

**CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL- FAMILY- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN  
RURAL AREAS: A CASE STUDY**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

in

**COMMUNITY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

in the

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

(School of Education)

By

**RIBANE M. S**

**AUGUST 2022**

**CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL- FAMILY- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN  
RURAL AREAS: A CASE STUDY**

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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**SUPERVISOR: Prof: Themane, M**

**AUGUST 2022**

## DECLARATION

I, Samuel Motshekga Ribane, declare that this dissertation: *Challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas: A case study*, hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the Master's degree in Education with specialisation in Community and Continuing Education, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university. I further declare that this dissertation is my own work in design and in completion; and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 30/08/2022

M S Ribane

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study reports on an exploration of the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships in two secondary schools located in the remote rural areas of Mogodumo Circuit, in Lebowakgomo District in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The main research question answered was.

### **What are the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province?**

This study is qualitative in design and is embedded within the interpretive epistemology. The two secondary schools were conveniently sampled due to their accessibility whereas participants were also purposefully sampled. The number of participants sampled was n=32. Data was collected through documents analysis, semi-structured questionnaires involving sampled participants, and observation by the researcher as a silent and non-participant observer. Inductive analysis was applied to arrange and organise data in thematic categories. From the themes discovered, intervention strategies were developed in order to address the challenges affecting the School-Family-Community partnerships at the two rural secondary schools.

The study revealed that there is little or no involvement of stakeholders such as parents, community leaders (including priests, pastors, headmen, and the chief), and community based businesspeople, and non-governmental organisations in school events, activities and functions. The study recommends that developmental programmes such as parenting, literacy and numeracy, and parent involvement in the education of their children be organised for parents and community members. These challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships need to be dealt with accordingly by the active involvement and engagement of various stakeholders including, more especially, the DBE, SMTs, NGOs, educators, learners, parents, various community members, and private sectors.

**Keywords:** School-Family-Community Partnerships; Learner; Educator; Parent; Family; School; Community; Partnership; Parental involvement and Rural.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABET	-	Adult Basic Education and Training
ACER	-	Australian Council of Educational Research
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	-	African National Congress
ASIDI	-	Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative
BEOs	-	Black Education Officers
CA	-	Curriculum Advisor
CADV	-	Coalition Against Domestic Violence
CD	-	Compact Disc
CDE	-	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CCSSO	-	Council of Chief State School Officers
CV	-	Curriculum Vitae
DEOs	-	District Education Officers
DBSA	-	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DBE	-	Department of Basic Education
DMG	-	Deputy Manager for Governance
DSD	-	Department of Social Development
DSM	-	District Senior Manager
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
EIG	-	Education Infrastructure Grants
EPWP	-	Extended Public Works Programme
FET	-	Further Education and Training
GET	-	General Education and Training
HIV	-	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
HOD	-	Head of Department
ICTTC	-	Information Technology Company Training Centre
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
ISLLC	-	Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium
LAFHAS	-	Living Away From Home Allowance Scheme
LEA	-	Local Education Agencies
LoLT	-	Language of Learning and Teaching.
MEO	-	Multiple Examination Opportunities

MoE	-	Minister of Education
NEA	-	National Education Agencies
NGO's	-	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPTA	-	National Parent Teachers' Association
NSNP	-	National School Nutrition Programme
PTAs	-	Parents Teachers Associations
QAIL	-	Queensland Academics Isolated Learners
RCL	-	Representative Council of Learners
SAICE	-	South African International Conference on Education
SAPS	-	South African Police Services
SASA	-	South African Schools Act
SEA	-	State Education Agencies
SGB	-	School Governing Body
SHAC	-	Schools Health Advisory Committee
SMs	-	Short Messages
SMCs	-	School Management Committees
SMT	-	School Management Team
STDs	-	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TB	-	Tuberculosis
TLSMs	-	Teaching and Learning Support Materials
TREC	-	Turfloop Research Ethical Committee
TV	-	Television
UNESCO	-	United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation
UNISEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
USB	-	Universal Serial Bus

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the background and orientation of the study, research problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, definition of key concepts, research methodology, trustworthiness of the study, significance of the study, ethical considerations, and the outline of the study.

#### **1.2. BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

The vision and mission of School-Family-Community partnerships should be an end-product of collaborative efforts by all relevant stakeholders (Bhengu & Myende, 2015:234; Berger, 2014:20). However, studies show that School-Family-Community partnerships in South African rural areas take less consideration to the voices, interests and needs of the broader community (Netshandama, 2010:70). The majority of such partnerships are characterised by the lack of trust and respect due to poor working relations and lack of the sharing of the vision. Pather (2015:212) notes that stakeholders often complain about being side-lined in the decision-making processes in schools and communities, and thus leaving out their significant inputs for community building.

South African rural communities are currently faced with diverse educational, social, political and economic challenges. Such challenges encapsulate the existence of very high levels of poverty, teenage pregnancy, orphanage, illiteracy, inequality, unemployment, and limited access to health and social welfare services (du Plessis, 2014:1109; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:30; Netshandama, 2010:70; Prew, 2009:1). In addition, rural areas are facing the ever-increasing presence of Human Immune-deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) related loss and grief, caretaking responsibilities and additional financial strain. This situation contributes to the escalating number of child-headed families, which becomes a crucial issue in such settings. South African rural communities are further affected by issues of affordability, accessibility, availability and low Information and Communication



Technology (ICT) literacy levels. As a result, it is hard to access information (Chisango & Lesame, 2017:58; Du Plessis, 2014:1109; Mdlongwa, 2012:4).

A majority of rural schools have under- and unqualified educators, poor teacher performance, poorly developed infrastructure, governance structures, poor roads, lack opportunities and development, lack of professional help and support, shortage of classrooms, dilapidated buildings with broken windows, limited access to water, electricity, sanitation, and lack of school transport (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; du Plessis, 2014:1109; Dichaba & Nwaozuzu, 2014:39; Badugela, 2012:37; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:30).

The content taught in rural schools is often irrelevant and thus not responding to the learners' immediate environment (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; du Plessis, 2014:1109; Berger, 2014:2; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:30). Learners' academic performance is very poor due to a variety of socio-economic factors. Over and above, the repetitive changing of the curriculum, insufficient training of educators, insufficient teacher education, overpopulated classes, learners' perpetual absenteeism, foreign language of teaching and learning, and uncommitted and ill-discipline learners worsen the situation (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; du Plessis, 2014:1109; Berger, 2014:2; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:30). This situation is exacerbated by the lack of access to resources such as libraries and books, computer hard-wares, internet, science laboratory and specialised science laboratory equipment. On the other hand, studies show that parents and guardians in rural areas are still not actively involved in the education of their children (Bhengu & Myende, 2015:234; du Plessis, 2014:1109; Berger, 2014:20; Mdlongwa, 2012:1; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:30).

The researcher assumes that with strengthened and nurtured networks, a difference could be made in building better rural schools, families and communities. That can also create a better platform for engaging all the relevant stakeholders in the decision-making processes as well as developing relevant and appropriate educational programmes that address the real needs of the communities. It is on the basis of this background that this study sought to explore the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province, in an attempt to value and appreciate the participation of all the stakeholders in rural education.

### **1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Immediately after the democratisation of South Africa, schools had to be restructured and transformed in order to create enabling and conducive learning environments for all learners (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; Cornelissen, 2016:2(ii)). This structural change was one way of redressing the educational imbalances inherited from the apartheid era. After twenty- four years of democracy in South Africa, a majority of schools located in rural areas seem to experience poor School-Family-Community partnerships, which negatively impacts on the provision of quality education. As a result, this condition deprives rural schools and community's access, affordability and availability of quality education (Pather, 2015:212). Moreover, relationships between schools, families and communities in rural areas appear to be weak and thus hindering the sharing and realisation of the vision and mission (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; Cornelissen, 2016:2(ii)). The implication is that partnerships in rural areas fail to meet the needs of the communities as compared to their counterparts in urban areas.

Globally, a number of studies were conducted focusing on the challenges facing school-family-community partnerships. Since such studies were context-based, a one-size-fits-all approach cannot be applicable in this context (Pather, 2015:212; Gardiner, 2008:11). Currently, no single study has been conducted to explore the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province.

### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study sought to answer the following research question:

- What are the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province?

#### **1.4.1. Sub-questions**

The following sub-questions were developed to answer the above question:

- What are the internal (school) challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnership in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit?
- What are the external (family and community) challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnership in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit?

- Which strategies are in place to strengthen the School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit?

## **1.5. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY<sup>1</sup>.**

### **1.5.1. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural area at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province.

### **1.5.2. Objectives of the study**

In order to achieve the above purpose, this study sought to:

- Identify the internal (school) challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit.
- Identify the external (family and community) challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnerships in rural area at Mogodumo Circuit.
- Investigate strategies that are in place to strengthen School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit.

## **1.6. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

The following are the key concepts that underpin this study:

### **1.6.1. Learner**

A learner is “*any person receiving education or obliged to receive education* (SASA, 2006:4; Brunton, Chris and Associates, 2003: B-4).

With regard to this study a learner is a person who is enrolled and taught at a school and obliged to follow the terms and conditions of that particular educational institution.

### **1.6.2. Educator**

An educator is “*any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons at an education institution or assists in rendering education services or education auxiliary or support services provided by or in an education department* (Brunton et al., 2003: A-3).

An educator means “*any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education related psychological services, at a school* (SASA, 2006:4)

In this study an educator is any professionally qualified person whose duty is to teach learners enrolled in public rural schools.

### **1.6.3. Parent**

A parent refers to “*any caregiver/guardian who assumes responsibility for nurturing and caring for their children*” (Martinez, 2015:5).

A parent means “*the biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner; a person legally entitled to the custody of a learner; or a person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs and towards the learner’s education at school*’ (Action Plan to 2014, 2014:7).

For the purposes of this study, a parent is any adult who is a caregiver, guardian, legally entitled to the custody of the learner or biological parent (mother or father), who carries the responsibilities of nurturing the learner and provides all the learner’s educational needs.

### **1.6.4. Family**

According to Wardrop (2011:9), a family is “*any of the wide variety of home arrangements that people establish to care for and rear children*”.

Family is “*a child’s primary care-giving unit*” (Board of Education, 2013:1). In the context of this study, a family refers to a group of people residing within the same house with the learner, to which the learner belongs, and have the responsibility of caring and rearing the learner.

### **1.6.5. School**

A school is “*a pre-primary, primary or a secondary school, a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R (Reception) to grade twelve*” (Brunton et al., 2003: B-4).

A school means “*any educational institution or that part of such an institution at which education and training, including pre-primary education, is provided and which is maintained, managed and controlled or subsidised by a provincial education department, excluding a University and University of Technology*” (Brunton et al., 2003:C-26).

In this study a school refers to an institution of learning offering post-primary education from grade 8-12 in a rural community.

#### **1.6.6. Community**

A community is “*a group of people who live in the same area and who, often, have a common background and shared interests*’ (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012:177).

A community is “*a society at large which includes, but is not limited to, families, businesses, faith communities, government agencies, non-profit service organisations, other organisations, and individuals*” (Board of Education, 2013:1).

In accordance with this study a community is a group of people living in the same area, sharing the same interests, goals, values, ethics, perspectives, values, joint actions, and create face-to-face social interactions and interrelationships.

#### **1.6.7. Partnership**

Partnership is *cooperation between two or more people or groups who work together for some purpose*” (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012:177).

Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014:14) defines a partnership as “*a joint working between two or more partners on the basis of values of openness, trust, honesty and mutual respect, agreed shared goals and regular communication between partners*”.

In this study a partnership is a contractual process with a long-term commitment, whereby two or more different stakeholders share a common vision and mission, goal and the willingness and responsibilities to improve the quality of education. In this study, a partnership is made up of the school, family, and community where the school exists.

### **1.6.8. Parental involvement**

Parental involvement refers to *“the chipping in of important caregivers such as parents, grandparents, stepparents, and foster parents in actions to enhance the educational development of their children in order to promote their academic and social well-being”* (Moorman, Coutts, Holmes, Sheridan, Ransom, Sjuts & Rspoli, 2012:3).

Parental involvement is referred to as *“including behaviours’ at home as well as at school. We use the term parental involvement to encompass the gamut of activities parents are (and other family members) engaged in helping their children succeed at school”* (Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, & De Pedro, 2011:76).

For the purposes of this study parental involvement is the active engagement and collaboration of learners’ parents with other stakeholders, aimed at improving the relationship with their children, helping in school activities, improving learners’ self-esteem, improving the performance and achievement, and developing the social competency of learners.

### **1.6.9. Family-Community partnerships**

School-Family-Community partnerships are *“child-centred approaches wherein families and professionals work together, organise, and join forces to improve opportunities and achievement for children and teenagers across social, emotional, behavioural and academic aspects”* (Moorman et al., 2012:3).

School-Family-Community partnerships are *‘partnerships that exist between families and schools, between the schools and their communities, and between families and communities to improve quality of schooling, to obtain satisfying educational experiences of students and, to strengthen the communities’* (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012:177).

For the purposes of this study, School-Family-Community partnerships are relationships that bind all stakeholders including learners, educators, parents, families, community members and other interested partners to share a common vision and goal of improving the quality of education.

### **1.6.10. Rural**

Rural by definition is *“low population density together with family isolation and community remoteness that uniquely characterise rural areas. Small schools and*

*small school districts are what distinctively characterise elementary and secondary education in these areas” (Redding & Walberg, 2012:5).*

*Rurality refers to “any place that is under the leadership and governance of traditional leaders. A rural school will then be, any school found in a place led and governed by traditional leadership” (Myende & Chikoko, 2014:251).*

The concept rural means a place under the jurisdiction and authority of a traditional leader. The two secondary schools selected for this study are situated in an area under the authority and leadership of the headmen Mr Y and Mr X. The villages are characterised by low population density, community remoteness, not industrialised and are poverty-stricken. The community members are still practising primary activities like hunting, collecting wood from the field, collecting water from the communal tap or from the river, fishing, ploughing with donkeys or bulls. The donkeys also serve as a mode of transport in very dusty gravel roads. These rural communities are partially composed of subsistence stock and crop farmers. The community is still embedded in its culture because it conducts traditional circumcision schools during winter school vacations. The communities are characterised by social maladies related syndromes because crime, teenage pregnancy, drugs abuse, illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty are at an alarming rate.

## **1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7.1. Research design and approach**

This study is embedded within the interpretive epistemology, whereby multiple social realities about the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships are constructed and understood from the perspectives of the participants (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010:343; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:343). Data was explored, explained, interpreted and given meaning in order to understand the above-mentioned challenges in the target schools (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014:14).

Qualitative research approach was applied to obtain data through observation, interviews questionnaires, and documents in order to explore the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships. Qualitative research is focused on obtaining in-depth data through observation, open-ended questions which allows for further probing for more details and based on their responses trying to understand their

motivation and feeling about the issue at hand. This enabled the researcher to generate detailed rich data. The approach allowed the researcher to explain and understand what the participants knew, the role they played, their contributions and the meaning they attached to School-Family-Community partnerships (Ary et al., 2014:27). The researcher interacted with the participants within their schools, and that brought about rich and insightful information on the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships (Gall et al., 2010:348; Ary et al., 2014:169).

A case study design was adopted with the goal to focus on Mogodumo Circuit and accessing rich data, getting more clarity and detailed information by investigating, exploring, examining relationships within the context of challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships of the target secondary schools. The findings of this study are not generalisable since purposeful sampling channelled the researcher to a limited number of participants (Gall et al., 2010:337; Ary et al., 2014:483).

### 1.7.2. Population and sampling

Mogodumo Circuit is composed of 12 secondary schools and 19 primary schools. The two secondary schools were conveniently sampled because they were easily accessible as they are nearer to the researcher’s workplace. The target schools are situated at gaChuene, a rural area located approximately 35 kilometres (km) south-east of Polokwane City, along the R37 road. Secondary school A comprised of 498 learners, 16 educators, and 1 principal. Secondary B school had 348 learners, 11 educators including the principal.

School	Learners	Educators	Principal	Parents	Community members
A	5	5	1	3	2
B	5	5	1	3	2

The total study sample consisted of 32 participants.

