drawing up a budget, fundraising and other functions as stipulated in SASA. Potgieter et al. (1997:14), highlight the lack of expertise and capacity by stating that: "these and other duties require high levels of literacy and relevant expertise. The apparent problem is that where governing bodies lack such expertise, governance is inhibited". On the other hand, Mothata and Mda (2000:79) write that: "the challenge to raise money by people without expertise, and often people living below the subsistence level, is indeed a daunting, if not an impossible task".

**The level of preparedness by partners to participate in school governance**

Hendricks (2000) states that school governance is an entirely new terrain for the vast majority of South African communities, so the changes have not all been plain sailing. The shift from the now defunct school committees to school governing bodies (Partnership model), found many parents, especially in black schools, being unprepared for such a demanding encounter. Participation per se may not be much of a problem, but participating as partners is quite a new terrain for many black parents. David (1996) mentions that school councils (governing bodies) are often made up of people who have previously never worked together as a group and who often have no experience in collaborative decision making. In many cases, members may in fact have a history of being adversaries, that is, rivalry between groups and conflict of interests. There is always suspicion and uneasy relationships in such settings. They still feel unfree to raise some suggestions during SGB meetings; they still regard themselves as possessing little or no knowledge at all. According to them

(parents), teachers and principals are better placed to participate as partners than themselves. Consequently educators take the most decisions in the school governing body meetings. The researcher thinks Lewis and Naidoo (2004:7) are right when they state that, most stakeholders tend to accept roles defined for them and do not integrate the prevailing discourse of participation. McDermott (1999) states that such participation defines certain boundaries that ensures a more passive role for parents and learners

#### ◆ **Role confusion and conflicts in school governance**

There are implementation difficulties that seem to emanate from various stakeholders within the SGBs. In some schools, SMTs and the SGBs cannot draw a clear distinction between their roles. According Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (2004:83), this is particularly the case in schools where SGB chairpersons are more educated, or are perceived to be of higher social standing, than the educators and the principals at the schools. Lewis and Naidoo (2004:80) highlight role confusion by stating that:

The 2003 Annual Emis Survey indicates that the SGB does not understand the role that it should play. There is a general confusion about the roles of the governance and management structures in the school and this confusion has led to tension and conflict. Training can rectify this confusion.

#### ◆ **Lack of community participation**

This challenge is most prevalent in black schools where community representativeness is lacking. Most parents are not interested in school matters and they normally do not attend meetings. In some cases, the principal sent learners home to “fetch” or come along with their parents, but still, very few parents attend. And in many cases, parents who attend do not form a quorum and the meeting is called off.

It should be noted that in most rural areas, there are no job opportunities, and as such parents are working in other provinces like Gauteng. As a result, most of the learners stay alone at home or with their grandmothers or guardians who are very old to attend meetings. The involvement of the broader community is uncommon in most school, particularly in rural school. These SGBs have the powers to co-opt some individuals from the community who

have skills and can help in the functioning of the SGB. The Ministerial Review Committee (2004:96) spells it out by indicating that:

There are many other formations, whose input into the SGB activities would be crucial, but does not appear to happen often enough. These include trade unions, traditional and local authorities and other civil society structures.

◆ **Lack of incentives**

There are some complaints from most parents in the SGBs, especially in poorer rural areas regarding the remuneration or recognition of their service. It is a challenge because it concerns the incentives that can be introduced in the education system to attract stakeholders, particularly those with expertise to serve in the SGBs. Currently, most SGBs in the black schools complain about the use of their time and energy to pursue the interests of the government and their communities at the expense of their families. They add that they sometimes encounter allegations from the parents that they misuse school funds.

◆ **Dissemination of information by the department of education**

The content in this section is drawn from my twenty years of experience as an educator: The partnership model as indicated in the preceding paragraphs, involves the Department of Education, and the way the information is disseminated to the schools, is another challenge facing the school governing bodies nationally. The DoE use circulars, electronic media like radio, and public meetings to disseminate information to schools. This presents a challenge because this mode of disseminating information is not as effective as it has to be. There are some problems relating to it, namely, circulars and other documents may not reach the school on time, stakeholders may not be listening to the radio at the time a department's official was talking over the radio, or might not even be owning one, or are not interested in listening to the radio at all. In some instances, the principal does not allow access to the documents sent by the DoE; consequently the SGB members may miss some important information



◆ **The economic, political and social system of the country**

The school does not operate in a vacuum; therefore, the economic, political and social systems affect the governance system. For example, Mda and Mothata (2000:980) state that “the decline in economic resources, unemployment and poverty do not only affect the immediate community in which they occur, but they also have a bearing in effective school governance and management”.

The gap between the haves and the have-nots (that is, rich and poor) sometimes becomes a determining factor of the SGB. I noticed that in some villages in Limpopo Province, a businessman in the village is often elected to be the chairperson of both primary and secondary schools. He is not elected on the basis of his leadership potential, but is only elected because he is rich. In most SGB meetings, his opinions, although are not always constructive, are just accepted by the poor members of the SGB.

The political set up of the country that is, government policies, and impact on the partnership that is needed to improve school governance. So, parental and community participation in school governance depend on sound educational policies that the government make. The denial of fundamental human rights, incompetent and populist political leaders, lack of real empowerment and widespread corruption can have negative effects on school governance, Landell, Mills and Serageldin (in Kaunda, 2004:24) express it well when they state that: “since community participation is about empowerment, let it be mentioned that empowerment neither will nor assure better governance unless the responsible public agencies are competent”.

In the light of this statement, devolution of power to schools without relevant skills and competence by the authorities can perpetuate a mere tokenism or symbolism of democracy without meaningful participation. Cleaver (1999) sums it up by stating that the evidence for empowerment and democratization is often partial, tenuous and reliant on the rightness of the approach rather than on proof of outcome.



Furthermore, the social system and culture, i.e., the values and traditions, sexism and others can perpetuate unequal relationships and this affect the management of the school during SGB meetings. For example, in most SGBs, males dominate females in terms of membership and most SGB chairpersons are men. This stems from the African belief that women cannot be leaders, and that is the reason why most women do not participate actively during SGB meetings. So, the issues of gender differences are also a challenge to the partnership model as enshrined in the South African Schools Act of (1996).

## **6. SUMMARY**

This chapter covered the literature review that the researcher has undertaken with a view to build a theoretical framework on the challenges that face parental participation in school governance. The literature review showed that devolution of power from the center to the periphery that is, from the education authorities or policy makers to the school sites in other countries, has not been a plain sailing exercise, but was faced with a number of challenges. These include amongst others, lack of authentic participatory democracy, that is, the school governors do not influence decision in key areas of school matters such as curriculum change, employment of educators and other crucial matters, but were limited to discussions on new playground equipment, the appearance of a school building, a need for new stop signs to assist pupils in crossing busy streets, and so forth. The researcher found that all countries across the globe follow different models of parental participation in school governance and each particular model determines the success or failure of parental participation in the education of learners. The models include, Moore's strategic triangle, professional/client, advocacy and partnership models. Whilst on the one hand, the ideal to achieve authentic participatory democracy is cherished by most countries across the globe, unfortunately, on the other hand, there are a number of concomitant challenges to this ideal. These include amongst others; lack of expertise and capacity, rigging of elections of SGB members, lack of incentives poor participation and representation in governance structures, and so forth. The education policies and scenarios in South Africa show a remarkable congruence with international trends. Consequently these experiences can serve as a springboard for the successful educational transforms (vis-à-vis parental participation in school governance) in South Africa.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter is about the research methodology that the researcher has employed in this study. It covers the definition of concepts such as methodology, method and research methodology. The researcher discussed the differences between the two approaches to research namely, the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, the various research designs and also indicated the reasons why the he chose the qualitative approach and the case study design. The researcher discussed various types of sampling techniques and also gave the reasons why the he chose the purposive sampling technique to select participants from the population. The two methods of data collection that the researcher used, namely, unstructured one-on-one interview and document analysis, data collection procedure, ethical considerations, limitation of the study and data analysis also forms part of this chapter. Lastly, the researcher has included the profiles of the schools where the study was conducted in order to enable the reader to visualize them.