### 1.7.3. Data collection

Data was gathered from School A and B in January 2017. The data collection process unfolded according to the following phases:

- *Phase 1: Documents analysis*



The following documents were analysed: SMT minute books, parents' meetings minute book, progress report record book, and disciplinary record book. These gave the researcher a clear understanding of the internal and external challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships in Mogodumo Circuit.

- *Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews*

Semi-structured interviews questionnaires were employed because they were flexible, open-ended and gave the researcher the opportunity to probe for clarity. This also allowed the participants to voice out their experiences in order to clarify their perspectives (Gall et al., 2010:348; Creswell, 2012:217; Ary et al., 2014:466). The researcher applied member checking as compared to focus group in order to ensure that the data collected is exactly real and is what the participants had experienced. The interviews were audio-recorded. Data collection took place at the target schools. That made the participants feels free and comfortable in answering the questions. It also gave the researcher a leeway to obtain verbal information that could not be obtained in any other way and revealed what was important in attempting to understand the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships in a rural area. The interviewer had better control over the type of information received and asked specific questions to extract that oral information (Gall et al., 2010:348; Creswell, 2012:217; Ary et al., 2014:466).

- *Phase 3: Observation*

The researcher played the role of a non-participant observer whereby information was only recorded without participating in the activities. The observation schedule was used as a form of reminding and directing the researcher of what should be observed. Furthermore, school events such as parents' meetings, soccer and netball games, cultural activities and the infrastructure at the two target secondary schools were observed. In addition, issues such as teaching processes, attendance of lessons by educators and learners, learner-teacher-interaction, parents, and community members' involvement were also observed. The interaction of the researcher and the participants assisted in building empathy, trust, and understanding. The researcher gathered data by writing field notes about the observations (Gall et al., 2010:349).

#### **1.7.4. Data analysis**

The researcher immediately started collecting and analysing raw data inductively once data from each target school were entered (Schools A and B) (Gall et al., 2010:348; Creswell, 2012:217; Ary et al., 2014:466). Data was transcribed to ensure its readability in order for ideas and themes emanating from the internal and external challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships to be easily understood (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014:14). Data patterns, themes, categories, regularities, were noted, interpreted, and analysed on the very first day of data collection. Furthermore, the researcher established similarities and differences from School A and School B, categorising the emerging themes in order to shed more light on the challenges facing School-Family-Community partnerships in the target schools. Data analysis process was continued until data saturation was reached. The researcher made sense, described, interpreted, and reviewed the collected data (Ary et al., 2014:466; Creswell, 2012:217; Gall et al. 2010:348). The member checking was done, and conclusions were drawn (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395).

### **1.8. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

In ensuring the trustworthiness of the study, the following quality criteria were adhered to:

#### **1.8.1. Credibility**

The researcher ensured that the collected data is accurate and is about the perspectives of the participants with regard to the target secondary schools. The use of triangulation during data collection enhanced corroboration of evidence from different sources. Data from different sources added to the trustworthiness of the findings and was achieved via the application of various analytic methods. Through debriefing, the researcher invited colleagues to double-check the availability of any discrepancies that might harm the credibility of the study (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259).

#### **1.8.2. Transferability**

A rich detailed description of the findings of this study, as well as the data collection methods and analysis techniques employed, guided the researcher to verify the study's transferability to other settings. As such, the findings of this study may not be

transferable to other settings due to the research approach adopted in this study. In other words, the case study approach and purposeful sampling employed limited the researcher to generalise the findings of this study (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259).

### **1.8.3. Dependability**

The researcher's peers who were not involved during the research process were used to audit-trial the collected data in order to ensure that it was what was entailed in the interviews, observation and documents (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259). The well-readable and organised notes and records of activities are kept in a laptop, Universal Serial Bus (USB) and Compactible Disk (CD) in order to be retrievable for future verification and referencing. The multiple data sources, methods, and member checking were used during data collection and data analysis to verify the authenticity of the findings. The themes identified were verified through individual participants checking to see if they were aligned with what the participants intended to give during the interviews (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259).

### **1.8.4. Confirmability**

The researcher ensured that the data was free from bias by triangulating data collecting methods and data sources (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259). This stressed the neutrality of the data. My research supervisor also reviewed the data and confirmed its authenticity (Ary et al., 2014:534; Creswell, 2012:259).

## **1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The establishment and strengthening of School-Family-Community partnerships may benefit the target schools by creating conducive teaching and learning environments. Furthermore, the target schools may benefit from the resources, ideas, governing and financial management training, mentoring and support that community and business organisations may offer. Consequently, the schools would be attaining and achieving their School-Family-Community partnerships visions and mission statements.

The establishment of policies and educational programmes may benefit the broader community by reducing dropout, at-risk learners, late coming, absenteeism by both learners and educators, bullying, HIV/AIDS, safety, and attendance. Learners may

improve academically, professionally, health-wise, socially and become more responsible members of the community.

Educators may gain good communication skills, improve academically and professionally through professional development workshops, programmes, in-service training programmes, and excellent experience, skills and knowledge gained through the interaction with volunteers and mentors.

Through School-Family-Community partnerships, principals may benefit new dynamics and strategies for enhancing relationships of trust and respect with various stakeholders involved in education. Principals may also be capacitated with skills to create and maintain School-Family-Community partnerships. By so doing effective communication and networks may be created in order to promote active participation by the relevant stakeholders.

Parents are an inevitable resourceful assets and support for teachers in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. This study may contribute towards developing possible strategies for parental involvement and parenting programmes. Parents may be capacitated to assess and make positive interventions to their children's education. By engaging parents in their children's education, attendance and retention may be improved as well as reducing absenteeism. The behaviour and the social competency of learners may be improved in general. Parental involvement may also ensure that locally developed practices are rewarded, sustained, and expanded.

Community members may be positively engaged in all School-Family-Community partnerships activities. Their interests, language and culture may be respected and prioritised, and may enhance their participation in the planning and decision-making processes. Equally, community members may have the opportunity to share the available resources with their local schools. In return they may be employed by the target schools and be consumers of local goods and services.

The findings of this study may add to the existing body of knowledge and serve as a source of reference to future researchers and policymakers. The uniqueness of the settings may add new information to the existing body of knowledge. Policymakers and curriculum designers may align their strategies, policies, and curriculum to serve the interests and needs of parents, learners, schools, families, and benefit the

community at large. In addition, transformational skills may be developed aimed at building better rural communities.

#### **1.10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted at two rural secondary schools at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The unique setting of the target schools limits the findings of this study. The implications are that the findings of this study may not be generalised. A small number of participants who took part in the study also decreased the opportunities of the study to be generalisable. The time and monetary constraints limited the researcher to sample only two of the twelve existing rural secondary schools located within Mogodumo Circuit. This study was conducted in rural secondary schools, and it is possible that different experiences may be found if the same study may be conducted in any peri-urban or urban secondary schools.

#### **1.11. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Permission to conduct this research was granted by both the Limpopo Department of Basic Education (LDBE) and the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:105; Creswell, 2012:228). The participants were made aware of the purpose and procedures of the study. Participation was out of their will, and they were free to withdraw at any time of their choice. The participants signed consent forms as a way of showing their willingness to take part in the study. Parents signed consent forms for learners who were part of the sampled space. Pseudonyms or codes were used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the participants (Creswell, 2012:228; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:105).

The participants were made aware of their rights to fair and equitable treatment before, during and after their participation in the study. During the study, the participants were not subjected to any activity that may harm them, be it physically, emotionally, and psychologically (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:105; Creswell, 2012:228).

#### **1.12. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

This study is composed of five chapters outlined as follows:

- Chapter One

This chapter provides the background of the study, research problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, definition of key concepts, research methodology, trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

- Chapter Two

This chapter focuses on the literature pertaining to the challenges facing School-Family-Community partnerships. It covers aspects such as the features of School-Family-Community partnerships, benefits of School-Family-Community partnerships, models of School-Family-Community partnerships, and strategies to enhance School-Family-Community partnerships in rural settings.

- Chapter Three

This chapter covers the paradigm, research approach and design, population and sampling, data collection, and data analysis techniques adopted in conducting this study.

- Chapter Four

This chapter presents the findings of the study.

- Chapter Five

This chapter provides a discussion, major conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the literature underpinning this study is presented. This chapter covers the internal and external challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnership in rural areas of Ga-Chuene in Limpopo Province. Furthermore, the researcher pays attention to the programmes that promote collaborative School-Family-Community partnership. The models employed in successful School-Family-Community partnerships to self-sustain themselves will be discussed. The literature also embraces the benefits of School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas.

#### **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In accordance with the research topic, there is a dire need that a good partnership between stakeholders like learners, educators, parents, and community members exists to collaboratively work towards the total development of the learners. Even after South Africa has been democratised, schools in rural areas are still having a very poor partnership between schools, families and community members (Pather, 2015:212). The poor involvement of parents and community members in the education of their children negatively impacts on the provisioning of quality education. The poor partnership hinders schools, families, community members from collaboratively working towards a common goal of sharing duties and responsibilities of developing the learners together (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:7; Cornelissen, 2016:2(ii)). This shows that there are internal (school) and external (family and community) challenges that work against the creation of a good School-Family-Community partnership. There is also a need to introduce developmental programmes that would enhance the participants with regard to School-Family-Community partnerships.

Chen, Anderson and Watkins (2016:5) and Lubell (2011:11) in developmental triangle theory suggested that it is imperative that school, parents, and community members work together if they want to develop their children's education. For the development of their children in totality, they are bound to work together. The theory above is further supported by Epstein's three overlapping spheres of effect theory which stressed the

fact that are Family, School and community are essential stakeholders that play a vital role in the upbringing of a child until an independent adulthood stage is attained (NEA, 2008:2).

The three stages of development of the What Works theory being development, implementation, and sustainability were implemented by stakeholders who commonly agreed to use them as the foundation of School-Family-Community partnerships and successfully yielded good results (Brian, Griffin & Henry, 2013:1).

Epstein's model of the six principles of involvement has been proven to be effective and efficient only if school, family and community members apply them in involving each other in the welfare and education of the children (Rahim, Mamat, Hashim, Ariffin, Rahman, & Yusut, 2015:106; Epstein, 2014:1).

Should learners, educators, family, and community members work together, it will be easier to take children towards their best educational heights. The study is intended to research about the internal, external challenges that hinders School-Family-Community partnerships and come up with developmental programmes that would improve the stakeholders' involvement and participation in the education of their children.

## **2.3 INTERNAL (SCHOOL BASED) FACTORS**

### **2.3.1 Features of School-Family-Community partnerships**

Literature reveals that in order for a School-Family-Community partnership to function effectively stakeholders should share power in administering and managing the partnership (Sanders; 2016:158; Epstein; Sanders; Simon; Salinas; Jansorn & Van Voorhis, 2002: 14; Simmons, 2011:1; Naicker, 2011:iv & Wardrop, 2011:9). The stakeholders should share the same aims, goals, a common vision and strategically work towards developing and sustaining School-Family-Community partnership in order to achieve their interests and needs. The partners should own the vision, have the sense of owning the school, carry their daily responsibility in the partnership, build up confidence and pride of their schools from the community's view, and uplift the cultural, social and economic status of their communities. Stakeholders should mutually work together, share ideas and support each other to make available the projects and programmes towards achieving the needs and interests of the



disadvantaged and at-risk learners, families, and community members (Sanders; 2016:158; Epstein al., 2002:14; Simmons, 2011:1; Naicker, 2011: iv & Wardrop, 2011:9).

The Education Review Office (ERO) recommend that the School-Family-Community partnership should be led by visionary and transformational leaders who engage stakeholders towards strengthening and sustaining the partnership (Wieczorek, & Manard, 2018:17; Lane, 2016:63; Mutch & Collins, 2012:183; Redding & Walberg, 2012:13; Naicker, 2011: iv;). A plan should be put into action in order to develop new visionary and transformational leaders. The School-Family-Community partnership should be inclusive to involve all partners in decision making process and respect the concerns, efforts, and contributions of partners and allow respect and trust to rein in the partnership. Learners should be motivated to believe in their potential to learn and educators to be lifetime learners. Computers and Internet technology are installed to equip learners with opportunities to access information independently (Wieczorek, & Manard, 2018:17; Lane, 2016:63; Redding & Walberg, 2012:13; Mutch & Collins, 2012:183; Naicker, 2011: iv).

## 2.3.2 Models of school-family-community partnerships

### 2.3.2.1 The developmental triangle models

The developmental triangle model in figure 2.1 is represented below whereby the learner is the centre of learning and positioned at the centre of the triangle (Chen, Anderson & Watkins, 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:11).

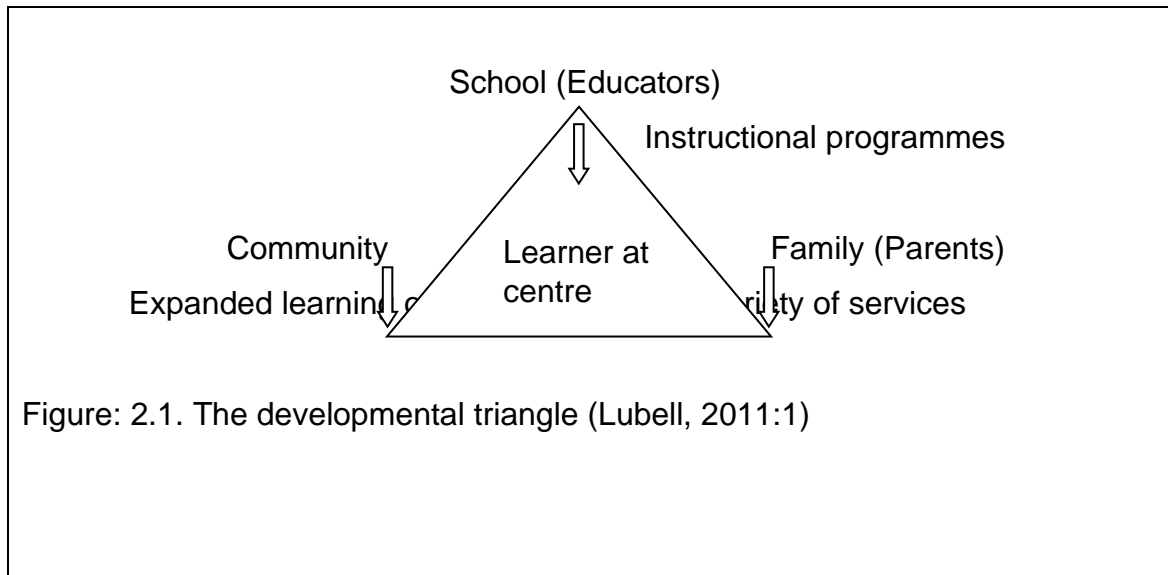


Figure: 2.1. The developmental triangle (Lubell, 2011:1)

- The essence of the developmental triangle model

The school, families and community's relationship are the basis of a triangle whereby the school, families and community are vital role players who have a common goal of supporting the learners, serving as the basis of learners' development (Chen, et al 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:1). The three stakeholders including the neighbourhoods objectively support and work towards maximising learners' learning, at the same time augmenting their health, educational, economic and social well-being (Chen, et al 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:11).

### The advantages of the developmental triangle model

The three legs represented by arrows are pillars of learners' development to be provided from as early as prenatal and to the age where the learners are about to enter the stage of being independent (Chen, et al 2016:5; 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:1). The legs of the triangle denote strong core instructional programmes, expanded learning opportunities, and a full variety of health services.

*Strong core instructional programmes:* This is about the programmes that enhance educators methodologically and in terms of content so as to develop learners academically. Some programmes are meant to enrich parents, family, and community members towards assisting learners with their schoolwork at home. Developmental educational programmes attract the interests of parents, create a friendly environment for them, give them opportunities in their own learning, and support them acquire skills to be involved in their children's education. By so doing, indirectly they are positively enhancing their children's interest in education and opening their chances of being lifelong learners (Chen, et al 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:11).

*Expanded learning opportunities:* They are planned to enrich the learning environment for learners, family and community members ((Chen, et al 2016:5 Lubell, 2011:11). Learning services and support are provided to get rid of learning obstacles. Educators are afforded a better opportunity to pay more attention on the curriculum because learners are in a sound health status. These improve learners' attendance, reduce social and emotional challenges and promote teaching and learning process. The fundamental school curriculum is adhered to, comprehensible and combined with extended learning and development opportunities. These give learners an opportunity to acquire various learning methods, more hours to learn during after-school, weekend, and school vacations and to consolidate the learnt information and apply hands-on projects, academic competitions or art projects. In this way educators have the responsibility of planning the practical projects for the learners accurately and well in time ((Chen, et al 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:11).

*A full variety of health services:* Health services are made available to learners to keep them in a sound health status as the saying goes "A healthy mind dwells in a healthy body". Psychologists, nurses, social workers, psychiatrists, families, community members, and the school are given a chance to take care of learners who are in need of services aimed at promoting children's well-being and remove obstacles to learning. The school should develop partnerships with various stakeholders in the areas of health, social services, and academics for children and adults. The school should also ensure that there are sports, recreation facilities and culture practices to engage learners in other activities other than educational activities alone, in order to develop learners in totality (Chen, et al 2016:5; Lubell, 2011:11).

### **The disadvantages of the developmental triangle model**

The model disregards the active participation of the main role player, the learners. The model puts learners at the receiving end of decisions taken in their absentia. For the mere fact that learners (centre of the triangle) are not partaking in decisions making, then some of their interests and needs might not be met by the School-Family-Community partnerships.

#### **2.3.2.2 What works model**

WHAT WORKS MODEL (2013:3) as a School-Family-Community partnership model is described as a process of incorporating the three stages being development, implementation, and sustainability of the School-Family-Community partnerships. The three stages should follow logically as they are given above:

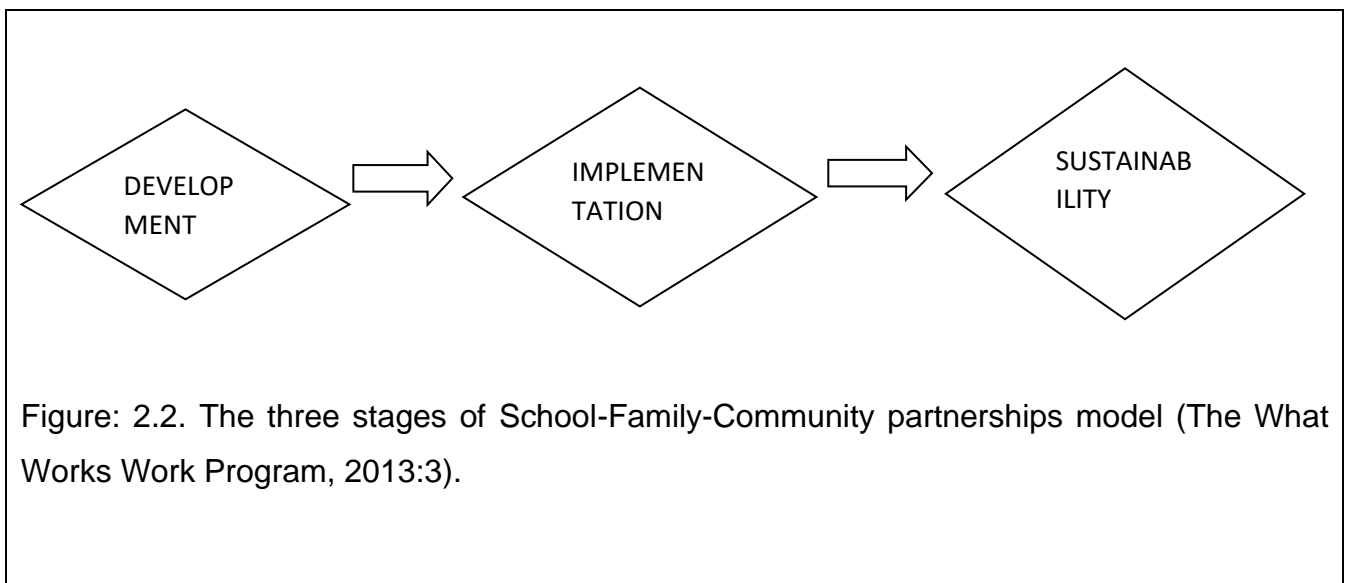


Figure: 2.2. The three stages of School-Family-Community partnerships model (The What Works Work Program, 2013:3).

### **The essence of three stages of development of School-Family-Community partnerships model**

The School-Family-Community partnerships is laid on foundational conditions that has been commonly agreed by all stakeholders including learners, educators, School Management Teams (SMTs), parents, community members, and others (Brian et al, 2013:1; What Works, The Work Programme, 2013:2). The commonly agreed plans are clear, well known to all partners and aimed at achieving the needs and interests of the learners. Members of the School-Family-Community partnerships should be

ruled by an element of trust and respect and made aware of their roles and responsibilities which are agreed upon collectively. It is imperative that good relationships amongst the School-Family-Community partners reign to prolong the sustainability of the partnerships (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1).

### ***The advantages of the three stages of School-Family-Community partnerships model***

*Stage one:* Development of the School-Family-Community Partnership.

All the stakeholders keep in their mind the vision of their school continuously driven towards achieving the vision statements (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1). They are ever ready and capacitated to perform their respective duties in order to achieve their mission. Stakeholders talk and discuss their roles in partnership with their neighbours, friends, colleagues, and create a good collaborative relationship. All stakeholders perform their roles within their set limits, following the right channels and appreciating the good things they had managed to accomplish (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1).

### ***Stage two: Implementation of the School and Community Partnership***

When the partnership is started all the stakeholders participate and are engaged during the planning process so that their ideas are incorporated in the partnership plans (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1). Various stakeholders monitor their daily activities, ensure that they are leading towards the attainment of their mission statement and keep on reviewing, refining and implementation strategies to ensure success (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1).

### ***Stage three: Sustainability of the School-Family-Community partnerships***

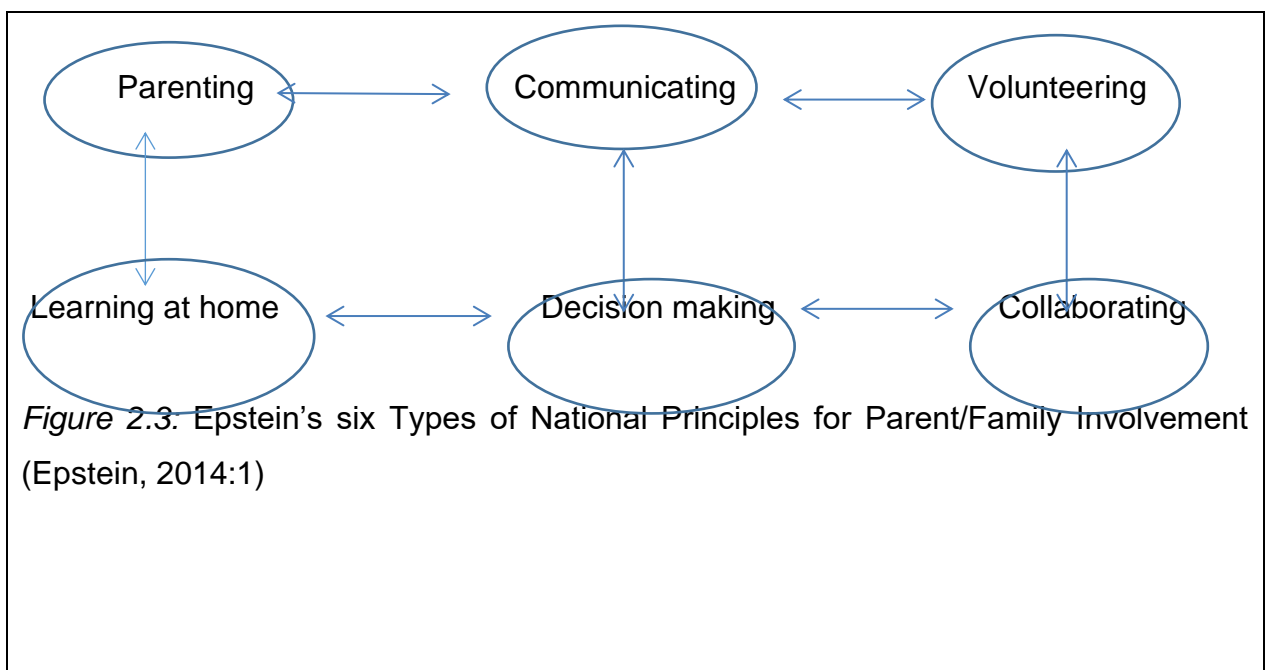
The stakeholders entrenched the school's culture in partnership to make it self-supportive (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1). Stakeholders sustain themselves by adhering to and working towards achieving the needs and interests of School-Families-Community partnership. The drawn well-documented action plan with clear roles, is regularly monitored, reviewed and refined as a good practice for sustaining the partnership (The Work Programme, 2013:2; Brian et al, 2013:1).

## The disadvantages of three stages of School-Family-Community partnerships model

The model does not explicitly elaborate the role to be played by learners. Learners are included amongst the stakeholders, but the model is not elaborative as to whether they are to partake in decision making or not. The model is quiet about incorporating the indigenous knowledge system of the stakeholders in the curriculum. The one size fits all kind of curriculum is not tailored for people living in rural areas. Graduates from rural areas are forced to seek for jobs in urban areas because they are not skilled to work in rural areas to upgrade these areas physically, socially and economically.

### 2.3.2.3 The Epstein's model of the principles of involvement The essence of Epstein model of Six Types of Family Involvement

The six types of family involvement in figure 2.3 positively improve learner's outcomes, academic potential, and future life (Rahim et al, 2015:106; NEA, 2008:2). They are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating.



- *Parenting*: Families and community members should attend developmental programmes to prepare their children for school readiness and assists their children at home.

- *Communicating*: Communicate information and involve parents and community members to actively participate in school activities and courses as well as opportunities to participate in school programmes.
- *Volunteering*: Recruit parents to volunteer in training of families to enrich education, help in other activities and physical education classes.
- *Learning at home*: Involve parents to actively participate in programmes that would help them to assist, guide and support children to learn at home.
- *Decision making*: All School-Family-Community partnerships members participate in policies development and implementation aimed at satisfying the interests and needs of all stakeholders.
- *Collaboration*: The School-Family-Community partnerships stakeholders benefits by working collaboratively to create a healthy and conducive educational environment (Rahim et al, 2015:106; NEA, 2008:2).

### **The advantages of Epstein model of Six Types of National Principles for Parent/Family Involvement**

Parents, families and community members are given opportunities to learn the best skills of parenting. In return these benefit their children starting from the prenatal stage until they complete their high school education. Information is leveraged to stakeholders evenly and timeously. The school benefits from skilful parents, family and community members who voluntarily offer to assist the school. Parents acquire skills to assist their children with schoolwork at home and improve the learners' and school's overall performance and achievements. By involving all the stakeholders in decision making process, the interests and needs of all stakeholders are addressed and eventually the School-Family-Community partnerships' vision is achieved.

### **The disadvantages of Epstein model of Six Types of National Principles for Parent/Family Involvement**

There are parents who are barred from parenting programmes by their work commitments and are unable to assist their children due to work related fatigue. Communication in rural areas is poor as anticipated due to the level of illiteracy which limits their usage of social communication means such as e-mails, SMSs, twitter, and

WhatsApp. As far as volunteering is concerned, family and community members prefer to work for money to support their young ones. They spend most of their time at work.

Family and community members have to undergo a literacy training programme that would capacitate them to assist their children in learning at home and doing their homework. As has been mentioned above, decisions taken may not address the needs and interests of other stakeholders because most of them spend most of their time at their respective workplaces.

#### **2.3.2.4 The Epstein's three overlapping spheres of effect model**

##### **The essence of Epstein's three overlapping spheres of effect model**

The Epstein's three overlapping spheres of effect are Family, School, and community (NEA, 2008:2). They are indispensable role players that serve as the foundational base for the lifeworld of the child until adulthood is reached (NEA, 2008:2).



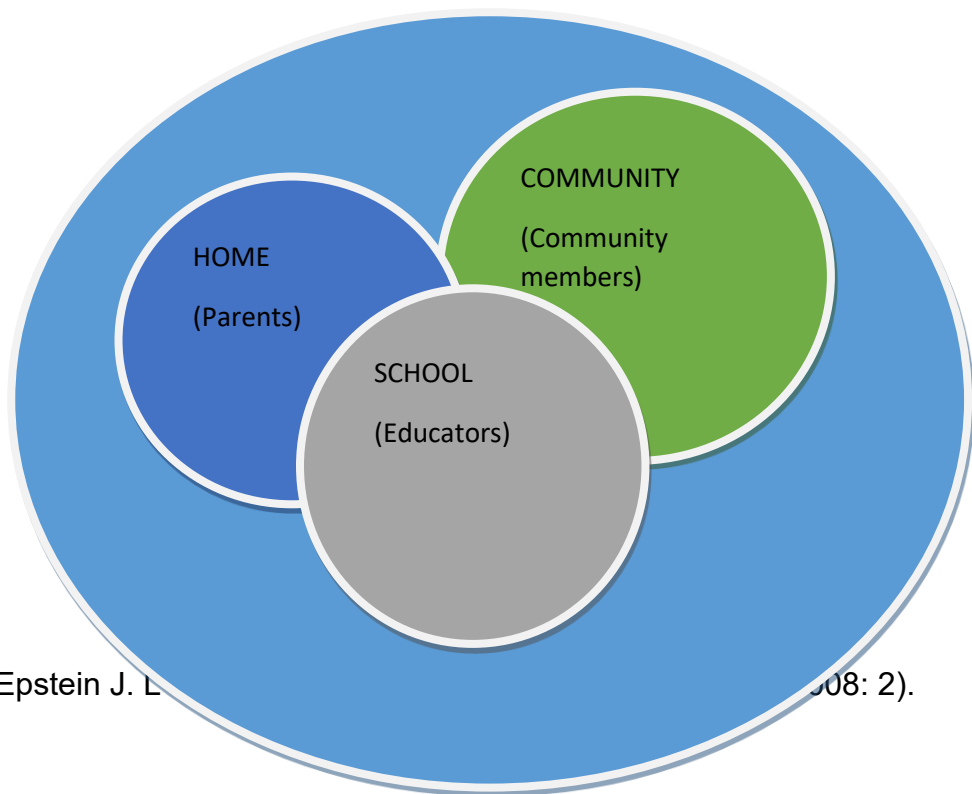


Figure: 2. 4. Epstein J. L. (2008: 2).

### **The advantages of Epstein’s three overlapping spheres of effect model**

The model refers the first educator (parent) of the child from birth as a sphere of influence whereby children are taught moral and social values from home. The social and moral values of the community at some stages intertwine with those of the family. The family and the community have a role of influencing the child to be their valuable asset and responsible adults in the future. Both supervise the well-being of the child so that he/she does not become a misfit in the two spheres.

When the child starts to go to school the above spheres of effect now interfere with what the learner is taught at school. The school as another sphere of effect exists to enhance what the learners have been taught at home and in the community. Furthermore, the school adds literacy and numeracy skills to argument what the learners have already accumulated in their lifeworld to achieve their ultimate goal.

## **The disadvantages of Epstein's three overlapping spheres of effect model**

The home as a sphere has an effective and efficient influence until learners are at their secondary education; thereafter parents and family members' influence get reduced. At this stage peer group, school and community members have more influence over the child than family members, and learners have developed the sense of willing to belong to these parties. The family now has little influence on their child as compared to the learners' educators, peers, and community members.

### **2.4. INTERNAL (RURAL SCHOOL) FACTORS**

#### **2.4.1. Challenges facing learners in rural communities**

Learners in isolated rural areas perform poorly, stay far away from school, have no access to bursaries, travelling allowance, and are under poor school climate which does not meet their psychological and developmental needs (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Komro, Livingston, Wagenaar, Kominsky, Pettigrew, & Garrett, 2017:458; Blank, Jacobson, & Melaville, 2012:1; Nelson et al., 2012:126; Michael, 2011:1; Kohn, 2011:4). Furthermore, learners are from low-income rural communities and low socioeconomic status. These factors lead to low retention and some lose interest of furthering their studies due to high-stakes testing, test nervousness, not being attracted, challenged, and/or engaged in real-world educational issues (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Komro et al., 2017:458; Blank et al., 2012:1; Nelson et al., 2012:126; Michael, 2011:1; Kohn, 2011:4).