#### 3.2. Methodology

According to Leedy (1993:137), a method is a word coined of two Greek elements: *meth*-and *odos*. The *meth* is an element meaning “after”, *odos* means” way”. A method is, therefore, a following after the way that someone found to be effective in solving a problem, of reaching an objective, in getting up a job done. *Ology* means” the study of”. Hence the term methodology is the study of a particular method, or methods, for reaching a desired end. Mouton (1998:36) states:

That the term method refers to a higher level of abstraction of research means, the term research methods refers to the means required to execute a certain stage in the research process and methods include classes of techniques, skills and instruments

Cohen and Marion (in Ndlovu, 2000:14) define research methodology as a range of approaches used to gather data, which are used as a basis for inference and interpretation,

for explanation and prediction. Research methodology refers to the means, methods techniques, skills and instruments that the researcher used to collect data or gather information from the fifteen participants in the schools that the researcher selected for the study. Leedy (1993:139) states that:

All research methodology rests upon a bedrock axiom: the nature of the data dictates the methodology. If the data are verbal, the methodology is qualitative, if it is numerical, the methodology is quantitative. There is of course, an alternative to this strict dichotomy. It consists of a hybrid variation, discussed in the literature under the designation of triangulation. All research methodologies can be classified under one of these categories.

Neuman (1997:30) puts it well by stating that every researcher collects data using one or more techniques. The techniques may be grouped into two categories: the quantitative, collecting data in the form of numbers, and qualitative, collecting data in the form of words or pictures. De Vos, Strydom, Fourche, and Delport (1998:249) write vividly when they state that “at present there are two well-known and recognized approaches to research, namely the qualitative paradigm and the quantitative paradigm”.

- **The qualitative approach**

Creswell (1994:02) defines qualitative approach as an enquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views and informants and conducted in a natural setting. De Vos et al. (1998:242) elaborate on the qualitative approach by stating that a qualitative research is used to answer questions about the nature of the phenomena with a purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena or problems from the participant’s own written or spoken words that is, it uses an emic perspective of enquiry whereby the researcher derives meaning from the subject’s perspective. A qualitative researcher is subjective because he or she interacts with the participants (subjects), it uses an inductive form of reasoning: develops concepts, insights and understanding in the data. The approach is dialectical, interpretive and idiographic (contextualizing). Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs and categories.



concepts, insights and understanding in the data. The approach is dialectical, interpretive and idiographic (contextualizing). Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs and categories.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:273) state that the emphasis is on developing and building inductively based new interpretations and theories of first order descriptions of events, rather than approaching the social actors with deductively derived research hypotheses. Mouton (1998:77) states that “in an inductive argument, genuine supporting evidence as expressed in the premises, can only lead to highly probable conclusions”. In other words, in an inductive argument, supporting statements merely lend gradual support to the conclusion(s). Neuman (1997:329) identifies the characteristics of the qualitative approach: it follows a more non-linear and cyclical path than quantitative approach, the qualitative style constructs social reality and cultural meaning, authenticity is the key, values are present and explicit, is situationally constrained, investigates few cases, data are in the form of words from documents, observations and transcripts, analyses themes and the researcher is fully involved that is interact with the informants throughout the research process.

- **The quantitative approach**

Fraenkel and Wallen (1996:442) state that quantitative research investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials”. According to De Vos et al. (1998:243), the quantitative research is a deductive form of reasoning: collects data to assess preconceived models, hypotheses and theories. It uses an ectic perspective, that is, the researcher determines the meaning. It is based on positivism, which takes scientific explanation to be nomothetic that is, based on universal laws and aims to objectively measure the social world, to test hypotheses, and to predict and control human behaviour. In other words, human behaviour can be explained in a causal deterministic ways.

Authors such as Babbie and Mouton (2001: 272) state that nomothetic studies ultimately aim at generalizing their results to larger populations and other settings. Neuman (1997:14) goes further to highlight the characteristics of the quantitative approach by stating that the focus of research is on variables; reliability is the key feature in quantitative research, it investigates many cases or subjects, unlike qualitative approach where data is analyzed by identifying



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A set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing a research problem. The main function of a research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to maximize the validity of the eventual results.

There are various types of research designs used in quantitative and qualitative studies. Neuman (1997:18) indicates that before a researcher conducts a research project, he or she must decide on a specific type of research design. By understanding the dimensions of research, you will be better prepared to make such decisions.

### **Quantitative research designs**

According to Babbie (1992:235) and Neuman (1997:33), the quantitative research approach uses experiments, surveys, content analysis, and existing statistics. These authors indicate that social scientists use experiments that is, the logic and principles that are used in the natural sciences and they are better-suited or effective in explanatory research. A survey research involves asking people questions in written questionnaires, through face-to-face interviews or telephonically. Content analysis is a social research technique that is appropriate for examining information or content in written or symbolic materials, for example; books, magazines, poems, speeches, letters constitutions, laws, and films. In existing statistics, researchers undertake social scientific enquiry by locating a source of previously collected information. Governments and a variety of private organizations regularly compile great masses of data such as reports or previously conducted surveys.

- **Qualitative research designs**

Babbie and Mouton (2001:279) highlight three qualitative research designs namely; ethnographic studies, case studies and life histories. The authors describe ethnography as the data of cultural anthropology that is derived from the direct observation of behaviour in a particular society. Handel (in Babbie and Mouton, 2001:281) defines a case study as an intensive/in-depth investigation of a single unit. Leedy (2001:157) states that “the purpose of a case study is to understand one-person situation or perhaps a very small number of cases in great depth. The focus is on one case or a few cases within its/their natural setting. It uses

observations, interviews, written documents and/or audiovisual material as methods of data collection. The methods of data analysis used in case studies are categorization and interpretation of data in terms of common themes, and synthesis into an overall portrait of the case(s)". Plummer (in Babbie and Mouton, 2001:) defines life history research as "the full length book account of one person's life in his or her own words usually gathered over a number of years with gentle guidance from the social scientists, the subject either writing down episodes of life or tape-recording them".

- **The reasons why the researcher chose the case study design**

The researcher has chosen the case study design because through this design the researcher was able to select and investigate few schools in depth (three schools and fifteen respondents), understand and describe in details the challenges that face parental participation in school governance. In addition, the researcher was able to give recommendations that would improve parental participation in school governance. Babbie and Mouton (2001:281) identified *studies of organizations and institutions* as one of the types of case study. They describe *studies of organizations and institutions* as "typical or relevant in business and management studies, where the focus is on a firm, company, corporation, a trade union and so forth. It includes studies of best practices, policy implementation and evaluation, human resource practices, management and organizational issues, organizational culture, process of change, and re-engineering and others". The South African government expected all the SGBs to implement the policies on school governance as enshrined in SASA. It is therefore, against this background that the researcher chose a case study design to understand and describe the challenges that face policy implementation (SASA) that is, whether parents participate in school governance as expected or not.



### 3.4. Sampling

- **Population**

Various authors such as Babbie (1992:198), Mouton (1998:134), Leedy (1997:204), De Vos et al. (1998: 190), and Bless and Highson-Smith (2000:85) define a population as individuals, group or Institutions, events or all potential participants who possess the specific characteristics or attributes in which the researcher is interested, that is, the aggregation of elements from which the sample is selected. The characteristics of the population in the present study are all schools in the former Department of Education and Training (DET) where the first SGBs were elected in 1997 and are expected to operate within the framework of the South African Schools Act (SA, 1996). The schools are all in the rural area of the Limpopo Province. Neumann (1997:203) states that the term target population refers to the pool of cases that the researcher wants to study. In the light of this definition, the target population for this study was educators, SGB members, parents, principals and learners in the Kone Kwena Schools.

A sample is a portion of the informants taken from the larger population. Leedy (1993:200) indicates that there are two major categories of sampling, namely, non-probability sampling and probability sampling. In non-probability sampling, there is no estimating or guaranteeing that each element in the population will be represented in the sample. According to Neuman (1997:204), there is a number of sampling strategies or types in non-probability sampling namely, haphazard, accidental or convenience sampling that selects anyone who is convenient. The quota sampling selects anyone in predetermined groups, snowball sampling (also called network, chain referral or reputational sampling) is a method used to identify and select people connected to one another. The purposive or judgmental sampling occurs when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth study. The purpose is less to generalize to a larger population than it is to gain a deeper of types or phenomena. In order for the researcher to get participants from the larger population, the researcher chose the purposive sampling technique because the researcher wanted to identify and select few schools in Kone Kwena area for an in-depth study of parental participation in school governance. Babbie and Mouton (2001:288) are more elaborative on purposive sampling when they state that "in fact, samplings in studies where qualitative methods are used, are



always by means of purposeful sampling". Therefore, in the light of the explanation above, the researcher selected one (1) SGB teacher component, two (2) parents (where one parent was the chairperson) from the SGB, one (1) Learner Representative Council (LRC) and the principal from each school under investigation (that is, a total of 15 participants).