#### **2.4.2. Challenges experienced by educators in rural communities**

In the United States of America, rural schools face hardships such as high turnover of newly employed educators and shortage of resources (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Kheswa, Sandlana & Kwatubana, 2014:1; Molina, 2013:263, Vermeulen, 2013:114; Brayn & Henry, 2012:3). The schools are poorly skilled to effectively communicate with parents and community members and educators do not have enough contact teaching time. Educators have to travel long distances to attend poor and sometimes irrelevant professional development programmes and workshops. Teachers and student teachers lack involvement training programme to collaborate with stakeholders. Educators are not involved in policies formation but are expected to apply policies and believe in them; as a result, they view the newly introduced policies as a vehicle

towards demeaning public education. Educators are experiencing poor working, living conditions, water shortage, have more work due to congested classes, poor sanitation, and salaries. There is no integration and continuity of programmes of the curriculum from one grade to the other. The administration finds it hard to attract funding and qualified educators due to little salary of which most is spend on transport costs (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Kheswa et al., 2014:1; Molina, 2013:263, Vermeulen, 2013:114; Brayn & Henry, 2012:3).

Educators in community schools are exempted from attending pre-service, in-service training and workshops which are attended only by educators from public schools (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Kheswa et al., 2014:8; Nigerian Ministry of Education, 2012:1; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007:301). There is a higher shortage of educators and lecturers in the crucial areas of science and technology. Principals are fraudulently hired for principal posts. The HIV/AIDs pandemic and its related diseases lead to death and the higher rate of absenteeism of educators and learners and incapacitated them to do their work effectively and efficiently (Oyedemi & Mogano, 2017:3; Kheswa et al., 2014:8; Nigerian Ministry of Education, 2012:1; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007:304).

#### **2.4.3. Challenges experienced by rural schools**

For the School-Family-Community partnerships to be effective the competency of school staff should be improved, power must be shared amongst the stakeholders and all partners should be involved in decision making processes (Mesty, 2017:1; Price, & Thomas, 2016:120; Aydin; Bryan & Duys, 2012:146). Stakeholders should be invited to partake in programmes that would enhance them to assist their children with schoolwork, collaboratively build good economic, cultural, social, and political relationships. The curriculum, instruction, and assessment should be reformed to prepare stakeholders for the 21st century educational demands of life and work (Mesty, 2017:1; Price, & Thomas, 2016:120; Aydin et al., 2012:146).

#### **2.4.4. Infrastructure as a challenge in rural areas**

The South Africa National Department of Basic Education through the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) have not alleviated the infrastructure problem by building new schools, repairing old, dilapidated structures, providing water and sanitation, and installing electricity (Price, & Thomas, 2016:120; Malgas, 2011:2; Naicker, 2011:72).

Learners use a local church and mobile classrooms. Schools are unfenced, vandalised, without administration block, computers, and science laboratories (Price, & Thomas, 2016:120; Malgas, 2011:2; Naicker, 2011:72).

#### **2.4.5. Learners' benefits from community involvement**

School-Family-Community partnerships develop assessment and intervention strategies, systems, and practices towards a conducive learning and teaching environment (Brownman, 2012:12; Blank et al., 2012:6; Williams, 2011:111; NEA, 2005:3). Schools and community resources are aligned to assist learners to gain more information from many neighbouring collaborative schools, public and/or private groups who offer after school activities, educational classes, and supportive services. Businesspeople sponsor special educational events and provide learners with scholarships. Parent/ home facilitators assist learners to attend school regularly, complete their homework and assignments on time to improve their performance. Clinicians and doctors provide rural learners with the required medical services to enhance learners' performance, despite their social, economic and health adversities (Brownman, 2012:12; Blank et al., 2012:6; Williams, 2011:111; NEA, 2005:3).

#### **2.4.6. Learners' benefits from teacher-parent relationships**

The School-Family-Community partnerships link parents and educators in promoting shared responsibility for children's academic success, improve the school's programmes to develop learners and assist in creating conducive learning climate at home and at school (Blank et al., 2012:9; Semke & Sheridan 2011:17; Epstein & Sanders, 2006:86; Epstein & Sheldon, 2006:119). These ease the tension between learners and educators, giving parents a chance to provide learner's needs and ease educator's work. The teacher-parent relationship increases student achievement and academic performance, stronger self-regulatory skills, giving fewer discipline problems, better study habits, more positive attitudes toward school, improved homework habits and work orientation, higher educational aspirations and the attainment of success and maturity (Blank et al., 2012:9; Semke & Sheridan 2011:17; Epstein & Sanders, 2006:86; Epstein & Sheldon, 2006:119).

#### **2.4.7. Learners' benefiting from parents and tutors at home**

Parents and tutors who participate in formal structures of the school are able to assist learners to study at home. This leads to improved learners' academic performance enhancing the wellbeing of learners, and eventually opening doors to learners' professional and vocational choices (Araque, Wietstock, Cova, & Zepeda, 2017:244; South African Department of Education Action Plan, 2014:142; Zhan; Bray; Wang; Lykins & Kwo, 2013:16; Longsdale, 2011:11). Tutors provide learners with examination skills, learning difficulties, thus facilitating examination preparation, and reducing the heavy load of educators. As a result, learners are free and prefer to ask for clarity from their tutors than their educators (Araque, et al 2017:244; South African Department of Education Action Plan, 2014:142; Zhan et al., 2013:16; Longsdale, 2011:11).

#### **2.4.8. Equipping learners with workplace skills**

By engaging learners in community projects, they learn valuable workplace competencies (Schonert-Reichl, Kitil, & Hanson-Peterson, 2017:16; Longsdale, 2011:11). Skilled family and community members offer formal and informal job observation, apprenticeship and internship opportunities for learners, educators, and the SMT. Learners get a chance to test their recreational interests, develop a good relationship with the community businesses and organisations and get summer and part-time employments chances through the relationships (Schonert-Reichl, et al 2017:16; Longsdale, 2011:11).

### **2.5. EDUCATOR'S BENEFITING FROM SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **2.5.1. Understanding the needs of a School-Family-Community partnership**

Educators are trained to sharpen their academic and professional expertise to adapt to new curriculum changes, develop their competency and skills to stimulate a richer learning environment (Stacey, Havlik, & Gavin, 2014:18; Kheswa et al., 2014:2869; Molina, 2013:237; Longsdale, 2011:11; Harmon, Gordanier, Henry, & George,, 2007:10).. Experienced educators participate in school design to restore the culture of teaching and learning, impact positively on the general development and behaviour of the learners, family and community members and afford educators a teaching chance

(Stacey et al., 2014:18; Kheswa et al., 2014:2869; Molina, 2013:237; Longsdale, 2011:11; Harmon et al., 2007:10).

### **2.5.2. Educators' benefits from experts and mentors**

According to Stacey et al. (2014:18) coordinators networks district-based educators to provide professional assistance. Experts with extensive knowledge share knowledge with educators to broaden their scope of knowledge (Stacey et al., 2014:18).

## **2.6. RURAL SCHOOLS' BENEFITS FROM SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

The community members may provide social capital to the school, influence others towards a positive relationship and serve as advocates of the importance of academic success among different stakeholders (Longsdale, 2011:11; Simmons, 2011:1; Epstein et al., 2002:14). Visionary leadership transforms schools towards achieving the visions of the schools. A good teamwork of stakeholders promotes a collaborative working spirit and formulates plans and strategies that lead towards the achievement of the common goal. The stakeholders would ensure that the activities that lead to the attainment of the desired goals of developing learners, family, and community members educationally and socio-economic are publicly and transparently well-implemented, executed, and accountably monitored. The School-Family-community partnerships members would form strategic alliance with agencies for collaborative services, ask for donations from potential donors and give each other strong collegial support to enhance participation (Simmons, 2011:4; Longsdale, 2011:11; Epstein et al., 2002:14).

## **2.7. EXTERNAL (HOME AND COMMUNITY) FACTORS AFFECTING SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

### **2.7.1. External role players in School-Family-Community partnerships**

In order to build or develop rural School-Family-Community partnerships seek advice from the rural education specialists, family and community members to suit the environment where it is introduced (Araque, et al 2017:230; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:41). Family and community members should assist by ensuring that their rural environment, culture, tradition and indigenous skills and knowledge are incorporated in the school curriculum. Any newly established project should meet the community's

satisfaction, approval and be relevant for their development. The project should ensure that relevant human resources, funds, learner's uniforms, learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs) are made available for the School-Family-Community partnerships to meet the needs and interests of learners, family, and community members. Unity is strength, meaning that collaboratively the stakeholders should solve issues such as counselling sessions, literacy interventions, networking, social grant applications and access to health services. Activities such as literacy classes, women's group meetings, parents-teachers' meetings, community functions should be allowed to take place at school to increase the stakeholders' sense of ownership of the institution and build the confidence and pride of the stakeholders about the school (Araque, et al 2017:230; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:41).

## **2.7.2. External challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships**

### **2.7.2.1. Challenges met by rural parents**

There is no parent-line for parents to access education and support services (Tyler, 2017:30; Lim, 2012:195). Hence, parents cannot acquire services with respect to child disabilities, parenting strategies, parent-child relationships, ICT and tutor training, custody and the treatment meant for emotionally challenged learners. As a result, they cannot use digital curriculum materials to support learners properly. The chaplain and pastors do not have access to Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care funding programmes that shall enhance their support to learners' socio-economic and religious needs. Korean American's culture does not allow them to be involved in the education of their children at the school level, but only at the home level and it is difficult to get them involved and engaged in the education of their children at school (Tyler, 2017:30; Lim, 2012:195).

### **2.7.2.2. Challenges faced by rural and remote families**

Poverty in rural families is at its alarming rate and leads to social and behavioural problems (Tyler, 2017:30; Brayn & Henry, 2012:3; Lim, 2012:100; Interim plan, 2011:1; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007: 301). The level of unemployment is high. Being geographically isolated and unemployment disadvantages rural families from accessing parenting, healthcare services, energy, and clean water. Educators do not utilise the advantage of their knowledge to educate family members. Families talk little with their children about schoolwork and play very little role in the education of their children. There are family members who are forbidden by their culture to share their

personal problems with educators. This situation makes it hard for educators to know the physical, social and economic challenges encountered by learners. In countries where schools are few, the partnerships between UNICEF, Ministry of Education, and family and community members provide assistance building schools for their children (Tyler, 2017:30; Lim, 2012:100; Interim plan, 2011:1; Brayn & Henry, 2011:3; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007: 301).

#### **2.7.2.3. Challenges experienced by rural community members**

Rural community members and their schools are isolated and thus collaborate little with institutions of higher learning (Tyler, 2017:30; De Pedro et al., 2011:73; Quinn, 2011:1; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009:1). Lack of respect and trust from community members leave educators as besieged professionals. Families and community members lack day care centres, social, medical, psychological and behavioural services, transport to school, and are challenged by work commitment, poverty, low-income, unemployment, usage of foreign language of communication, school meetings scheduled at awkward times, limited resources, changing demographics, and at some stages they are forced to build and fund schools for their children, (Tyler, 2017:30; Redding & Walberg, 2012:8; De Pedro et al., 2011:73; Quinn, 2011:1; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009:1).

#### **2.7.2.4. Challenges aggravated by lack of motivation and good values**

Teachers, family, and community members do not practise a culture of encouraging and motivating learners by acknowledging their ability and potential to excel in their studies (Hurley, & Huscroft-D'Angelo, 2018:253; Redding & Walberg, 2012:8). Unmotivated learners perform poorly, and learners are not supported and guided in terms of dating, sports, and other issues. Learners spend most of their time outside engaged in activities that are against their academic achievement and future interest. Learners' peers and community's poor attitude towards education reduce their interest, persistence, and perseverance in their schoolwork (Hurley, & Huscroft-D'Angelo, 2018:253; Redding and Walberg, 2012:8).

#### **2.7.2.5. Challenges emanating from geographical milieu**

The one-size-fits-all national school administration programmes, curriculum, and teacher training model are designed and prepared to be applied even in rural areas, disregarding the uniqueness and indigenous knowledge system of the rural remote



areas and the communities' needs and interests (Hurley, & Huscroft-D'Angelo, 2018:252; Roy, 2012:525; Semke & Sheridan, 2011:5; Harmon & Schafft, 2009:4). Rural settings experience the non-availability and non-delivery of School-Family-Community services, high percentage of inexperienced or poorly prepared teachers, insufficient resources, and poor facilities due to its remoteness. It is hard to organise and gather educators to educational developmental programmes as they are sparsely distributed throughout the rural area. It is hard and difficult to deliver furniture, laboratory equipment and textbooks to rural areas because of long distances and poor roads, sparsely located villages and inadequate delivering vehicles. The education officials find it hard to guide principals, educators and monitoring and supervision their work due to the remoteness of these areas and little is provided in terms of ICT (Hurley, & Huscroft-D'Angelo, 2018:2520; Roy, 2012:525; Semke & Sheridan, 2011:5; Harmon & Schafft, 2009:4).

### **2.7.3. EXTERNAL BENEFITS OF SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **2.7.3.1. Parents' benefits from School-Family-Community partnerships**

- Parents as members of the School Governing Body

The South African Department of Basic Education Action Plan (2014:142) highlights that the parent component of the School Governing Body gains skills in budget structuring, policy formation, the governance of schools, parents' rights, their duties, and responsibilities in the education of their children in all official languages. The parents' organisation highlights that through advocacy and training, parents and community members should promote the quality of teaching and learning, address social problems such as school violence and drug abuse. The educators, school management team and government officials need to promote parent participation (Araque, et al 2017:244; South African DBE Action Plan, 2014:142)

- Parents' benefit from learners' behavioural and performance improvement

Parents' involvements improve learners' performance, attendance, retention, social competency, learners' behaviour and reduce absenteeism in general (Tyler, 2017:30; De Pedro et al., 2011:72). Parent, school, family, and community's rights to participate in school related issues are protected by the district complaint officer. This would open

a room for school, parents, family, and community to contribute whatever is important to develop and sustain the partnerships (Tyler, 2017:30; De Pedro et al., 2011:72).

- Rural parents' benefits from developmental programmes

Parents and families benefited from parents' developmental programmes organised by the partnerships that focus on parenting support, parental development, academic and extracurricular activities, counselling, child development and how to deal with emotionally challenged children in forums and workshops (Tyler, 2017:30; Aydın et al., 2012:146; Mutch & Collins, 2012:183; Simmons, 2011:1; Elias, Bryan, Patrikakou & Weissberg, 2011:148; Longsdale, 2011:11). The gained skills are applied to assist and support their children on schoolwork at home and their neighbours. The parent leadership programmes improved parent's positive self-identity, leadership, and communicative skills relevant for the development of school, families, and the community members. (Tyler, 2017:30; Aydın et al., 2012:146; Mutch & Collins, 2012:183; Simmons, 2011:1; Elias et al., 2011:148; Longsdale, 2011:11).

### **2.7.3.2. Community's benefits from School-Family-Community partnerships**

Community members benefit from training programmes, funding and opportunities organised by the districts (Tyler, 2017:30; Cowrie & Radmass, 2014:94; Molina, 2013:237; Allerman & Holly, 2013:1; Brownman, 2012:1; Roy, 2012:525; Lonsdale, 2011:10; Simmons, 2011:1; NEA, 2005:3). The educational skills serve as a source of revitalisation to add more vigour to the community's working force. Learners who gain skills are capacitated to be future leaders. The skills acquired by stakeholders are the prerequisite requirements in the academic, professional, working sector, and they reduce unemployment and boost the economic status of the community at large. The businesspeople's profiles get enriched as they plough back to their communities by supporting schools, employing community members, and giving services to the community members. Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CADV) and the National Parent Teachers' Association (NPTA) provide workshops related to technical areas such as handicraft and the creative arts to schools, family, and the wider community. Some school provided gathering area/space where workshops, meetings and activities are held. During stringent weather conditions such as hurricane and snowstorm, community members use schools as shelter, bathrooms for taking showers, recharging of their electronic devices, and refilling of water suppliers. Adults

teach learners as a form of ploughing back to their communities. Learners provide community services and development by assisting local groups and organisations in completing the projects. Communities benefit from physical and human resources of schools and when schools turn out to be main employers and users of local goods and services. Black Education Officers (BEOs) and District Education Officers (DEOs) use rural schools as a site to teach SMTs, educators, learners, family and community members ICT skills in ICT programmes in their home language (Tyler, 2017:30; Cowrie & Radmass, 2014:94; Molina, 2013:237; Allerman & Holly, 2013:1; Brownman, 2012:1; Roy, 2012:525; Lonsdale, 2011:10; Simmons, 2011:1; NEA, 2005:3).