#### **4. Data Collection**

Two methods of data collection were used, namely, unstructured one-on-one interview and document analysis. De Vos et al., (2002:298), state that at the root of unstructured interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. The researcher analysed the following relevant documents: Circulars from DoE regarding the election of the SGB, minutes of parents and SGB meetings. The researcher interviewed a total of fifteen (15) respondents between 16 August and 22 August 2005 in order to understand each respondent's experience, meaning and point of view, in relation to the challenges that are faced by parental participation in school governance.

##### **4.1. Data Collection Procedure (s)**

To facilitate the data collection process, the researcher requested permission from Vlakfontein circuit office manageress in Kone kwena area office in writing to conduct the study at the schools. The researcher was given permission to visit the school principals to make arrangements to interview the 5 respondents attached to each school. The researcher also requested principals that if permission is granted it should be done in writing. However, all principals said that permission from the circuit manager is sufficient and that the researcher was allowed to conduct research at the schools. The interviews were conducted in two languages, namely, Sepedi for the SGB parent components (because all of them could not speak English due to their low literacy level) and English for the educators. The researcher got a verbal consent from all the participants to use the tape recorder to capture information that the researcher would otherwise forget, because the researcher ensured them anonymity and confidentiality.

The researcher requested the principals to organize a special classroom for that purpose to avoid any disturbances and to create an atmosphere that was conducive to making the respondents feel free to express their views. De Vos et al. (2002:301) suggest that unstructured interview can be exhausting and should not continue for more than an hour. Hence the researcher spent approximately 50 minutes with each respondent. In the light of this, the researcher finished the interviews at each school within a day. The researcher was taking some notes during the whole process because the researcher was asking some open-ended questions.

#### **4.2. Ethical considerations**

Neuman (1997:443) states that ethics define what is or is not legitimate to do, or what moral research procedure involves. Therefore, on the basis of this, the researcher considered all the ethical principles of research, namely, voluntary participation, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, avoiding deceiving the subjects and causing no emotional harm to the participants. To avoid emotional harm to the respondents the researcher showed love and sympathy to some of them who could not hear the questions well during the interviews, for example, the researcher repeated some questions several times. The researcher sought permission from the respondents to make use of the tape recorder and still assured them confidentiality and anonymity. Lastly, the researcher, consistent with the aim of the study, ensured them that the results of the study would be sent to the schools under investigation and would be discussed through the debriefing process only after the university approves the dissertation. The driving goal was to have practical payoffs or uses of the results by the parents and the school on which the study was conducted. The Kone Kwena area office would also receive a copy of the dissertation.

#### **4.3. Limitation of the study**

The study was nearly hampered by a number of factors, namely, commitments from the respondents particularly parents, for example, the researcher struggled to find the chairperson of school A because he was busy with the funeral arrangements of one his close relative. Educators were busy with both preparatory examinations in all grades and the computation of continuous assessment marks (CASS) for the Grade 12 learners.

## **5. Data Analysis**

According to Charles (1995:118) the purpose of data analysis is to describe the data clearly, identify what is typical and atypical of the data, bring to light differences, relationships and other patterns existing in the data; and ultimately answer research questions or test hypotheses". Babbie (1989:278) defines data analysis as how one observes and formulates ones analytical conclusions on the basis of the data collected. A researcher interprets the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the topic or problem under investigation. The researcher's analytical procedure was done in the following manner: Firstly, the researcher organized data and read all the respondents' answers then identified categories, that is, bigger sub-themes such as consensual decision making, involvement of the broader community, eligibility and election processes, incentives and others. These categories helped the researcher to understand what the respondents thought about the challenges they face in their participation in school governance.

Secondly, the researcher identified the patterns that is, the relationships among categories as they emerge from the data, for example, the relationship between the level of education of parents and the expected execution of their duties, the relationship between incentives and the willingness to serve in the SGB. Lastly, the researcher quoted the interview statements when the he discussed the results.

## **6. Profiles of the schools**

### **SCHOOL A**

The school is a public school that was established in 1977. It is approximately 54km west of the city of Polokwane and situated between two villages in the rural area of Ga- Matlala and falls under Aganang municipality. It falls under the educational jurisdiction of Capricorn District, in the Vlakfontein Circuit, Kone Kwena Area in the Limpopo Province. It is graded as S3<sup>1</sup> (secondary school) and classified under quintile 2<sup>2</sup> of the poverty level. The enrolment of

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<sup>1</sup>. According to the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 chapter A Section 2 (2.6), the rank (post level) of the head of an institution is determined in terms of the grading of the institution which is in accordance with the

the school (with Grades 8-12) at the day of the interviews was 490 and is offering commercial, science and general streams. The school has a total of 13 educators (that is, one principal, two heads of departments and ten educators). The SGB is composed of a total of 9 members that, is 6 parent components, 2 educators and the principal. There are no co-opted members. The school has no libraries, no electricity and no reliable water supply system. The enrolment of the school is at 490 and most adults in the area are unemployed, illiterate and poor.

### **SCHOOL B**

The school is a public school that was established in 1987. It is approximately 50km west of the city of Polokwane and situated in the rural area of Ga- Matlala and falls under Aganang municipality. It falls under the educational jurisdiction of the Capricorn District, in the Vlakfontein Circuit, Kone Kwena Area in the Limpopo Province. It is graded as (secondary school) and classified under Quintile2 of the poverty level. The enrolment of the school (with Grades 8-12), on the day of the interviews, was 310 and is offering commercial and science streams. The school has a total of 10 educators (that is, one principal, one head of department and eight educators). The SGB is composed of a total of 9 members (that, is 5 parent components, 2 educators, non- educator staff and the principal). There are no co-opted members. The school has no libraries, no electricity and no reliable water supply system. The enrolment of the school is at 310 and most adults in the area are unemployed, illiterate and poor.

### **SCHOOL C**

The school is a public school that was established in 1979. It is approximately 58km west of the city of Polokwane and situated in the rural area of Ga- Matlala and falls under Aganang municipality. It falls under the educational jurisdiction of the Capricorn District, in the Vlakfontein Circuit, Kone Kwena Area in the Limpopo Province. It is graded as S3 (secondary school) and classified under Quintile 2 of the poverty level. The enrolment of the school (with Grades 8-12) at the day of the interviews was 250 and is offering general and science

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number of learners in the institution: secondary schools with number of learners fewer than 630 are graded as S3 schools and those with more than 630 learners are graded as S4 schools.

<sup>2</sup>. The Department of Education has categorized school according the poverty levels (quintiles) that range from 1 to 4. Quintile1 schools are the poorest, while quintile 4 schools are the least poor school (comparatively).



streams. The school has a total of 10 educators (that is, one principal, two heads of departments and eight educators). The SGB is composed of a total of 7 members (that, is 4 parent components, 2 educators and the principal). There are no co-opted members. The school has no libraries, no electricity and no reliable water supply system. The enrolment of the school is at 250 and most adults in the area are unemployed, illiterate and poor.

## **7. SUMMARY**

The chapter covered the exposition on the research method that the researcher used in the study. The researcher started by discussing the definition of concepts such as methodology, method and research methodology, and then went on to discuss the differences between the two approaches to research namely, the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, and the various research designs and also indicated the reasons why he chose the qualitative approach and the case study design. The researcher discussed various types of sampling techniques and also gave the reasons why he chose the purposive sampling technique to select participants from the population. The researcher spelled out the two methods of data collection that he used, namely, unstructured one-on-one interview and document analysis, data collection and the procedures that he followed ethical considerations and limitations of the study. In the data analysis section the researcher gave a concise explanation on how the coding process and the development of categories and themes were done. In the last section of the chapter, the researcher has included the profiles of the schools where the study was conducted in order to enable the reader to have their picture in mind.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter is about the results or findings (information) of the entire research process that the researcher gathered from the participants, that is, from the SGB members, namely, parents, learners (LRC representatives), educators and principals, with regard to the participation of parents in school governance. In other words, it covers all their opinions and experiences (see table 1) regarding the election and eligibility of parents as school governors, functions and powers of school governors and the role of principals vis- a- vis those functions, participation of parents during SGB meetings, replacement of deceased members, and so forth. Lastly, the researcher has included the results from documents that he analyzed; namely, the PDE's circular on the election of SGBs, the Provincial Gazette of Northern Province regarding the number of parent components in the SGBs and minutes of parents' meeting.

Table1: The respondents' views on parental participation in school governance.

THEMES	RESPONDENTS	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C
Parental participation	Parent 1	Parents are not willing to participate in school governance because if we invite them to meetings only few parents attend.	No effective participation in school governance because when we call them for meeting only few parents attends.	This is a big problem because sometimes only five women attend meetings organised by us. They don't want to participate in school matters. I can't tell why they don't attend these meetings but maybe they just shirk their responsibility.
	Parent 2	Parental participation is not satisfactory because if we call them to parents' meeting they don't come, sometimes only a few attend.	They do not participate satisfactorily because they do not attend meetings. Sometimes we inform them 14 days before the meeting and even send learners to fetch them but still they do not come.	Parents are not willing to participate in school governance because they fail to attend meetings for elections of SGB and I don't know the reasons why.
	Learner	Our parents are not willing to participate in school governance because if the SGB call them for meetings only few come.	They do not participate effectively because they do not attend meetings.	They do not participate effectively because I see a few of them only at the beginning of the year and from there they disappear. The reason might be the lack of zeal for the education of their children.
	Teacher	Parents are afraid to participate in school governance because when we as the SGB call them for meetings they do not attend satisfactorily.	They are afraid to participate in school governance because they do not attend meetings. For example, in the last meeting, only 12 parents out an enrolment of approximately 300 learners, attended.	Their participation is not satisfactory because they don't attend elections meetings sometimes only 10 of them attend meetings but our learner enrolment is more than 250. I don't know the reason, maybe they just undermine this school.

	<b>Principal</b>	They are not participating in school governance because those who attend meetings are very few. Most parents work in Gauteng and only few old men and women (pensioners) attend school meetings.	Parents as stakeholders are not participating at all. They are doing nothing at all. Despite writing letters and sending learners to fetch them for meetings, they do not come. I do not see any participation at all.	They don't want to participate in school governance because they don't attend meetings. Maybe the reason is that most parents of these learners are young and are working or looking for jobs in Gauteng and only the grandmothers and grandfathers remain at home and those cannot come.
<b>Number of Parent Components in the SGB</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	They are six in number, four men and two women.	If I am not mistaken, they are six in number.	We are currently four, two men and two women because the treasurer passed away in April and is not yet replaced because parents don't attend meetings.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	We are seven in number, I think there are four men and three women.	We were seven, but two of us passed away in May this year, and they are not replaced as yet.	We were initially five but the treasurer has passed away in April this year and to date is not replaced because parents fail to attend meeting called by the SGB. So, presently, I am both the secretary and the treasurer.
	<b>Learner</b>	The parent components are six in number, four men and two women.	They were seven in number but now they are five the other two have passed away in May this year.	They were five but one has passed way in April and is not yet replaced because of poor attendance by parents.
	<b>Teacher</b>	They might be five; I am not sure at this stage.	We had seven and two died in May but now we are left with only five. They are not replaced because as I told you earlier on parents do not come for election meetings.	They are four, two men and two women. Our treasurer has passed away in April and is not replaced because of poor attendance by parents.
	<b>Principal</b>	They are six, four men and two women	They were initially seven but two passed away in May this year and are not replaced thus far. We have only reshuffled the positions because of poor attendance of parents.	There are presently four parents because the fifth one has passed away and is not replaced because parents do not want to come to meetings, so we have, thus far, not held elections.



Election and eligibility of parents as school governors	<b>Parent 1</b>	Only parents or grandmothers and grandfathers who reside at this village are elected. We do not use ballots but we raise up our hands to elect them. Teachers conduct elections Gender equity is not considered because we elect among those who will be available.	All parents of this village are eligible. Teachers conduct elections. We make use of hand to elect them. We do not consider gender equity.	Only parents of the learners are elected. Teachers conduct elections and we use the raising up of hand to elect, we don't use ballot papers. We also consider gender equity where possible.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	We elect every parent who resides in this village. Teachers conduct the elections and we raise up our hands to elect these few parents who shall have attended	We elect only those parents whose learners attend school here. Educators conduct elections and we raise up our hands to elect, not ballot papers. Gender equity is not considered at all because we elect those who are available.	We elect parents who live at this village. Teacher's conduct the elections and we raise up our hands to elect. Men are always in the forefront and women are always at the back. But as I told you, only few attend these
	<b>Learner</b>	The present SGB members have children at this school, But they also elect other parents whose children do not attend school here. We do not use ballot papers but make use of hands. Teachers conduct these elections.	Only parents whose learners attend school here are elected. Teachers are responsible for the election process. We raise up our hands to elect. The question of gender is not important; we elect those who are present that day.	They normally elect parents whose children attend school here. Teachers conduct elections and they make use hands to elect.
	<b>Teacher</b>	Only parents of learners are elected. We do not even co-opt other parents whose children do not attend school here. The principal and other teachers always conduct these elections. We make use of hands to elect. I think they elect those who are available	We elect the parents of learners and guardians as well. They just elect anybody who might be available on the day of election; they do not consider the capacity of that individual. Teachers conduct the elections. They raise up their hands to elect not ballots.	According to SASA, only parents of the learners must be elected but because they don't come to meetings, we just elect any parent. We as teachers conduct elections

	<b>Principal</b>	Normally, parents whose learners attend school are elected, but sometimes they co-opt other parents whose children are not learners here.	Only parents of the learners, as stipulated by SASA, should be elected, but because they do not attend meetings, we elect those who are available. Teachers conduct these elections. The ballot papers are still not clear to them so we resort to the raising up of hands. They normally elect a person who seems to be active.	Parents of learners should be elected according to SASA, but because of their poor attendance we have no option but to elect any parent who will be present.
<b>Functions and responsibilities of the School Governors</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	We look at the finances of the school. We check if there is money for stationery. We also maintain buildings.	Our duty is to take care of school buildings; Budgeting is the responsibility of teachers. Teachers do the code of conduct and other policies, and they tell us what they have done. We are present when teachers are interviewed for posts at school, but because our teachers know English they interview them.	We support teachers in their work. Teachers draw budgets, conduct interviews when there are new posts and make laws for our children and during SGB meetings they show us what they have done.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	We check the windows and rafters of school buildings.	Our duty is to invite parents to meetings, and we are never told anything about budgeting. Teachers carry out the other duties concerning learners.	Our teachers and us work together. We don't draw the budgets and other school policies and code of conduct for learners, teachers do all these and they will show us in our meetings.
	<b>Learner</b>	They help to repair broken window panes and doors	They see to it that windows and doors are not broken and I think that is their main job. Budgeting hiring of teachers and other policies are done by teachers	The parent components do not know their duties. The reason might be that teachers have not explained these duties thoroughly to them. They cannot draw budget or our code of conduct because most of them are not educated.



	<b>Teacher</b>	I think it is only the chairperson who understands the duties of SGB but the rest are just in the dark.	They are doing nothing because most of them cannot read and write. We just do everything for them. So just forget about interviewing candidates for new posts, budgeting etc. We as teachers do the spade work and later on show them and they will just say it is ok.	They don't have the capacity at all because of their level of education. We do all their duties. The treasurer would just come and sign, but they do not want to be involved in financial matters, e.g., we do monthly financial statements.
	<b>Principal</b>	The principal and teachers always come with the initiative. From the parents side there is totally nothing, and we just do everything.	Most of them are illiterate and hence cannot do anything on their own, e.g., drawing up a budget or interview candidates for appointments. We do everything and they append them signature. They still need a lot of training with regard to many of their responsibilities of functions	They don't know their duties because of lack of education, so they depend on us for direction and execution of their duties. All these functions stipulated by SASA need capacity.
<b>Participation of parent-components during SGB meetings</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	Some members will not attend a single SGB meetings after being elected and do not even give us reasons. Most of the time is teachers and myself alone who talk. The principal chairs meetings	I think all of us take part during meetings	I think we are contributing during meetings. The principal always chairs the meetings and he guides us very well. The teacher takes minutes of meeting.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	We all participate in the decision-making but the teachers help us a lot because they even chair our meetings.	I think all of us take part during meetings	We all participate, no one is passive. Te principal conducts the meetings, the teacher takes minutes of every meetings.
	<b>Learner</b>	As far as I am concerned, I think they take part during meetings. Teachers chair all the SGB meetings.	Most of them do not say anything during meetings but teachers dominate the proceedings.	They don't contribute anything during meetings. They depend on teachers' initiatives or inputs. The principal always chairs the meeting.
	<b>Teacher</b>	Only the chairperson participate during meetings others, as I said earlier on, do not know their responsibilities.	Chairperson could say some things during meetings but others just keep quiet and the teachers and principal dominates the whole meetings.	They are just passive, they only come to listen to what the principal and teachers say, but they won't come with constructive suggestions