## **2.8. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

### **2.8.1. Educational programmes for enhancing School- Family- Community partnerships**

School-Family-Community partnerships should provide programmes assisting vulnerable SMTs, educators, learners, family and community members with emotional, home-based care, sexuality education, parenting, adult education development, and caregivers/ home tutors, creation of a good learning and teaching environment, disability grants, food parcels, academic, professional, physical, social and psychological challenges in order to eradicate perpetual dependency syndrome (Tyler, 2017:23; Araque, et al 2017:244; Limpopo Department of Basic Education (LDBE), 2013:10; Hlalele, 2012:70). The stakeholders such as the orphaned, poor families, those affected by domestic violence, heads of child-headed families and those neglected by their parents' needs and interests will be catered for. Reviewed Literacy Strategy for General Education and Training (GET) introduced programmes whose vision is to develop multilingualism in schools, family, and communities in order to capacitate them to play a meaningful role in a dynamic society and economy by facilitating, supporting and monitoring the availability and accessibility of resources (Tyler, 2017:23; Araque, et al 2017:244; LDBE, 2013:10; Hlalele, 2012:70).

### **2.8.2. Parent and community members' involvement policies in School-Family-Community partnerships**

There is a need to have a national policy on parental and community members' involvement that would ensure that they are held accountable for their children's

absenteeism and those who ultimately drop out (Araque, et al 2017:244; Tyler, 2017:23; Bhengu & Myende, 2015:7; Okeke, 2014:5; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007:306; NEA, 2005:2). A legislation that mandates all schools to include parents in advisory councils, school accountability teams, and governance committees should be implemented. The structured policy should explicitly cater for parents from different cultural groups, reflecting the role that should be played by parents, community members, teachers, and principals in the education of their children inside and outside the school. Stakeholders should be actively involved in the formulation of policies such as Admission Policy, Attendance Policy, Communication Policy, Enrolment Procedure Policy, Health Services Policy, HIV/AIDS Policy, Student Profile Policy, Student Record Retention Policy, and Withdrawal Procedure. Stakeholders should be involved in solving emerging problems and challenges (Araque, et al 2017:244; Tyler, 2017:23; Bhengu & Myende, 2015:7; Okeke, 2014:5; Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007:306; NEA, 2005:2).

### **2.8.3. Formation and application of strategies**

The Vancouver Public Schools (VPS), the Council of Large Public Housing Authority (CLPHA), and Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) formed a strategic coalition of organising the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programme to give voucher to low-income rural residents whose children were enrolled at (VPS) school and are without a home or face a great potential of being homeless (Tyler, 2017:23; Galvez & Simington, 2015:2; Okeke, 2014:5; van Wyk & Lemmer; 2007:301). The programmes were aimed to ensure stability at schools, fight against homelessness; reduce poor attendance and achievement; implement the curriculum, support, and encourage the education and training for learners, parents and community members, to enhance them to be socio-economically empowered (Tyler, 2017:23; Galvez & Simington, 2015:2; Okeke, 2014:5; van Wyk & Lemmer; 2007:301).

### **2.8.4. Establishment of policies**

For School-Family-Community partnerships to be established effectively, the school and other stakeholders should introduce policies and action principles that invite the active participation of parents and community members (Tyler, 2017:23; Bhengu & Myende, 2015:9; Witte & Sheridan, 2011:8; Witte & Sheridan, 2011:5; Brayn & Henry, 2011:3; Simmons, 2011:6). The established policy should make available travelling

costs, distance communicative resources from the community to school, from school to family, and programmes to enable SMT and educators to execute their duty in deep rural areas without infringing the cultural rights of the rural community at large. Community members in leadership positions should be given some incentives as a means of motivation and further increasing the eagerness of other stakeholders to be engaged in the School-Family-Community partnerships. Furthermore, willing family and community members should be found and trained to serve as translators, volunteers, and bus drivers. The policies should include invitation of specialists such as school psychologists, counsellors, and social workers to render their services to learners, family, and community members. Parent-parent and parent-teacher interaction policy create a chance to share members' information, goals, plans, and solutions for all children with behavioural challenges (Tyler, 2017:23; Bhengu & Myende, 2015:13; Witte & Sheridan, 2011:8; Brayn & Henry, 2011:5; Simmons, 2011:8).

#### **2.8.5. Introduction of parent and community members' involvement programmes**

##### **2.8.5.1. Pillars of a School-family-community partnerships**

The School-family-community partnerships should be laid on foundational conditions that have been commonly agreed by all stakeholders including learners, educators, SMTs, parents, community members, and other sectors (Myende, Samuel, & Pillay, 2018:1; The Work Programme, 2013:2; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:41; Netshandama, 2010:70; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009:2). The partnership should be led by outstanding leadership that share responsibilities, delegate duties, and involve everyone in decision-making mechanisms and facilitate changes for the improvement and development of the partnerships. The commonly agreed plans should be clear, well known and aimed at achieving the needs and interests of the stakeholders. Stakeholders of the School-family community partnerships should be aware of their roles and responsibilities, know the communicative protocol, and have trust and respect, and a good relationship amongst each other (Myende et al., 2018:1; The Work Programme, 2013:2; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:41; Netshandama, 2010:70; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009:2).

### **2.8.5.2. Participants in establishing a school-family-community partnership**

School-Family-Community partnerships should use the boundary-spanning leadership to ensure that school leaders create a culture that embrace educator, learners, parent, families, and community members to get fully involved in the partnership and work towards improving the health status of learners (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:1; Myende & Chikoko, 2014:256; Blank et al., 2011;15). Schools located in rural areas could consequently contemplate partnering with faith-based organisations, parents, community members, community leaders, government sectors, businesses, hospitals/clinics, or higher education authorities (Mampane & Huddle, 2017:1; Myende & Chikoko, 2014:257; Blank et al., 2011;17).

### **2.8.5.3. Development and improvement in Leadership skills**

The district and School-Family-Community partnerships leaders should use a policy standard designed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) aimed at guiding leaders of what to look for in gauging, monitoring, evaluating, and supporting improvements in educational leadership (Mesty, 2017:8; Majesty, 2017:1; Bhengu & Myende, 2016:10). The leadership should be visionary, collaborative, and instructional and focused on the partnership development. Stakeholders as implementers of educational policies and people who do the spade work at ground level deserve to be developed.

Workshops, in-service training, funding, and bursaries offered by the DBE are essential and should be made available to develop stakeholder's skills. Programmes relevant to enhance stakeholders' positive self-identity, leadership and communication skills should be implemented. The DBE should make available the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes to all stakeholders including principals and educators. Parents should be given the first priority in involving them in the partnerships and should be allowed to serve on regional advisory committees. This Educational Leadership Policy Standard (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium) ISLLC 2008 has been adopted and defined as good leadership under six standards which are:

- Having a common shared vision for learning by all members of the School-Family-Community partnerships

- Develop a culture and instructional programmes that would develop learners academically and staff professionally.
- Management of the School-Family-Community partnerships should ensure that there is an effective and efficient learning environment.
- The School-Family-Community leadership should collaboratively respond to the needs and interests of the community at large and make resources readily available such as community services, generation of jobs and growing crops for.
- The leadership should ensure that they act ethically and treat all stakeholders equally with integrity and fairness.
- The School-Family-Community leadership should understand, be answerable and affect the political, social, legal, and cultural groups in the community to support the development of the school-family-community partnerships.

The above-mentioned standard policy for leader's development would be applied to prepare and develop future leaders, guide educational leaders at schools, circuits, and districts. It also encourages the working together of schools, families, communities, and departmental officers for improving the performance and achievements of learners (Mesty, 2017:8; Majesty, 2017:1; Bhengu & Myende, 2016:10).

#### **2.8.5.4. Provisioning and implementation of the constitution requirements**

The South African Action Plan's (2014:46) vision of the schooling system in all South African schools is to achieve the following by 2025:

Learners should attend school regularly on time; schools should be nearer to learners' residential place to reduce unreasonable absenteeism of both learners and educators; learners should complete their schoolwork in time; schools should exert the necessary effort to make learners learn; learning through computers should be introduced from grade three, and the creation of a safe and conducive learning environment where friendships and respect reigns. Teachers should be readily available to advise and provide guidance to learners and parents, and learners should actively be involved in sporting and cultural activities (Action Plan, 2014:48).

Further, the employer should provide educators' personal and professional needs, improve educator's salary and conditions of service so that their profession could

become decent and competitive to other professions (Tyler, 2017:23; Action Plan, 2014:49).

The SMT should ensure that the National Curriculum is adhered to and teaching is taking place (Tyler, 2017:23; Action Plan, 2014:157), training them to be transformational leadership whereby harmony, creativity and internationally accepted work ethics are promoted all the time. Parents should know and be engaged in all activities and matters related to the school. Parents should be advanced of their children's performance and allow parents to contribute their supportive ideas and apply the commonly agreed corrective measures where necessary. Learning and teaching support materials LTSMs of high quality as described by the National Minimum Schoolbag policy should be made available to all learners, especially to those living in rural areas. Computers should be made available and accessible for learners and teachers to access information. School infrastructures and facilities should be attractive, spacious, functional, safe, and well maintained. The partnerships should safeguard their buildings and facilities and take pride in their school (Tyler, 2017:23; Action Plan, 2014:157).

#### **2.8.5.5. Delivery of essential public services**

The South African Department of Education Action Plan's (2014:157) goal (Number: 24) is aimed at using schools in providing health, poverty alleviation, psychosocial support, sport, and cultural services. The following strategies shall be applied to achieve the goal:

- The effect of nutrition in educational performance and enhancing government support in this area is conducted at schools.
- The new integrated strategy on HIV and AIDS is launched.
- A funding and implementation strategy agreed to by a range of government and non-government stakeholders is finalised to give effect to the new school sport policy.
- An independent review of a variety of school safety interventions undertaken during the previous years is completed, in order to reduce of violence in schools.



- An independent review of a three-year drive to introduce physical education to every quintile 1 school in the country is completed.
- Regulations should be comprehensively implemented and assessed to guide future actions to prevent and manage of teenage pregnancy and gender issues generally.

#### **2.8.5.6. Asset-based approach in community building**

The School-Family-Community partnerships should be built on the existing capital in the school, parents, community, and its surroundings (Juan & Visser, 2017:8; Myende & Chikoko, 2014:251). The home and educational assets are inevitable for the learners' success should be used in School-Family-Community partnerships. Educators have to know, accept, and appreciate, used and acknowledged the cultural capital students have. The asset-based approach is divided into three levels: primary, the secondary and outside assets.

- *Primary tier:* They are assets found inside the school site such as teachers and their skills.
- *Secondary tier:* This represents the immediate local community of the school such as local businesses and associations.
- *Outside tier:* These are interested individuals and organisations outside the community's vicinity such as research institutes and universities.

The School-Family-Community partnerships central assets being teachers, the school principal's leadership, the experience of the school in partnerships and local community representatives should be utilised effectively and efficiently to develop education of learners (Juan & Visser, 2017:8; Myende & Chikoko, 2014:251).

## **2.9. CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the relationship that the school must built and sustain with the communities around its vicinity. The characteristics and models of good and functional School-Family-Community partnerships are elaborated. The School-Family-Community partnership should be built on a good foundation of respect, trust, and active engagement of all the stakeholders. Furthermore, challenges that are encountered by rural schools and the policies and strategies that could be applied to

build a successful School-family-community partnership were also discussed. Lastly, the chapter explained the benefits that could be achieved by all members of the School-Family-Community partnerships. The next chapter is about the research design chosen for this study and how the participants had been chosen. The method that has been employed to collect and analyse data will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers the research paradigm, approach and design that have been applied to conduct this study. The population and sampling, data collection, and data analysis procedures followed throughout the course of the study are explained.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research is a case study of two rural secondary schools at Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province. The choice of case study design was grounded on its flexibility of allowing the researcher to explore, find relationships, and make predictions about the real-life situation of the target secondary schools (Ary et al., 2014:483; Gall et al., 2010:337). Case study design, further, allowed the researcher to access in-depth and detailed description, and get more clarity about the challenges facing School-Family-Community partnerships at the target secondary schools. This further led to the theoretical explanations based on the findings of this study (Ary et al., 2014:483; Gall et al., 2010:337).

This study was entrenched within the interpretive epistemology, which is based on multiple, socially constructed realities about the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships at two rural secondary schools of Mogodumo Circuit in Limpopo Province (Twining, Heller, Nussbaum, & Tsai, 2017:11; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:343; Gall; Gall & Borg, 2010:343). The implication is that reality was constructed and understood from the participants' viewpoints. As such, systematic procedures were applied to explore, explain, and interpret meaning in order to understand the challenges facing School-Family-Community partnerships at the target schools (Twining, et al 2017:11; Gall, et al., 2010:343; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:343; Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker, 2014:14).

The qualitative research approach was employed in order to answer the research question and come up with a detailed rich data of the target secondary schools (Twining, et al 2017:11; Ary et al., 2014:27). Furthermore, the researcher interpreted what was seen, heard and understood from the face-to-face interactions with the participants. A more detailed picture of the School-Family-Community partnerships at the target secondary schools was explored by reflecting and reporting multiple perspectives of the participants. That gave more meaning and identified the multiple factors that lead to School-Family-Community challenges experienced at the target secondary schools (Twining, et al 2017:11; Ary et al., 2014:27).

### **3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

The population of this study is comprised of 12 secondary and 19 primary schools in Mogodumo Circuit, which is a rural area at ga-Chuene, ga-Maja and ga-Mothiba. This area is located south-east of the city of Polokwane, along the R37 road, approximately 35 kilometres from Polokwane City. The study sample is composed of two secondary schools from this Circuit sampled as represented in the table below.

School	Learners	Educators	Principal	Parents	Community members
A	5	5	1	3	2
B	5	5	1	3	2

The sampled participants in the study were composed of learners, educators, principal, parents, and community members confined within the rural area where the

target schools are situated (Ary et al., 2014:169; Gall et al., 2010:348). Purposive sampling of participants was adopted by the researcher whereby relevant, well informed participants and their willingness to participate in the study were used as the criteria. Furthermore, the participants were conveniently sampled on the basis of being near the target secondary schools and therefore easily accessible. That saved the researcher money for transport (Ary et al., 2014:169; Gall et al., 2010:348).

3.4 The sample size totalled 32 participants.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher used triangulation of multiple data collection methods namely, document analysis, semi-structured interviews and observation in order to provide a rich holistic description of the present study. As such, the findings of this study are supported by various evidence sources, and are thus relevant, real, authentic, substantive, and represent the real challenges affecting the two target secondary schools.

Data collection process was done separately at Schools A and B according to the following three phases:

- Phase 1: Document analysis

The document analysis involves identifying, selecting, interpreting, and synthesizing information contained in documents of the research site in order to answer the research question (Twining, et al 2017:9; Lain, 2017:160; Ary et al., 2014:472). The following sources were analysed to produce documentary evidence about challenges affecting the School-Family-Community partnerships: SMT minute books, parents' meetings' minute book, progress report record book, and disciplinary record book. This was done because written work is the first-hand information and the most reliable primary information. A rich, detailed data about internal and external challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships was disposed from documents of School A and B.

- Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview is a strategy applied in qualitative research design whereby the researcher asks participants open-ended question to get more clarity

about the research question (Gall et al., 2010:348; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:169; Ary et al., 2014:466;). A semi-structured interview questionnaire guide is prepared in order to asks participants the same set of questions. A semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions was prepared to ask all participants in School A and B. Open-ended questions allowed the researcher to get rich information about the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships at the target schools from the participants. Semi-structured interviews were preferred because they gave the researcher the flexibility to probe by asking further clarity-seeking questions until data about challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships at the target schools was saturated. The researcher used the participants' settings (School A and B) and created an environment that made the face-to-face interactions with the participants a free conversation zone, where no one felt intimidated. The participants were free to ask questions verbally for clarity and were further allowed to respond to questions at their own pace. Furthermore, participants could express their feelings, experiences and perspectives about School-Family-Community partnerships challenges affecting the target secondary schools. These gave the researcher ample opportunity to deal with any possible discomfort that could have jeopardised the interview session on the part of the participants.

- Phase 3: Observation

Observation is a qualitative research technique whereby the researcher gather data by watching participants, events, and physical structures of the research site in order to define and answer the research question (Twining, et al 2017:9; Lain, 2017:160; Creswell, 2012:213; Gall et al., 2010:349). The researcher observed the target schools and the participants in their natural settings. The researcher applied a non-participant method whereby the researcher watches the subjects of his study in their present but without participation in the situation under study. An advantageous position was selected in order to observe and record field notes about the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships of each school without causing any disturbances. An observation schedule was prepared and used to redirect the researcher of what should be observed. A data collection instrument was prepared and used during the observation process. Through observation the researcher gathered first-hand data from the participants at the two secondary schools.

Observational evidence provided additional information about the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships.

The activities of interest such as SGB meetings, punctuality, Heritage Day, morning assembly and parents' meeting were observed in order to gather relevant data related to the challenges affecting School-Family-Community at the target secondary schools.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data collection and analysis occurred immediately after the researcher gained entry to each of the target rural schools (Twining, et al 2017:10; Gall et al., 2010:350; Ary et al., 2014:452). The collected data was recorded and transcribed into readable words. Data collected from the two secondary schools from Mogodumo Circuit was analysed thematically because thematic analysis allowed the researcher to organise bits and pieces of data until themes emerged. The researcher proceeded by reading and re-reading the collected data, breaking down the read data into sentences, grouped sentences carrying the same idea into categories and coded each segment. The data was built into patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom-up. The thematic data analysis and interpretation was followed immediately until themes were discovered.

The researcher discovered the emerged theme from observations, semi-structured interviews, and documents to shed more light on this study. The above process was followed recursively until the data analysis process reaches saturation point. (Twining, et al 2017:10; Ary et al., 2014:452; Gall et al., 2010:350).

### **3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

The following quality criteria were met in order to ensure the trustworthiness of this study:

#### **3.7.1 *Credibility***

This reflected how accurate the researcher described the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships of the target secondary schools from Mogodumo

Circuit of Limpopo Province (Spiers, Morse, Olson, Mayan, & Barrett, 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014: 531 Creswell, 2012:213). The researcher reflected a higher level of confidence, accurate, and truthful description of the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships at the target secondary schools. Data from documents, semi-structured interviews and observations were triangulated and they enhanced the evidence of the corroborated data. The information from various sources analysed via various analytic methods added to the trustworthiness of the collected data. The participants were invited during the debriefing process to double-check the availability of possible discrepancies that might harm the credibility of this study. The researcher complied and adhered to ethical considerations when undertaking this study. The needs and rights of the participants were respected during the course of the study. The researcher remained focused on the challenges of School-Family-Community partnerships. This led to the development of possible strategies for enhancing partnerships necessary for promoting quality education for all. The experiences of the participants were taken and accepted without questioning or altering them, even if they contradicted with the researcher's ideas about the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213).

### **3.7.2 *Transferability:***

Transferability of data is meant to answer the question: how far can the findings of this study fit in the same context outside the present study? This refers to the extent to which the findings of this study could be generalised and applied to other contexts, settings and groups (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213). The findings of this study might not necessarily be the same to that of other settings due to the uniqueness of the two target secondary schools. Furthermore, the study as a case study, purposively delimited the number of schools and participants who took part in the study and consequently the findings of the study will also be delimited. Therefore, the findings of this study are not transferable (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213).

### **3.7.3 Dependability:**

The researcher's peer who was not part of the study was used to audit-trail the findings of the study (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213). The use of audit-trail was vital for verifying whether the collected data tallied with the description of the partnerships at the two target rural secondary schools. That process verified the experiences and perspectives entailed in the documents, interviews and observations. The notes and records of activities are kept in a retrievable form in a Compact Disk (CD), Universal Serial Bus (USB), hard copy and a laptop. Multiple data sources, methods and member checking were used during data collection and analysis. The participants were revisited to verify themes identified as to whether they were what the participants intended to give during the interviews (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213).

### **3.7.4 Confirmability:**

This was meant to measure and double-check the extent to which the researcher was free from bias in any way during the course of the study (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213). The researcher ensured confirmability by triangulating the findings gathered in documents, field notes, transcribed interview notes and data collection methods (Spiers, et al 2018:1; Smith, & McGannon, 2018:16; Ary et al., 2014:531; Creswell, 2012:213)

## **3.8. CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the methodology that the researcher employed, research design, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, and the trustworthiness of the present study.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the results of the qualitative case study focus on the perception of teachers, learners, principals, parents, and community members on the challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas. The study focused on the internal (school) and external (family and community) challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnerships and the strategies that should be put in place to strengthen the School-Family-Community partnerships. The participants shared their submissions, experiences, and their perceptions with the researcher through one-on-one interview interaction.

Interviews were conducted in English and Sepedi (mother tongue of learner, parents, and community members). There were participants' perceptions which were common to one another, but some were different. Logically, the researcher presents the results, the commonness, and the differences in the perceptions of the participants in an ordered way. There are direct quotes from interviews with the participants to illustrate themes and findings in this chapter.

This chapter presents the findings of this study. The findings are categorised according to the objectives of the study being the internal and external challenges that affect School-Family-Community partnerships and lastly the developmental programmes that would strengthen the School-family-Community partnerships.

## 4.2 THE INTERNAL (SCHOOL) CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN RURAL AREAS

### 4.2.1 The context of the school

The school B is situated in a remote and poor rural village of gaChuene Leshikishiki in the Mogodumo Circuit. Family and community members in the village are largely illiterate, not capacitated in parenting, and to assist their children with schoolwork. The assistance they afford is buying them learning accessories' such as calculators, study guides, data bundles for accessing internet and the costs for enrichment classes. The school is poorly fenced with an old rusted barbed wire fence. A dusty and gravel road leads to the schools with old, rusty entrance gate. The infrastructure is old fashioned and does not cater for inclusive education whereby people with disabilities such as blindness and paraplegics can be accommodated.

Community Members <sup>5B</sup>:

*"The Department of Basic Education does not improve the school. Toilets are in a good condition. Ultimately the school looks dilapidated, does not cater for inclusive education, unattractive and stakeholders tend to dislike and disrespect the school".*

Family and community members are illiterate and therefore cannot assist learners with their schoolwork. In other words, learners lack educational assistance. Parents assist by buying their children study guides, cell phones, data bundles to access the internet, calculators, school uniform and paying money for attending block teaching and enrichment classes at a school selected by the Circuit as a centre for that time. Furthermore, they do help learners when it comes to their historical background, culture, and tradition.

Principal <sup>1A</sup>:

*"The school is located at a rural community whereby community members are illiterate, addicted to liquor, dagga, or gambling. Learners come to school having not done their schoolwork. Parents came to school complaining that educators give their children difficult work of which they cannot even assist. One parent came to insult an educator because she had misunderstood the task that was given to their children. A Natural Science educator gave grade 8 learners a task to go and find out how to avoid being*

*struck by lightning. The next morning the parent came in fuming. The old mother said she was not a witch. She does not know how lightning formulates”.*

#### **4.2.2 Safety and security**

In February 2013 the DBE installed fire extinguishers in every class, including the principal's office. All these items were stolen before the end of the same February except for the one in the principal's office. In September 2016, it was noted in the disciplinary that two boys in grade 10 and one in grade 12 in school uniform were caught by police while smoking dagga in the village. The police further searched their school bags and found packed packets of dagga in one learner's school bag. The SGB suspended the learners from attending classes for two weeks.

In the SMT minute book, it was recorded in September 2017 that the following items were damaged or stolen hot plates, computer server, electric kettles and cords, dictionary, calculators (Casio), maize meal, cans of fish, rice, raw beans, printer, computer server, fire extinguishers, plastic containers, burglar doors (steel rods), windowpanes, door handles, dish washing liquid; soccer, netball, and volley balls and four skipping ropes.

In February 2018 the principal of the school reported to the SGB that five grade 10 learners were found gambling in the boy's toilets during school hours. The principal took the dice and money from the gambling scene as evidence. The SGB and learners' parents suspended these learners for a week.

In accordance with the reports, in March 2016, July 2016 and August 2017, a staffroom where NSNP learner's raw food is stored has been broken into. In all three cases the raw food such as rice, beans, soup, maize meal, and kitchen utensils were stolen.

From the disciplinary record book, it is noted that in May 2016, two male learners whose fathers are siblings, both from grade 10 were found fighting at the male learner's toilets during break time. One was armed with an axe while the other one was armed with a knife. The disciplinary committee and the two learner's parents learnt that they were fighting over a girlfriend who is in grade 9. They were both suspended from school for two weeks.

In mid-August 2016 two male learners in grade 10 fought over a pen in class in the present of other learners. The deputy principal of the school tried to intervene and stop

the fight. Unfortunately, one learner slapped the poor deputy over the face wearing a pair of spectacles. The deputy principal was badly injured. The learner's parents and the disciplinary committee suspended the two learners from school for a month.

In September 2016, it was noted in the logbook that the main computer server of this school was stolen, and this resulted in rendering twenty desktop computers stored in the classroom converted staffroom dysfunctional.

In August 2017 as recorded in the logbook, police crew in five police vans from Lebowakgomo police station made unexpected visit to the school to search learners for illegally in possession of drugs and dangerous weapons. Five male learners were found in possession of dagga and various knives and an axe. It was further discovered that they belong to two opposing rival gangs in the village. The committee disciplinary and the parents suspended the five learners for a period of five consecutive weeks.

#### **4.2.3 Learners' Absenteeism**

In March 2015, the District Manager for Governance visited the school for monitoring and support. Only three teachers had signed the educator's time book. There were teachers who were at work but did not sign the time book. Four educators reported late at work. Also, twenty-eight learners from various grades were also late on that date.

As noted in learner's class register in February to March 2016, a group of grades 10 and 11 who repeatedly absent themselves on Mondays and Fridays. The principal noted in visitors' book and their parents signed underneath. The learners bunk their lesson and start drinking liquor early on Friday until late Sunday afternoon on weekly basis. They were suspended for a week and their parents agreed to monitor and supervise the learner's present at home and their schoolwork.

In February to May 2016, it is recorded in learner's class registers from grade 9 to 11 that approximately 4 to 5 learners were absent from school every school day. It was also noticed that *there* are learners who come late deliberately and start attending lessons after break. These learners always ensure that they are available when food is dished out to learners during break time.

During the ten-day Easter Enrichment classes of March 2017, three learners in grade 12 were recorded for deliberately absenting themselves. The principal and parents

agreed that learners should be punished by cleaning the school yard for one week in the afternoon under the supervision of the principal.

#### **4.2.4 Substance abuse**

In February 2017, ten learners from different classes were recorded in the disciplinary record book for making noise and disturbing lessons in the presents of educators several times. Their parents were called, and they assisted the principal in interrogating learners. After lengthy interrogation learners disclosed that were under the influence of smoke dagga. The principal and parents reprimanded and suspended for a week.

In mid-June 2017, two girls and three boys were found smoking dagga in school's toilets. Through intensive interrogations, it was revealed that there are a huge number of learners in school who are regular cigarette and dagga smokers. Parents were called and those learners were given punished of cleaning the school yard in the afternoon for two weeks.

It was reported in the logbook that from January 2015, the Lebowakgomo South African Police Services (SAPS) visited the school three times. In those visits, focus was on prevention of substance abuse, youth development and back-to-school campaign.

It is recorded in the logbook that the Deputy Manager for Governance (DMG) and the English Curriculum Advisor (CA) visited the school in May 2015 for monitoring and support. The DMG saw a group of learners who were sitting next to the restrooms. Among them were a girl and sixteen boys. They were smoking dagga. Back to their classrooms, the DMG searched the learners and found that a grade 9 learner was in possession of dagga. All were given a punishment of cleaning the school yard for a week in the afternoon by SGB and the learners' parents.

#### **4.2.5 Teaching, learning and assessment**

It was found from the logbook that from February 2016 to September 2017 the district and Circuit officials visited the school eighty-five times for monitoring and support on issues related to class attendance, audit of written work, supervision of extra and enrichment classes, and examination. Their visits also focused on supporting teachers

on specific subject content and teaching approaches and methodologies. All these efforts were done with the intention to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

In January 2017 one departmental official visited the target school to monitor and support reopening. All educators were present. Teaching and learning took place despite the fact that stationary was not delivered.

It was noted that in June 2018 the school served as a centre for enrichment classes. Experienced teachers were appointed to teach during the enrichment classes. They supported their children financially and they provided sleeping paraphernalia. The parent component of the SGB from each school supported learners by maintaining discipline, cooking for learners, and motivating them to study more.

It is noted in the logbook that a curriculum advisor visited the school in March 2016 to monitor the Easter Enrichment Classes. At the time of the visit, it was the Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy period. Only one learner in the Mathematical Literacy group was absent. Teachers do attend their classes as expected.

In September 2017, it has been noted that the centre manager runs the vacation enrichment class's centre in an acceptable manner. The centre is up and running with all tutors for all subjects doing their work well. Learners are also punctual and well dressed in school uniform. With this kind of attitude and commitment, this activity will yield fruits.

A follow up was done by English curriculum advisor in August 2017 whereby class lessons for grade 12 poetry was presented in class in the present of the educator. The teacher confided that he has serious challenges in that content.

It is noted that in logbook in August 2017 the Circuit manager visited the school for monitoring and support. An accountability session with educators was held and educators had an opportunity to present their subject challenges. Analysis of grade 8 to 12 June results were presented and discussed by all. Teachers pledged to go an extra-mile to improve performance.

#### **4.2.6 Funding**

From the logbook, it was found that in February 2017 the DMG visited the school to monitor and provide support on issues pertaining to financial management. It was

noted that the cash book and cheque requisition books were not up to date. There were blank cheques which were signed by the chairperson of the SGB. It was recommended that the financial books should be audited and that blank cheques should not be signed beforehand to avoid misuse of school funds.

#### **4.2.7 Overcrowding**

The researcher noticed that in grade 8 and 9 classes are congested with learners to the extent that the desks are stretched up to near the chalkboard. Educators do not move freely by the chalkboard when teaching. It is hard also for the educator to move between rows of learners' desks due to congestion. Due to overcrowding learners are compelled to share desks and chairs which are meant to be used by one learner.

#### **4.2.8 Infrastructure**

The school A is well fenced with palisade fence with two gates; one main gate at the West of the school A is used by people and cars while the other small gate is at the East of the school A are used only by learners. The school A has three blocks made up of ten classrooms. The blocks are old, unattractive, and dilapidated. The school does not have a library, a science laboratory, school halls, administration block and a computer laboratory. One classroom serves as an office for the SMT, a staffroom, storage of books, storage of scientific chemicals and apparatus, and storage of printing and photocopying machines.

It was recorded in the visitors' book that in November 2016 the director from DBE visited the school A on issues related to the construction of classes in order to replace the mobile classes. He requested the school managers to submit a letter requesting the provision of classes.

There are four mobile classrooms to supplement the shortage of classes. They are used by the grade 8 and 9. The classrooms have broken windowpanes and non-lockable door. Inside the classrooms are desks and chairs of which some are broken. There are not enough chairs and desks as a result, learners share chairs as well as desks. Toilets for female and male learners and educators are available and are still in good condition. There are playing grounds for soccer, netball, and volleyball only. The soccer field is outside the schoolyard and is not fenced.

The school B has been long fenced with barbed wire which is at a rusting stage. The main entrance gate is also old and broken. The school has three blocks of three classrooms each. There is no administration block, library, laboratory and a computer room. There is also a small two-roomed house which serves as the staffroom, HOD and the principal's offices. The two offices are non-spacious. Classrooms have broken windowpane without closing/opening handles. There are classrooms with broken keys as a result they are not lockable. One classroom has been converted to a staffroom, a photocopying room and a storeroom for books, educator's files, dysfunctional desktop computers and buckets of polish and floor soap. Roofing in other classrooms is in good condition while in the one in the staffroom has been broken by thugs.