	<b>Principal</b>	They are passive and are only activated by us educators. They just wait and listen to what we say.	Only four of them can give their views, but the rest are just passive.	They don't take an active part during meetings; we as teachers do most of the spawework, and we draw the agenda, take minutes and chair the meetings.
<b>Distinction between professional management and school governance</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	We stick to our duties and teachers also do their job.	Teachers are knowledgeable, as such they know the laws, and they guide us in these matters.	The principal has his duty and we have our duty. The issue of the school fees is the responsibility of parents and teachers.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	We know our duties and teachers also know theirs.	We consult the principal in all cases to avoid confusion	We know our duties and teachers also know theirs. If there are people who want to use the school hall, it is the responsibility of teachers and they'll tell us later in the meeting.
	<b>Learner</b>	The Principal usually deals with learners and the parents' concentrate on school buildings.	The teachers and parents do one and the same thing. They agree on whatever they do.	They don't see any difference between their roles and the roles of teachers.
	<b>Teacher</b>	There is always a conflict between these parents and the principal because of role confusion.	They can't distinguish between the two, sometimes the principal reminds them of their duties because they can't do anything on their own.	They can't differentiate between those roles. We just work and do everything to avoid confusion.
	<b>Principal</b>	If you do not want things to go wrong, you as the principal, you should overlap to school governance. They can't differentiate between the two; in fact it is just theoretical because the principal must always overlap to school governance.	They don't know their duties, I always overlap and do their job, and otherwise the school will come to a standstill.	As I said earlier, all these people are not educated and therefore cannot budge on such matters. They only know about repairing windows and that is all.



<b>Participation of Broader Community in School Governance</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	They contribute nothing at all, let alone coming to meetings. They concentrate only on their business.	They contribute nothing to school. They don't even attend parents' meeting.	Those contribute nothing to school governance. They don't even attend our meetings.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	Those despise us as the SGB members, the school, and teachers. They contribute nothing towards the school governance. I have never seen one of them here.	Those care only about their business; they contribute nothing to the school, let alone coming to meetings.	Since I served in the SGB for the past two years I did not see any of them coming to meetings. They do nothing for the school.
	<b>Learner</b>	The school belongs to two villages but still no one of business people came to school.	Those do nothing for us as the SGB; they not even attend parents meeting.	They contribute nothing to school governance, they only concentrate on their businesses.
	<b>Teacher</b>	We made several attempts to elicit help from them, but with no success.	Those care only about their business; they contribute nothing for the school, let alone coming to meetings. Sometimes the Induna or the headman conveys the message to parents about meetings that is all he does.	They don't attend meetings, despite the fact that we invite them on time. They contribute nothing to school governance.
	<b>Principal</b>	These people come only if there is a financial gain or other interest. But they may participate in other schools but not in their village.	Those contribute nothing for example now the Indians and the Malaysians have taken over many black business, so there is no hope.	Forget about those people, they don't participate at all. We don't even feel their presence in the community.
<b>Incentives</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	We just volunteer, we do not receive anything for our service. My term is about to expire, and I won't stand for elections anymore	There are no incentives, this is discouraging us and we need payment.	The government gives us nothing as incentives. I think the government and the school must give us something like money to show that they appreciate our service.

	<b>Parent 2</b>	<p>We do not get anything for our sacrifice. I wish that the government can feel pity for us and pay us. We sacrifice our time and family matters to attend to school matters for nothing, because even the community does not support us.</p> <p>They do not receive anything and this discourages them. I think they should receive something like certificates.</p> <p>They get nothing because this is a voluntary service. The government should give them something like money, cellular phones and so on.</p>	<p>We work for nothing and this makes many parents to be unwilling to participate in governance. We need money otherwise, I won't volunteer any more. Government must pay us just like it is paying teachers.</p> <p>Currently, our parents get nothing to encourage them to work; I think they need some certificates as a form of recognition to their job.</p> <p>They get nothing as incentives and this is really discouraging them and also other parents.</p> <p>The government just uses them for nothing, I think they must give them at least R2 500.00 per month and this will encourage them to participate in school governance.</p> <p>They use letters to communicate with us; they never came to school to talk to us. I saw one of them only once and I was told that there were some interviews at school.</p> <p>The DoE uses circulars to disseminate information to us. Sometimes they talk to us through the radio. I served in the SGB for the past two years and I never met any official here at school.</p>	<p>We receive nothing as incentives and this is discouraging us a lot. We sacrifice our time and family commitments for nothing. They must give us a few cents at least.</p> <p>There are no incentives at all. They deserve something at the end of each month. This will encourage even other parents to take part in school governance.</p> <p>They receive nothing as incentives. Most of them have commitments, so they need some payment to sacrifice their commitment and attend to school governance matters.</p> <p>Currently, there are no incentives at all and I think they should receive some allowance when they come to SGB meetings, maybe this will encourage them.</p> <p>Letters are used, no physical contact.</p> <p>The letters are the only means of communication, they never came to our school to talk to us.</p>
	<b>Learner</b>			
	<b>Teacher</b>			
	<b>Principal</b>	<p>There are no incentives at all. They should be appraised and be given awards. Again, they should receive food for meetings, which last longer than 12h00.</p> <p>They only use circulars to convey information to us. But they do not come to school physically to talk to us.</p>		
<b>Department of Education's System of Communication</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>			
	<b>Parent 2</b>			



	<b>Learner</b>	The department uses circulars to convey information to schools.	The principal shows the letters from the circuit office but we never physically met with the DoE's officials.	The principal shows us letters from DoE only. They never met the SGB at school.
	<b>Teacher</b>	The Department of Education uses circulars to communicate with us. They never come to school to visit the SGB.	The DoE use circulars to disseminate information to us. This year we met them only once at the SGBs mass meeting. More often than not, they use the media to communicate with us and this is not effective at all, because some of us do not listen to the radio.	We only receive circulars; there is no official who came to school to discuss matters. They also use the radio to disseminate information to us, which is not professional at all.
	<b>Principal</b>	Circulars are the only means of communications. Sometimes organise workshops but they are very poor and ineffective. These workshops are held once per year and concentrate on financial matters and nothing else.	The DoE officials use only circulars to communicate with us. They never come to school specifically to assist us but they come only when there are conflicts and they want to blame us as teachers. More often than not they use the media to communicate with us, and this is not effective at all, because some of us do not listen to the radio.	The DoE uses only circulars to communicate with us, but they never visited the school unless if there are problems at school. They also resort to the media (radio) to disseminate information to us, which is not professional at all, because sometimes this cannot reach us.
<b>Challenges to SGB Parent Components</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	The dilapidated buildings and lack of financial resources to refurbish them is our biggest challenge. The state has thus far not helped us, and since the 1994 elections parents have stopped their financial contributions.	The dilapidated buildings and lack of fence to protect our school frustrate us. So the challenge is to have new classrooms but we don't know what to do. The school is highly exposed to acts of vandalism.	Parents do not attend meetings, we solve the learner related problems alone.
	<b>Parent 2</b>	Poor parental attendance of meetings even meetings even during Std 10 Farwell functions. They just appreciate when one meets them at the streets but will never attend meetings.	Other parents accuse us of using school funds for our family matters. Lack of school fence and watchman. Parents do not support us because they don't attend meeting we organize.	Learners break windowpanes and they are not disciplined, we don't know how to solve these problems because parents do not support us.

	<b>Learner</b>	<p>Vandalism by learners: they break windowpanes. Parents do not personally come to school to pay school fees, instead they give this money to learners and this does not reach school, learners squander it. Some learners cannot even pay R2.00 for casual days.</p>	<p>The big challenge facing them is to put new window panes and to ensure that they are not broken again. The school is highly exposed to vandalism.</p>	<p>Lack of support from the parent community, especially when learners misbehave. Parents do not come to support the SGB members in such cases.</p>
	<b>Teacher</b>	<p>Role confusion, because even we teachers in the SGB sometimes we get confused. Teachers are over burdened because I am both treasurer and a finance officer, the parents who are supposed to do this do not have the capacity. They just come to sign cheques and claim forms; I do all the monthly financial statements.</p>	<p>They feel very inferior and whenever they see a teacher they see a totality. Simply because they are not educated and do not have the capacity to execute their duties. The non-attendance by the parent community discouraged them more and more.</p>	<p>Nowadays children are not disciplined and to discipline them is a big challenge to these parents, e.g., some learners come to school drunk and in such cases they become embarrassed and they need support.</p>
	<b>Principal</b>	<p>Lack of knowledge and capacity to execute their duties. The inferiority complex among parents causes a gap between educators and these SGB parent components. There is no scholarly relationship between stakeholders. Parents do not have knowledge and contribute nothing during SGB meetings.</p>	<p>The challenge is that they are not being paid, so they become discouraged. Lack of capacity due to their little education makes them more passive. I think that poor attendance by both the parent of the learner and the business leaders.</p>	<p>Lack of support from parent community by not coming to meetings and, secondly, the ill-disciplined behaviour of learners frustrates these members, especially during hearings.</p>



## **4.2. Results from documents**

### **Document 1: PDE's circular on the election of SGBs**

The circular dated 7 June 2000 indicates the common dates for the elections of the SGBs in the Limpopo PDE. The circular also reminded schools to conduct elections according to the Provincial Gazettes, SASA and the announcement made by the former MEC for education in Limpopo Province, Mr Edgar Mushwana. This would be the second elections of the SGBs since the first ones in 1997. The school governors have been in office for the past three years. However, an educator in school C said: "they (parents) depend on us for direction and execution of their duties" (Sic), so this statement shows that there is still no practical evidence of parental participation in school governance. This situation is similar to what the researcher found from literature where Sumra (1997:17) points out that in Tanzania even though educators and school administrators participate actively in school governance, there is, however, no practical evidence of parental participation despite the fact that Tanzanian government does encourage participation of various stakeholders in school governance. Therefore, despite the PDE's efforts to have democratically elected SGBs, parents are still not participating meaningfully in school governance.

### **Document 2: Number of parents in the SGB**

According to the Provincial Gazette of Northern Province (2000:16), the number of parent components in the SGB of public secondary schools with learner enrolments of less than 720 with all components (that is clerks, gardener and etc) and those without non-educators must be 7 and 6 respectively. However, in contrast to the Gazette, the study found that some schools still operate with few parents and this confirms that representation of parents in the SGBs. The Ministerial Review Committee (2004:67) put it correctly by stating that "in terms of representivity and inclusiveness, the situation is even more complicated and possibly cause for a great concern. Many schools have not become the sites of democratic and open participation that SASA intended. Levels of representivity in the SGBs are poor across a range of indicators"

### **Document 3: Minutes of parents' meeting dated 31/07/2003**

The minutes show that only 20 parents (the enrolment of the school in 2003 as per admission register was 360) attended the meeting in which new school governors were to be elected. This concurs with what all the participants said with regard to parental participation in school governance. They said that "the parents do not want to participate in school governance because when we call them for meeting they don't come or only few parents come" (Sic). The learner in school C expressed it well when he stated that "they do not participate effectively in school governance because I see a few of them only at the beginning of the year and from there they disappear" (Sic). Only two women were elected (as the names in the minutes indicate). This indicates that the issue of gender equity is not considered during SGB elections. This shows that the South African government's efforts to devolve power to schools, where parents as stakeholders should serve as the majority, is far from being realized. The responses from the informants say it all: "we don't consider the question of gender equity because we only elect among those who shall have attended" (Sic).

A total of six parents (according to the PDE Gazette it was supposed to be seven) were elected on 31 July 2003 but the study found, during August 2005, that only five parents were serving in the SGB. The minutes show that, among the office bearers, one parent was elected as a treasurer while the other one was elected as the finance officer. These are the duties that require capacity and expertise. The study found that most parents have low literacy levels, hence they have no capacity to execute these duties. They are just written down for formality sake or procedural purposes and to satisfy the requirements because the documents must be submitted to the DoE as per SASA. The study found that those parents are just executing those duties theoretically but educators do the practical part. The educator in school C said "they don't have the capacity at all because of their level of education. We do all their duties. The treasurer will just come and sign, but they do not want to be involved in financial matters, e.g., we do monthly financial statements" (Sic).

### **4.3. SUMMARY**

The results show a number of challenges that face parental participation in school governance. Parents as stakeholders do not participate satisfactorily in school governance in terms of

representation because in most cases, their number in the SGBs is lower than what the DoE has stipulated and there is often a confusion regarding their eligibility. Few parents attend parents meeting and they don't avail themselves for elections and this is related to the lack of incentives during their tenure. They lack the necessary expertise and capacity to contribute effectively in the decision-making and execution of their duties, instead, educators especially the principals, do most of the work (that is, both the professional and governance). The majorities of parents who are members of the SGBs in these schools have low levels of literacy and as a result contribute nothing during SGBs meetings. The principal of school B said that "they are passive during meetings, they only wait and listen to what we say, they can't differentiate between the professional management and school governing governance because of their level of education, we as principals must just overlap and do our job, otherwise the school will come to a standstill" (Sic). The lack of proper training and poor means of communication on the side of DoE exacerbate their problems and frustration.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The study shows that from the fifteen respondents, who were interviewed at the three different schools, parental participation in school governance is ineffective. It is not according to the spirit and policies of transformation and democratization of the education system in South Africa as enshrined in both the Constitution and SASA. The reason cited range from lack of interest in school matters, to parents not attending meetings in which SGB parent components would be elected.

This concurs with the researcher's experience and literature review. For example, the findings of various authors such Rivarola and Fuller (1996: 506), Anderson (1998:572) and the Ministerial Review Committee (2003:115) are that despite the promulgation of SASA with its clear stipulation of the functions and responsibilities of the SGBs, there are still many challenges related to the authentic and effective participation in school governance.

A good practical example is school B, where less than fifteen parents out of approximately 310 attend a meeting; in such cases there is clearly no authentic parental participation and representation. The smaller the number of parents in a meeting, the smaller their voice will be, and, consequently, the principals will continue to dominate meetings and influence the decisions alone. There is no consensual decision making in the SGB and parents' meetings. Even in the SGB meetings, most parents are still not free to express their opinions; educators and the principals confirmed this. Actually, the principal in school A said:

They are passive and are only activated by the educators; they just wait and listen to what we say (Sic).

The foregoing situation is similar to parental participation in New Zealand whereby both higher authorities and the educators take decisions while parents are only expected to implement or endorse these decisions. Sallis (1988) refers for this type of parental participation as "sham participation" In addition from literature review; I found that Mda and Mothata (2000:73) express it well when they write that:

Representative symbols or tokenism, that involves stakeholders for merely showcasing a physical presence of



stakeholders are contrary to the principle of representativity and serves as a smokescreen for autocratic participation.

On the issue of eligibility for voting or participating in the SGBs, the study found that there is still confusion with regard to the definition of parent. For instance, some parents said:

We elect parents who live in this village, while others said we elect only parents whose learners attend school here (Sic.)

Clearly, this confusion shows that fruitful parental participation in school governance is still far from being realized. The election process itself is not conducted by the relevant stakeholders, namely, parents, but educators. The raising up of hands instead of ballot papers makes the whole election process to be flawed. This corresponds exactly with literature wherein a report on the 2003 school governing body elections (2004:20-21) states that under such conditions, the principals pretend to hold election meetings but in fact handpick the SGB members.

The South African School Act (SA, 1996) spells out many functions and duties of the SGBs, but the study found that the parent components seems to know only the duty related to school buildings, for example checking the broken doors and windows panes. When asked about other functions such as appointment and recommendations of educators, adoption of a constitution and code of conduct for learners, language and religious policies budgeting etc their answer was:

Our teachers are knowledgeable and do all these for us; they just tell us or show us what they have done (Sic).

This indicates lack of expertise and on the part of most SGB parent components and it is one of those challenges that are facing parental participation in school governance. So, this raises questions about what is meant by participation and its connections to spheres of influence in schools.

The majorities of parents who are members of the SGBs in these schools have low levels of literacy and as a result contribute nothing during SGBs meetings. The principal of school B said:

They are passive during meetings, they only wait and listen to what we say, they can't differentiate between the professional management and school governing governance because of their level of education, we as principal

must just overlap and do our job, otherwise the school will come to a standstill (Sic).

The SGB educator component of school B said, “when these parents see an educator they see a totality” (Sic). The above statements further highlight the fact that there is no consensual decision making processes in schools and that there is still a gap between educators and the parent community. This is not unexpected or unique to the South African context but it happened in Malawi as well. Kaunda (2004:13) shows that there is a conspicuous demarcation line that exists between educators and parents.