There are separate toilets for female and male learners. Female and male educators share a block made up of two toilets on either side which are all in a good condition. There is also a newly built multi purposed tennis court which can be used for playing tennis, table tennis, volleyball, basketball, and netball. It is not yet in use.

#### **4.2.8.1 Knowledge of school-family-community partnerships' vision**

The participants understand a vision to be a set of goals, aims, objectives set by all stakeholders to give the school a direction and the target to be achieved at the end. The vision gives direction to stakeholders to collaboratively ensure the smooth running of the school. The set a goal direct stakeholder where they want their children, family, and community members to be in the future and empowering them to change their environment for the better and to unfold their hidden talents.

Principal 2B:

*"The vision of the school gives the school a target that the school will work towards it. You set certain aims and objectives so that you exert all your effort to achieve the set aims and objectives. These helps the school as to whether is it still in the right direction or not. The importance of a vision is to put the school on track, so that as you go along with your daily business, you work within the prescripts that you shall have set as your school goals".*

A vision is the driving force of stakeholders to achieve their goal. The vision is aimed to educate learners, parents, and community members, for them to understand what



the school stands for and what it intends to be now and in the future for the benefit of learners, educators, the community, and other stakeholders.

Educator 2A:

*“A vision is the driving force behind all stakeholders to benefit the learners. This is about what the school wants to achieve and the plans that the school will put into practice to achieve its goals. A vision is the driving force of stakeholders to achieve their goal”.*

- **Understanding of the school’s vision**

The school’s vision is about building better future opportunities for learners, families, and community members and improving their economic, social, and educational endeavours by unfolding the hidden talents in learners. The goal is to lead them to an independent adulthood. It is aimed at developing the school to have access to facilities such as libraries, scientific laboratories, computer laboratories and theatre.

Educator 4A:

*“The vision is about the education development of learners, parents and community members. It is intended at producing the best products for the country in various sphere of education. Partnerships of SMT, staff members, SGB and community members should fundraise to develop the infrastructure of the school”.*

Participants stated that a vision gives the school a target to be achieved and agreed upon by all stakeholders. The mission statements are set towards achieving the vision. The school ensure as to whether it is in the right direction by checking if they had achieved the missions. The daily activities should be within the regulations of the goals that the school shall have set. The objectives and missions of various stakeholders are encapsulated into the vision of the school. A school’s vision defines the characters of stakeholders and develops the school’s culture.

Community Member 1B:

*“A school’s vision is a set goal or a set objective that is agreed upon by all stakeholders aimed at improving the smooth running of an institution. All stakeholders are involved. The development of the school and effective teaching and learning in the school environment should be in line with the school’s vision. All stakeholders inclusive of*

*family and community members must bear in mind, recall and think about the school's vision".*

- **Formulation of School-Family-Community partnership's vision**

Participants agreed that every time when the SGB is elected, they are given a platform to develop their own strategies over a three years' period that they will be serving including the reviewing the existing school vision. For all stakeholders to partake in vision formation they should be invited by the SGB. These include businesspeople, community leaders like headman (Induna), chief, the DBE officials, the school's SGB, the SMT, learners, parents, community organisations, church leaders, councillors, and community members.

Laerner<sub>9B</sub>:

*"We can send letters to parents and guardians through learners requesting them to come and attend the meeting. The community leaders, community councillor, traditional healers and the pastor may be requested to announce the message that parents should attend a school's parent meeting, giving all details about date, agenda, time, and venue so that family and community members get an opportunity to play their part in vision formation. In order to spread the message about the meeting to be held, we may also put posters at popular places like shops, churches and taverns".*

The participants cited that all stakeholders should be represented in the School Governing Body (SGB) and representatives of each stakeholder should be part of the crafting of the School-Family-Community partnership vision. SGB has to be reviewed every three years when a new SGB is elected if there is a need to make amendments. The participants agreed that parents and community members should be guided and made aware of the role they must play regarding the formation and sustaining the School-Family-Community partnership.

Learner <sub>4A</sub>:

*"Parents should be enlightened about how the School-Family-Community partnership vision should be crafted and what role it plays in the education of their children".*

The vision for School-Family-Community partnership should be crafted in such a way that it is non-discriminative to cater for all diverse cultures, race, religion, and gender.

Stakeholders should be allowed to voice out their views and ideas about the School-Family-Community partnership. Decisions should be made collaboratively so that the School-Family-Community partnership could be accepted and owned by all stakeholders. These gives the stakeholders the courage to own whatever the School-Family-Community partnerships come across, be it challenges or achievements and support partnerships.

Learner 5A:

*“Parents and guardians should be led to come up with a vision through their discussion. The combination of their ideas and opinions would build up to the vision they need and readily available to support. The SMT and educators should respect and treat equally all those stakeholders who attend meetings. The parents and community members will feel confident, and useful if their contribution is valued”.*

- **Sharing of School-Family-Community partnership’s vision**

Participants stated that family and community members should be reminded that it is their responsibility to know the vision statement of their school by heart, singing it, talking about it, and living it. It was further noted by the participants that they will encourage all stakeholders to remind each other of what the School-Family-Community partnership vision is all about and sell it to other family and community members, including their friends and neighbours. The vision can be shared through mass media like the radio and newspaper and the school’s website, wherein stakeholders may access the School-Family-Community partnership vision.

Educator 2A:

*“Encourage all stakeholders to remind each other what the school vision is all about and their duties and responsibilities in School-Family-Community partnership. Let them sell it to other family and community members including their friends and neighbours. The vision could be shared by being sent to a local radio to be broadcast, social media and being sent to newspaper as an article. A school website should be opened where people could access the school’s information including the vision”.*

- **Display of School-Family-Community partnership’s vision**

Fliers could also be distributed to parents and community members as a means of sharing the vision of the school. Pamphlets and placards may be pasted at local popular places such as the church, shops, and street's electric poles to disseminate the information to all members of the community. The display should be simple, bold, and legibly written in the language understood by all stakeholders.

Educator 10B:

*"It should be written somewhere where everyone who will enter the school premises will see the school vision. Normally you will have a school logo, the motto of the school and the vision and mission statements of the school in written form".*

The School-Family-Community partnership's vision should be displayed where all stakeholders can see it. The vision and mission statement should be boldly written for all stakeholders to be in a good position to see and read at ease. Furthermore, it should be displayed in staffrooms, the principal's office, on learners' progress reports, on the school's newsletters and at the back of each classroom on a flannel board so that learners can access it easily.

Learners 2A:

*"Vision statement should be written boldly and placed where all stakeholders can see it without any hindrance. Posters with the vision statement should be pasted at popular places like tuck-shops, shops, taverns, and churches so that the messages can reach many people and be read at ease".*

- **Poor School-Family-Community partnerships**

The participants stated that the SMT of the school does involve teachers in drawing an annual calendar. The annual calendar is not distributed to families and community members like police, social workers, and nurses so that they become aware of the programme of activities of the school.

Principal 1A:

*"Principal does not have an annual calendar and experiences poor involvement of stakeholders. In most cases the annual calendar assists educators and School Management Teams (SMTs) to get well prepared in time and avoid frustrations".*

- **Educator-learner relationship**

Other educators use sarcastic remarks to learners which cause a poor relationship. There are parents who irrationally defended their children without finding out the misconduct they had committed. It was further highlighted that there is a need for educators to attend parent's meetings in order to voice out their concerns regarding learner's behaviours. By so doing, learner's challenges would be discussed, and possible solutions would be commonly reached. That would strengthen educator-learner and parent-educator relationship.

The participants reported that educators who are not outspoken and do not transparently address their work-related problems like being overburdened with work, have family problems like divorce, poor classroom management, disruption of classes by naughty learners, practising of favouritism and who are emotionally and psychologically disturbed do not do their work effectively. Such stress may be transferred to learners. These may harm the educator-learner relationship.

Parent <sub>3A</sub>:

*“The mistakes made by our children like not writing or completing their schoolwork, disruption of lessons, cause poor educator-learner relationship. Learners refuse to acknowledge their mistakes and exchange words with their educators. Sometimes this poor relationship is caused by educators who are stressed, overburdened with work, and do not attend to learners' challenges, and poorly attend their lessons”.*

- **Educator-family relationship**

The participants noted that educators are working with learners who come from diverse families as such they should respect their diversity. They emphasised the families' lack skills to analyse the quality and quantity of education given to their children by educators. Learners who had been called to order by educators wrongly reported educators to their parents developed negative attitude towards educators because of being consistently called to school for their children's misconduct.

Learners <sub>1A</sub>:

*“Poor interaction between the school and families cause poor relationship. Educators, who do not know, accept and respect the families' culture and tradition. Illiterate parents sometimes misunderstand educators and have negative attitude towards them. Learners who are punished at school report the wrong information at home.*

*Non-consultative family members develop a negative attitude towards the school without knowing exactly what had transpired”.*

Educator 4A:

*“Parents seem not satisfied with the way the school coffers have been spent. These cause a rift between the parents and the school. Furthermore, parents are afraid of asking for accountability of funds due to their illiteracy”.*

Families develop a negative attitude towards a school where learners fail in higher numbers. They believe that the school is failing their learners. When learners spend most of their school time outside their classrooms, this makes the families angry because learners lose most of their valuable learning time.

Parent 1A:

*“Parents are not in good terms with the school due to poor performance of learners. Educators do not respect their daily contact teaching session. Some parents support their learners unreasonably when the learner is mistaken. Such parents become angry to the extent of fighting without finding the cause of the problem.*

- **Educator-community members’ relations**

The participants stated that the school is an extension of the community. Educators who teach in their community, and who do not understand, accept, appreciate acclimatize to the culture and tradition of the communities where they work create conflict between themselves and the community. These impede the anticipated collaboration between the school and the community.

Principal 1A:

*“In South Africa we follow the seven critical cross outcomes. In the seven critical cross outcomes, one of those outcomes talks about enrichment with respect to the culture of the society and ethnic groups. The educators should respect the culture of various ethnic groups in the community to avoid being in contradiction with basic principles within the Bill of Rights in the Constitution.*

The participants complained that community members do not believe or accept that the school belongs to them due to poor performance of learners, unattractive infrastructure, and they are not even interested in its safety. Community members are

not satisfied about meetings which often start late. This results in community members attending meeting poorly. The school refuses community members access water when they desperately need it, and this causes tensions and problems.

Parent 4A:

*“High failure rate of learners causes poor relationship between the school and community members. The situation was aggravated by the school when the community members were denied access to water when the communal tap system was dysfunctional. Villagers are undermining their local school and the teachers due to the school’s unattractive infrastructure. Community members broke the school fence to access water without permission. In another incident, the community members forcibly took learners from their classrooms to go and blockade the neighbouring tarred road with burning tyres as a way of lodging their grievances”.*

- **Shortage of resources**

The school does not have infrastructure like science and computer laboratory, library, administration block, and sporting codes like rugby, cricket, basketball, and golf. There are no recreational and enrichment books, no scientific equipment and apparatus, and poorly equipped office and staffrooms.

Learner 2A:

*“The community members can fundraise in order to build infrastructure like science and computer laboratory, library, administration block, introduce and improve sporting codes and provisioning of TLSMs There are books in the community which when being gather can contribute to create a library for the school. The collected books would be accessible to more learners and improve learner’s reading skills and knowledge. Community members could be advised to donate computers to the school so that learners could be taught computer skills”.*

- **Decision-making for School-Family-Community partnership**

Participants noted that involvement of the family and community members in decision-making process at school is a critical issue that is stipulated in SASA. There are parents elect members of the School Governing Body (SGB) who are servicing the school and acting on behalf of the parents and community members in terms of the

law. Sometimes parents are called to make decisions on behalf of their children in the present of the learner when a learner has committed misconduct. This is done on a face-to-face situation whereby the advantages and disadvantages of the decision to be taken are explicitly elaborated to both the parent and the learner.

Community Members <sup>8B</sup>:

*“I remember a neighbour woman whose child who had failed but qualifies to progress to the next grade due to age cohort. Educators discussed this problem with the mother, showing the disadvantages of a learner progressing to the next grade. Maybe the learner may understand better the following year; the woman understood and agreed to retain him. That caused a big disagreement between the woman and her husband”.*

Participants concurred that parents, educators and SGB members should play equal roles in decision-making processes. They should be engaged in all policy making processes within the school. Participants mentioned that parents, community members and Representative Council of Learners (RCL) are not involved in decision-making processes, but only the SGB’s parent components are involved. Parent and educator in the SGB do not believe that learners can contribute positive informed decisions.

Learner <sup>5A</sup>:

*“Parents and learners are not involved in decision-making process. Learners are informed of the decisions taken by the SGB parent and educator component. They are not taking part in the process”.*

Participants mentioned that the parents are involved in decision making because most of the school policies like budget, disciplinary are approved or amended by the SGB parent component together with parents and community members in parent’s meeting. Parents and community members are invited to come and decide on how to raise funds to augment the inadequate norms and standards funds provided DBE. Parents are represented in other committees such as School’s health advisory committee. Some of the decisions made by parents ultimately become policies.

Principal <sup>2B</sup>:



*“Most of the school policies are approved by the parents starting from finance, disciplinary policy just to mention a few. The school budget is drawn by the school’s finance committee and presented to the parent component of the SGB. Furthermore, the SGB parent component presents it to the parents who ultimately approved it”.*

Learner 6B:

*“Decisions are taken, and the concept of majority rule sometimes is applied in parents’ meetings, and it disadvantages poor and unpopular family and community members. The issue of paying R50, 00 and a ream per learner is one decision that was taken parents and community members”.*

#### **4.2.8.2 Participation in School-Family-Community partnerships**

Participants indicated that stakeholders should be made to understand that an organisation cannot be run effectively without their involvement in strategic planning. They must know and understand that they are the one who should ultimately put strategic planning decision into practise. HODs together with their educators must plan as department and come up with subject allocation which is in line of their field of specialisation. Stakeholders should be strategically place according to their weakness or their strengths wherein which the entire mission and vision of the school will become paramount and achievable.

Principal 1B:

*“This is very critical. Teachers and HODs should strategically plan in their department. Managers should think of spending an extra hour in the morning, come and assist in terms of strategic planning and thinking. I am saying as a manager makes them understand that you cannot run an organisation without strategic planning. And how do you as a manager make them understand that strategic planning decision process has ultimately to be put into action. Let them have a departmental plan and come to say this is the plan I have for my department”.*

*between the school and community members also cause poor attendance.”*

- **Communication**

Let the school have a cell phone wherein a programme that could be used to send messages or invitations to stakeholders in mass form has been installed. In that way

the message or invitation will be send in a short span of time to all the stakeholders' cell phone numbers. The more stakeholders are informed well in time the greater the chance of being available in school activities, event, and functions in large numbers.

Principal <sub>1A</sub>:

*“The school should have a bulk SMS programme and the cell phone number of parents of the learners available. So that at any point in time when need arises you can communicate with them or at once through the principal button”.*

- **How meetings were called**

The school send letters through the parent's component of the GB and learners when inviting parents and community members for a parents' meeting, school events, and functions.

Learner <sub>1A</sub>:

*“Messages are sent to parents and community members in the form of letters by learners. Illiterate parents and community members cannot grasp the message from a letter. Learners do not read letters to their illiterate parents”.*

Participants indicated in school that meetings were called by sending letters to family and community members via the learners. Participants further indicated that invitational letters or messages without agenda bar parents and community members from getting prepared and actively participating in parents' meetings. The school does not disseminate the information to stakeholders in time. Sometimes meetings were called by sending verbal messages via the learners and SGB parent component.

Learners <sub>7B</sub>:

*“Most learners do not deliver the messages given from school in the form of letters to their parents. Parents do not get abreast of what is going to happen at school soon”.*

Principal <sub>2B</sub>:

*“School do not invite parents to meetings at the right time when they had returned from work. Most parents are working and come back home in the late evening which makes it hard if not impossible for them to attend parent's meetings during the day”.*

- **communication towards enhancing participation Improvement**

Participants highlighted that once information has been received; a communiqué should be sent to relevant stakeholder in time. The communiqué should be written in a language that most stakeholders understand better. Participants further indicated that an annual plan should be drawn and distributed to all stakeholders. It will serve as a means of reminding stakeholders of all the school activities and the date in which they will take place. As the saying goes” fore armed well-armed”.