Therefore, under these circumstances, educators, the principals in particular, still serve as the referee and a player during SGB meetings, they take advantage of the low level of education and the inferiority complex of the parents serving in the SGBs. Parents are just there to rubber stamp the initiatives and decisions of the principals in all major discussions of matters related to the education of their children. They are still limited to discussions on repairing broken taps, windows, falling fence et cetera. This situation is different from school governance in USA, where Daresh (1998:325) shows that, initially parents in school site-based management were often limited to discussions on new playground equipment, the appearance of a school, a need for new stop signs to assist pupils in crossing busy street end so forth. But for now site-based management engages in matters that were traditionally reserved for professional staff (that is, educators) namely; reviews of curriculum instructional materials and programs evaluation. If in South Africa, parental participation can be involved on these kinds of issues, then that will begin to show signs of the success of devolution of power to parents, and the reinforcement of democracy at schools level.

The study found that another common challenge facing all the respondents is the fact that only few parents attend meetings and more often than not, parents who come to meetings do not form quorums and consequently meetings are often called off. They only come when there are problems at school such as allegations on mismanagement of funds, corporal punishment related issues, vandalism, theft, strikes by learners and other misconducts by educators such as drunkenness, et cetera. (that is, according to the advocacy model). This was confirmed by the failure to replace SGB members of schools B and C who respectively passed away in April



and May 2005, to date (August 2005). This means that the SGBs operate for a long time with incomplete parent representatives. The Report of the Ministerial Review Committee on School Governance (2004:117) also shows that:

There are clear instances where the SGBs are not meeting the requirements of functionality. In the case studies, one school had operated without its chairperson for a period of 18 months with little attempts, it seemed, to replace him or call him to account. The other members had fallen by the wayside.

Consequently, the challenges facing parental participation in school governance with lack of community participation as one of them continue unabated.

The SGBs cannot co-opt competent or skilled individuals because they show not interest in school matters. There is clearly no partnership between all stakeholders, that is, between parents, educators and the boarder community. In brief, there is no social capital. Cohen and Prusak (2001:4) say that social capital is necessary for the active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviours that bind the members of human networks and communities and make cooperative action possible. However, the reasons for poor attendance vary, and these include, inter alia, the fact that most parents are far away in Gauteng, working or looking for employment, the lack of interest in the education of their children and other family commitments for the few parents who remain at home. The grandmothers and grandfathers who remain at home all the time do not want to participate in school governance.

The researcher also found that the Department of Education's system of disseminating information to the SGBs is not without problems. The DoE uses only circulars and even the radio to disseminate information to school governing bodies; there is hardly any physical contact between the department's officials and the SGBs members at specific schools. They only visit schools when there are problems at schools, namely, learners' strikers, poor results, allegations related to mismanagement of funds etc. One parents said that, they had never met the officials from the department since they served in the SGB two years ago. Sometimes, these officials meet SGB members only once per year in a mass meeting which they regard as training, which can last for less than two hours. These meetings are not effective at all. The

department's spokesperson often tries to disseminate information through the radio, and some people might not be listening to the radio while some might not even own one. Therefore, given all these challenges, there is no authentic or meaningful parental participation in school governance. Instead, as Reitzug and Cross (1995:329) indicate, parents only have a feeling that they participate in decision making while they are actually not.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to enhance meaningful parental participation in school governance in the current South African context, proposed solutions and recommendations are outlined hereunder.

### **◆ Dissemination of information to schools**

In order for the Department of Education to maintain strong links with the schools and the governing bodies, it is recommended that the use of radio, public meetings, and sending documents to schools, should be supplemented or accompanied by personal contact with the various SGBs. This will help clarify some difficulties, which the SGBs might encounter with regard to the information they received.

### **◆ Launching campaigns on school governance awareness**

To sensitize and mobilize communities on school governance issues, it is recommended that the Department of Education, on a regular basis, conduct public hearings or meetings. This will allow parents and other stakeholders to express their opinions on the school governance matters. The Ministerial Committee Review (2004:13) recommends that in these meetings members of the public should be allowed to speak in the language they feel most comfortable with. These meetings will assist in the clarification of misconceptions about school governance and educational transformation in South Africa. Hendricks (2000) expresses it well by stating that "many communities are steeped in backgrounds where democracy was previously curtailed or completely denied".

This means that the transformational requirements or motives, particularly with regard to the devolution of power to schools as enacted in SASA, are still a "white elephant" in most South African schools, and black schools in particular. So, these public meetings will assist greatly in



the demystification of former school governance. This will also increase the level of preparedness to the “would be” governors.

◆ **Determining the needs of participants (governors)**

After the stakeholders are elected to be members of the SGB, it is important that the Department of Education determine their needs. This means determining the kind of training that these newly elected members will need (based on the level of capacity, others might be having). It is difficult to train SGB members when their needs are unknown. Parental participation in school governance will be a dream comes true if the needs of these parents are determined.

◆ **Training of governors**

One of the basic needs of the newly elected SGB members is training. The training of these newly elected governors, will capacitate them and give them confidence to execute their duties properly. Unfortunately, the Department of Education provides very few or no training workshops. The suggestion therefore, is that, many of these training workshops are organized and cascading be avoided as much as possible. Financial resources are made available to expedite the support or capacity building programmes for SGBs.

◆ **Introducing some incentives for the participants**

Department of Education (1997:9) encourages voluntary participation from parents by stating that “be warned, being involved in school governance is something that takes hard work. You will have to sacrifice precious time. So, being a member of the governing body of your school will call for time and effort on your part”. This is because parents, particularly in rural areas, often complain about lack of incentives, and also cite this as one of the reasons why parents are unwilling to participate in school governance. The proposal is that, incentives be introduced to encourage parents to participate in school governance. The incentive can range from transport and subsistence allowances, or provision and some form of certification. This will make them feel recognized for being involved in the school governing bodies, sacrifice their time and efforts, and will encourage those with expertise to be interested to participate in school governance.

#### ◆ **Affirmative Action, values and cultural beliefs**

In order to level the ground for parental participation in school governance, it is recommended that the historical imbalances, based on race and gender created by the past political regime in South Africa, are addressed. The reason is that, currently, schools give access to all races, hence membership or the composition of parents in SGBs for instance, in schools attended by black and white learners, should be on a pro rata basis (that is, proportionally).

For rural schools Mda and Mothata (2000:71) highlight the issue of affirmative action by stating that “in distant rural schools where the integration of learners from different population groups cannot take place as a result of geographical positioning, affirmative action should apply in order to balance the gender equation”.

On issues of values and cultural beliefs, it is recommended that those responsible for disseminating and implementing policies on school governance should take cognizance of the conditions of the immediate environment of the school. This includes values and cultural beliefs of stakeholders, and where possible the school governance policies might be adapted to suit the local conditions

#### **CONCLUSION**

When one reads government policies on school governance, particularly SASA, one gets a picture of increased involvement of parents in school governance, and the ideal situation where all stakeholders participate in consensual decision making in pursuit of a common interest is cherished. However, the present study found that there are still many challenges facing parental participation in school governance. For instance, most principals are still unilaterally influencing decisions in schools.

In addition, the present study found that there is still a lot of work to be done by the government and the Department of Education in terms of sensitizing or coscientising and mobilizing the communities with regard to school governance and its concomitant challenges. Jansen (1999) writes that declaring policy is not the same as achieving it. More support systems and funds need to be channeled to school governance, otherwise parental participation will continue to

be a mere symbol or tokenism to legitimize the state's transformational initiatives but will not translate into empowerment of communities, particularly the historically disadvantaged ones. Therefore, while on the one hand, the researcher acknowledges the painstaking efforts of the South African government to improve parental participation in school governance, nonetheless, on the other hand, this researcher needs to mention that the government has, thus far, achieved nothing tangible in this regard.

By and large, this study achieved its objectives namely, to identify challenges faced by parents regarding decision making processes in the SGBs, to determine the causes of problems faced by parents regarding decision making processes in schools and to identify possible solutions towards addressing problems that hinder effective participation of parents in school governance. The research questions were: what are the challenges facing effective participation of parents in school governance and what kind of mechanism or strategy can be employed to encourage the parents to participate in school governance? This study has attempted to answer these questions. There is, however, a number of issues that this study has raised and this will need further research, for example, training of SGB members, causes of lack of participation by parents, et cetera.

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## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:** Letter of permission from Kone Kwena Area Office (Vlakfontein Circuit).

**Appendix 2:** Circular on Election of School Governing Bodies and guidelines on the number of members of school governing bodies.

**Appendix 3:** Minutes of parents' meeting.

**Appendix 4:** Interview schedule.



# Limpopo

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Ref: 81284543

Enq: THAHQUANA ME

10 August 2005

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Your letter dated 02 August has reference

This serves to testify that the bearer Mr D.E Mashamaite is granted permission to conduct research in schools within the circuit.

It is however incumbent upon him to further ask for permission from the principals of the schools for where the study will be conducted. May you please assist him.

We always bank in your co-operation

*M. Mashamaite*  
.....  
CIRCUIT MANAGER  
/dmm

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KONEKWENA AREA VLAKFONTEIN CIRCUIT
2005 -08- 10
PRIVATE BAG X02 JUNO 0748
LIMPOPO PROVINCE







# Northern Province

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CENTRAL REGION

Private Bag X03

CHUENESPOORT

0745

Tel.: 015 633 7130

Fax.: 015 633 6177

*SGB*

ENO: MASOGA M.C  
TEL: (015) 633 6598

*2000*

07/06/2000

TO: All District Managers  
Principals of Schools  
School Electoral Officers

Sir/Madam

NORTHERN PROVINCE EDUCATION DEPT  
CENTRAL REGION  
KONKWELE DISTRICT OFFICE  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER  
2000-06-03  
TEL: (015) 633 6598  
PRIVATE BAG X03 CHUENESPOORT 0745

RE: ELECTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. Provincial Gazette No. 530 of 19 May 2000, Notice No. 135 gives dates for elections of SGB as May to July.
3. You are therefore requested to ensure that elections of SGB's in all Public schools are held prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2000 in line with the Provincial Gazette and the announcement by the MEC for education.
4. You are further requested to ensure that election are conducted in line with the SASA and the Provincial Gazette (Regulations).
5. Amended Regulations are obtainable from your District offices.
6. Please find an attached Action Plan.

Thanking you

*To: All Principals of Schools  
Konkwele D/Office*

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

1. Copy for your information.
2. Circulate to all stakeholders for perusal and prompt reaction.

*Dusand  
To District Managers*

## TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

31. (1) The old governing body will cease to exist in the first meeting of the new governing body.

(2) The new governing body will, after its first meeting, review the constitution and the code of conduct developed by the old governing body for adoption.

## CHAPTER 4

32. (1) Subject to regulation 31 (2) and unless the context indicates otherwise, a word which is defined in the Act No. 84, 1996 as amended, shall have the same meaning in these regulations.

(2) In these regulations, unless the context indicates otherwise—

"educator" refers to a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extra-curricular duties, who teaches, educates and trains learners and attached to a school, but does not include Principal;

"member" means a member of a school governing school;

"simple majority" means fifty percent (50%) plus one (1);

"school" means an ordinary public school and excludes public schools for learners with special needs and independent schools;

"spoilt ballot paper" means a ballot paper without an official mark or stamp; or on which more votes are recorded/crossed than the number of candidates to be elected; or completed in such a way that it is uncertain as to which candidate(s) a vote was recorded;

"RCL" means a duly elected RCL in respect of a school with at least grade 8 class;

"Act" means South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, as amended;

"SGB" School Governing Body;

"Department" Refers to the Northern Province Department of Education.

## SCHEDULE A

## 36. NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES ACCORDING TO TYPE AND SIZE

## 1. PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH ALL COMPONENTS

## (a) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Non-educators	Principal	Total
<80.....	4	1	1	1	7
81-159.....	5	2	1	1	9
160-319.....	5	2	1	1	9
320-719.....	5	2	1	1	9
720 + .....	6	3	1	1	11

## (b) SECONDARY SCHOOL

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Non-educator	Learner	Principal	Total
<80.....	5	1	1	1	1	9
81-159.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
160-319.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
320-719.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
720 + .....	9	3	1	3	1	17

## (c) MIDDLE SCHOOL (COMBINATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SECONDARY SCHOOL)

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Non-educator	Learner	Principal	Total
<80.....	5	1	1	1	1	9
81-159.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
160-319.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
320-719.....	7	2	1	2	1	13
720 + .....	9	3	1	3	1	17

**SCHEDULE A**

**2. SCHOOL WITHOUT NON-EDUCATORS**

**(a) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Principal	Total
<80 .....	3	1	1	5
81-159 .....	4	2	1	7
160-319 .....	4	2	1	7
320-719 .....	4	2	1	7
720 + .....	5	3	1	9

**(b) MIDDLE AND SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Learner	Principal	Total
<80 .....	4	1	1	1	7
81-159 .....	6	2	2	1	11
160-319 .....	6	2	2	1	11
320-719 .....	6	2	2	1	11
720 + .....	8	3	3	1	15

**3. SCHOOLS WITH LOWER ENROLMENT**

**(a) SECONDARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Non-educator	Learner	Principal	Total
- 50 .....	3					
- 50 .....	4	1		1	1	5
720 + .....	5	1	1	1	1	7
				1	1	9

**(b) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Number of learners	Parents	Educators	Non-Educator	Principal	Total
- 50 .....	3	1			5
- 50 .....	4			1	5
- 50 .....	4	1	1	1	7

**SCHEDULE B**

**Amendment of Northern Province Regulation No. 257 of 1997**

37. To amend Northern Province Regulation No. 257 of 1997, and other previous legislation so as to substitute certain definitions; to delete others and to insert new definitions; to provide additional functions of a school governing body and Head of the Department and to insert new regulations.

Title, number and year of regulation	Extend of repeal
Coloured Persons Education Act, 1963 (Act No. 47 of 1963) Regulation No. 1898 of 4 December 1963	Chapter F
Indian Education Act, 1965 (Act No. 61 of 1965) Regulation No. 459 of 25 March 1977	The whole
Education and Training Act, 179 (Act No. 90 of 1979) Regulation No. 828 of 30 April 1982 (as amended by Regulations No. 672 of 31 March 1983, Regulation No. 2365 and 2366 of 25 November 1988 and Regulation No. 331 of 3 March 1989)	The whole



## Lekgofa la batswadi ka la di 31/07/03

Pulo ka tlapelo ka Setlau Joseph.

Roll Call : - Manamela SK

- Tjale MR

- Lekalokala MH

- Mashilo MA

- Molele MJ

- Batswadi ba bana (20)

Batswadi ba ile ba gopatswa ka lebaka le lebotsi la gore go ba gona ga SCB dikolong. Ba ile ba botswa gore go swetswe go kgethwa batswadi ba ba nago le bana mo sekolong gore ba kgone go sala ditaba tsa sekolong ka morago ka ge ba na le bana. Ba boditswe gore go kgethiwa SCB e utshwa ka ge mengwaga ye menaro e fetile "term of office" ya bana ka fao e fedile, ga se e le gore ba sentse selo ge go kgethiwa ye ungweng bjale. Ba hlaloseditsw ka mo dikgetho di tlang go sepetšwe ka gona. Go saule motgwa wa "secret ballot".

Go kgethiwe batswadi ba ba latelago -

1. Moabelo William

2. Setlau Joseph

3. Mathekga Eric

4. Kgomo Samuel

5. Moja Agnes

6. Manamela Joseph

### Montwana

Thamaga Collins wa grade 11

### Banutiši

1. Kgaka MR

2. Molele MJ



New-Educator Staff (NES)  
- Seema MV

Ka morago ga ditgetho, hlogo ya sekolo e ile ya fa mafoko a kgothotso, tiseletso, le tshomisano me ya ba ba tgethilwego malebana le sekolo. Ba ile ba napa ba fihla ditulo tsa bona, bona bakgethiw ba o. "Portfolios" tsa ba ka tsela ye e latelago

1. Kgomo Samuel - chairperson
2. Moabelo William - vice-chairperson
3. Mathekgae Erica - Secretary
4. Seema MV - finance officer
5. Seema MV - treasurer

SCIB chairperson: Kgomo S.

Electoral officer: M.H. Lekurumane 31/07/2003

SCIB secretary: Mathekgae E.

Principal: PK Mwanamele 31/7/2003

## APPENDIX 4

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Tell me about your experiences concerning parental participation in school governance?
2. How many parent components are there in the SGB?
3. Would you please explain the eligibility of parents and how the elections are conducted?
4. What are the core functions and responsibilities of the school governance?
5. How active are parent components during SGB meeting in terms of influencing decisions?
6. Can you distinguish between the duties that are carried out by the SMT (principal and educators) and those that are carried out by you as school governors?
7. Could you please tell me about the contribution that the broader community (that is the business people, religious and traditional leaders, etc)?
8. What type of incentives do you receive as a token of the recognition of the service that you render in the SGB?
9. Which system of communication does the Department of Education use to disseminate information to you?
10. What are the challenges facing you as parents who serve in the SGB?