Educator 1A:

*“Leaders should ensure that information received reach relevant stakeholders in time, detailed and legibly written in the language they understand. Annual planning should be commonly done and evenly distributed to all stakeholders. That would enhance stakeholder’s interests and participation”.*

A School-Family-Community partnership communication can be improved by applying various methods like letters, SMSs, e-mails, twitter; face-book, WhatsApp, and calling cell-phone calling. Stakeholders would receive information in large numbers and in time.

Educator 1A:

*“The chairperson of the meeting must find a suitable language to address a meeting. All parents do understand Sepedi, but there are those who speak Tsonga when they are at home. Communication can be done via the Social media to all stakeholders at once”.*

- **Communication for School-Family- Community partnerships**

Participants stated that other learners are heading their families. Learners indicated that their parents have passed on. Parents, family and community members may not be able to attend school events, meeting and functions even if they are available and willing because the messages are not delivered to them.

Learner 5A:

*“Some families are child-headed, some parents are at work and come back home at the end of the month, and while in some family’s parents work shifts which do not allow them to be available on the scheduled”.*

Communication breakdown and short notices also deprive parents and community members to access messages. Hence, their attendance and involvement in school activities, events and function is poor.

Educator <sup>4A</sup>:

*“Sometimes short notices are given to family and community members to collect learner’s reports, attend school events and functions. Communication breakdown.*

Participants had shown that the parents and community members in the village where school is speaking Sepedi and Xitsonga as their mother tongue. People who wish to speak to them in other languages other than their mother tongue may not manage to bring the message home. It is worse if one may think of using English to communicate with them.

Educator <sup>3A</sup>:

*“The English and Sepedi languages are used to send messages to invite families and community members. The families and community members speaking other languages are not accommodated misunderstand the detail of the message. Some learners who do not do their mother tongue as home language at school do not perform well in the language. One Tsonga speaking learner failed grade 12 because of Sepedi and ultimately left school without the certificate”.*

- **Poor communication**

There is poor communication between the school, family, and community members because the information sent to them does not reach them. The school send letters via learners to their parents as a means of communication; some are not delivering them while other learners do not read them for their uneducated parents. There is no channel of communication available for the parents and community members to communicate with the school.

Community member <sup>10B</sup>:

*“The school communicate through letters and give them to the learners to deliver to their parents. But in most instances letters are not arriving to their parents. Parents and community members do not have a way to communicate with the school”.*

The researcher observed that communication is still predominantly in the form of verbal and letters send via the learners. In March 2017 the end of the first term the school B had send letter messages to family and community members via learners to come and collect learner's progress reports. Unfortunately, less than fifty family and community members managed to come and collect learner's progress reports. The poor respond of family and community members reflects the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the mode of communication the school is using.

A learner who was furious because she felt that her lady educator has embarrassed her in front of other learners reported this matter to her mother. The following day the mother came to school and directly goes to a classroom where the educator was busy teaching. She loudly said demeaning words to the educator in class and the lesson had to be adjourned. The educator left the class with the mother behind her and still fuming vulgar words. The lady deputy principal managed to cool down the mother and the matter was laid to rest.

The principal had received a workshop invitation and forgotten to inform or circulate it amongst educators. The principal only learnt in the last thirty minutes before the starting time of the workshop that he had not informed the educator and called the educator and informed him. The educator had to use public transport (taxi) to reach the venue. The time was no more favourable for the educator that is why the report caused an uneasiness and tension between them.

#### **4.2.8.3 Late coming**

There are learners and educators who come to school late than the expected time. On daily basis there are educators who punish late-coming learners instructing them to pick up papers within and around the schoolyard, cleaning of their toilets, class verandas and cleaning their classroom as a disciplinary measure. Educators who are late can go to their respective staffrooms or to the office to sign in the time book. There are learners who are habitual late comers and take the punishment showing no sign of remorse. Instead, they seem to be enjoying the punishment and do it slowly so that they could take time to finish. Educators and the SMT solitarily are trying to solve the challenge without the involvement of family and community members.

Educators are fairly punctual while most of the learners do not report in time at school. The principal is the one in charge of controlling late coming by closing the gate for

learners who are late. They were discipline by doing a frog jump exercise supervised by the principal. There were learners who came to school two hours later than the starting time.

#### **4.2.8.4 Uncommitted and ill-disciplined learners**

One morning when they principal of school was addressing learners and educators at assembly, a girl learner disrespectfully responded by saying “what you are saying is nothing”. The researcher, learners, educators, and the principal were puzzled by the learner’s respond. Unfortunately, the learner did not elaborate further.

One mischief grade 9 learners who frequently absent himself from school did not submit assessment task. He was given a verbal message, a letter, and sent home to call his parents by his Technology educator. The learner did not deliver the message and letter to his parents. The following morning the learner stated that his parents are at work. Unfortunately, this report was done in the present of one kitchen helpers who divulged that the learner’s parents are at home and are not employed. The message was then sent via kitchen helper mother. It was then that the learner’s mother visited the school. She mentioned that she missed attending most parents’ meetings because the information does not reach her

- **Involvement in strategic planning of school activities**

The SMT design and implement annually strategies taking into cognisant the challenges encountered the previous year. This plan outlines the details of all annual activities, the human resource personnel responsible for a particular activity, the activity to be executed, the budget, and the performance indicators. The school’s plan should be discussed in a formal meeting involving educators, learners, parents, families and community members for possible amendments and augmentation. The final document is filed while its copy is sent to the circuit.

Educator 7B:

*“At the end of every year, we have a meeting whereby we discuss the strategies to implement in the coming year. That outlines a school’s plan whereby all the activities that are going to be run are tabled about their dates, human resource personnel responsible for a particular activity, the activity to be executed, the budget as well as the performance indicators. The plan is further discussed in a very formal meeting*

*involving all the educators and learners. The drafted document is tabled in a general parent meeting so that parents can also air out their views on what is it that is going to be done as a form of turnaround strategies for the coming year. The final document will be in place and filed while a copy is sent to the circuit”.*

- **Educator-learner relationships:**

Participants stated that emotionally disturbed educators cough out vulgar words to learners. Learners vengefully respond and these cause a poor relationship between the two parties. Learners who seem poor with untidy clothes are not given the necessary respect. A conflict sometimes happens when a learner makes a mistake and the educators say you are like your parents who are a stupid or a drunkard or less gifted. There are mischief learners who deliberately did not do their homework and irritates the educator.

Learner <sub>6B</sub>:

*“Some educators come to school being in bad emotions and handle learners poorly. Learners as well respond in a vengeful manner and this causes a disagreement between them. Sometimes such emotionally disturbed educator punishes an innocent learner. Such educators are sometimes forced to give those learners a cleaning punishment. Non-disciplined learners disturb educators during the teaching process, respond to educator in an unrespectable manner and report wrong information to their parents when educators had tried to call them to order”.*

Learner <sub>2A</sub>:

*“Bad behaviours of learners are the cause a poor relationship between learners and educators. Some learners use drugs like dagga and disrespect educators when they are under the influence in class. There are learners who go to the extent of making bad relationships by befriending those who have less interest to their studies due to peer pressure and adolescence stage”.*

- **Shortage of resources:**

Participants added that the school is running short of facilities such as classrooms, playing grounds, laboratories, administration block, and library. These create a non-conducive teaching and learning environment. The unattractiveness of the school and

its old features repels the interests of learners, parents and community members from the school.

Educator <sup>10B</sup>:

*“Our school does not have a computer laboratory, science laboratory, playing grounds, administration block and a library. We have insufficient textbooks, dysfunctional computers, copying and printing machines which are stored in the non-spacious staffroom. The books recovered from learners are not well packed, but heap packed”.*

#### **4.2.8.5 Involvement of educators in curriculum development**

Participants highlighted that besides teaching; educators are also involved in extracurricular activities, managerial duties like controlling late coming, uniform, and maintain discipline. Educators drill learners on previous question papers, engaging them in extra studies, and holding Saturday classes whereby educators get an opportunity to cover up the syllabi and close the learner’s content gap. The entire staffs collaboratively and systematically plan their work to provide learners with quality teaching and learning. The educators are work-shopped on new policies, planned their lesson ahead following a structured pace setter which is informed by the curriculum and attend their lessons punctually.

Learners <sup>7B</sup>:

*“Educators are doing their utmost best by creating a conducive learning environment and teaching learners. Most learners are not focused to their education. They entertain themselves by spoiling themselves with liquor and drugs. There is a higher rate of learner’s absenteeism. Learners, who are regularly absent, are those who do not write or complete their school tasks. Some learners bunk classes and come to school just before break when food is about to be dished out”*

### **4.3. THE EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY) CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN RURAL AREAS**

#### **4.3.1 Language of communication with stakeholder**

Participants stressed the fact that messages and invitation send to the family and community members were written in English and Sepedi. Almost three quarter of



family and community members do not understand English. They are uneducated as results are unable to read and write English and Sepedi. The draft of school's vision and mission statements written in English were send to the parents and community members to add their inputs and amendments wherever possible. The language used bars parents and community members who are uneducated and do not understand English to make amendments and add inputs.

Community Members 10B:

*"I remember the vision and mission statements which were dispersed to the parents from the school were written in English. You do not understand, speak or write English but you are expected to understand the vision written in English and contribute something to it".*

#### **4.3.2 Parents and community members involvement in vision formation**

Participants concurred that the stakeholders who are present during vision formation should be given a mandate to go and sell the vision of the school in various structures of the community such as church choirs and civic association.

Community Member 6B:

*"I think this one needs the stakeholders who are present at the meeting to own the vision. And to actually tell them as a leader to say, would you please deliver this message (vision) to other stakeholders whom you think they were not in this meeting. Perhaps by narrating what was transpiring in the meeting".*

Participants insisted that the school's vision could be shared amongst all stakeholders by targeting community meetings, functions, funerals, events and cultural ceremonies and request for a platform to announce it to community members who are available there. The school's vision could be sent to the chief, the headman (induna) and other community leaders to help in disseminating it to parents and community members. It could be spread by encouraging people to share with the neighbours and friends.

Educator 10B:

*"The vision has to be written after it has been adopted and be circulated to all stakeholders. The learners, SGB, SMT, parents and the community members must*

*live by and know the vision of their school by heart. This would encourage the participation of other stakeholders”.*

#### **4.3.3 Roll call attendance register of parents**

In September 2016 as recorded in the parent’s attendance register, 50 parents and community members agreed in a parents’ meeting that each learner should contribute an amount of R 50, 00 and a realm of blank sheets as a means of supplementing the Norms and Standards fund provided by the Limpopo DBE. In December 2016, it is reflected in the parent’s attendance register that only 45 parents and community members attended the financial report meeting. In this meeting the income incurred, and the expenditure expended throughout the year were addressed to them.

In March 2017, only 65 parents of learners in school attended a parent-teacher consultation meeting whereby performance of learners from grade 8 to grade 12 was discussed. A parent requested to meet a grade 8 Mathematics educator in order to find out about the challenges encountered by his child. The number of parents who had attended was completely below the expectation as compared to the number of learners who had been enrolled.

#### **4.3.4 Educator-parent relationship:**

Participants acknowledged that educators or parents who gossip in the present of their learners/children cause poor relationship between educators and parents. Learners who are not doing their schoolwork always report wrong stories about the teacher to their parents and this create a poor relationship between them. It is in most cases caused by teachers who are not doing their job. That is where a sour relationship between the educator and family members originates. At times educators solve learner’s problems without involving learner’s parents.

Community Member 3B:

*“I think that parents who do not attend parent’s meeting when they are invited are the one who cause poor relationship between educators and learners. Those parents sometimes comment wrongly about the educator in the present of their children. Like, I am tired of your educator who keeps on calling me now and again. This builds up to a poor relationship between educator and the parents”.*

#### **4.3.5 Educator-community members relationships**

Participants reported that there are some features which depict conflicts of language as well as religion. Sepedi and English languages are given the first priority over the other languages. The school has adopted a Christian culture over the community member's cultures. Only the Christian religion is practiced at assembly and other religions are not given a chance.

Educator 10B:

*“Educators do cause discomfort to some community members by not addressing them in their mother tongue. Sepedi is predominantly used as a learners’ home language at school disadvantaging the other minority languages the school has adopted a Christian culture. But there are learners who wished to be excluded when the Christian religion rituals are practised because they do not believe or practice at home as their religion”.*

Participants cited that new educators are not oriented about the community's background, culture, and tradition. The new educators sometimes behave in a manner that seems to undermine and disrespect the values, norms, and tradition of the community where they are working.

Educator 10B:

*“As an educator you need to have a light background of the learners you are teaching. Treat learners in accordance with their background. You should also know the kind of parents and community members you are working with”.*

#### **4.3.6. Parental and community involvement in School-Family-Community partnerships**

From the SGB minute book, it was noted that the DMG visited the school on 13 March 2015. The purpose of the visit was to assist in electing the parent component of the SGB. The meeting could not quorate due to poor attendance and was postponed to March 17, 2015 at 09h00. The DMG visited school on March 2015 to monitor SGB

elections for the parent component. Another notice was issued. On the 17/03/2015, nomination and elections were free and fair. Seven parents were elected.

Most parents did not collect their children's progress reports at the end of each quarter of 2017. In March 2017 only 54 parents/guardians attended a progress report meeting whereby reports were collected. In June 2017, 36 parents/ guardians made themselves available to collect their children's progress reports. In September 2017, 56 parents/guardian attended learners' progress report collection meeting. In December 2017, only 36 parents/guardians availed themselves to collect their children's end of year results. Reports are given only to parents who are available.

Despite the poor participation above, parents of grade 12 learners attended the parents' learner consultative meeting organised by the Circuit officials in January 2017 in large numbers. This was highly appreciated by the Circuit manager. This situation reflects a poor partnership amongst school, family, community members and DBE officials.

It is recorded in the logbook that in January 2015 the school had requested a community local soccer club to use its soccer ground for soccer and athletics. The school was permitted to use their soccer ground.

It is recorded in the logbook that the IEC officials visited the school to request to come and conduct voter's education and registration in July 2015. The grade 10 class was given to them for use. In November 2016, recorded in the logbook, subsistence farmers from the community had been given the permission to use a classroom for holding their meetings in the afternoon every time they are to assemble.

In March 2017 only 49 parents and community members attended a parents meeting including collection of progress reports. In June 2017 only 65 parents and community members attended the meeting. The worse part of it is that in September only 40 parents and community members attended. In December 2017 only 69 parents and community members attended.

#### **4.3.7 Social support for School-Family-Community partnerships**

In the same meeting in January 2015, it was recorded in parents meeting minute book that parents whose children are pregnant should accompany them to school every school day. The parent should be nearer if the learners may need any attention, be

parental or medical. Parents did not take heed of this rule and refuse to accompany them.

In the logbook it is noted that officials from the South African Police Services in Lebowakgomo had visited the school in April 2016 about crime prevention campaign. Learners and educators were made aware of crimes that commonly happen in the school and community and guided to be away from such activities. Learners and educators were advised to stay or do away from/ with drugs, liquor places, child abuse and other forms of crimes. Crime does not pay but destroy people's future. They were given a phone number that could be used to alert police if one witnesses a crime taking place.

It is reflected in the logbook that the School Health Team visited the school in September 2016 to give health education and study materials for grade 08. In October 2016, noted in the logbook, the Child-line Limpopo visited the school to facilitate education and prevention on child abuse, teen pregnancy and peer pressure.

In June, September and October/November 2016 and 2017 when examination were about to start, visitations by local pastors from various denominations have been recorded in the logbook of the school. The pastors are invited by the SMT to pray for the school community at assembly.

In the logbook, the following visits by community members were recorded In October 2015, the Circuit manager visited the school with the intention to offer a prayer and motivate the grade 12 learners prior to their final examinations. In November 2015, visitors from Clinic C came to the school in order play advocacy about male circumcision which was performed at hospital L. They invited male learners aged 10 upwards.

In January 2016, members of the School Health Team visited the school with the goal to raise awareness about child abuse, teen pregnancy and peer pressure. The School Health Team from the DBE provided health education and study materials to the grade 8 learners. In February 2016, a motivational speaker from the community visited the school in order to inspire the learners and educators to perform better in their daily activities.

In October 2017, the mobile clinic at Maja-Chuene visited the school and gave health education to the grade 8 learners. Topics included in this programme were: hygiene, healthy food, living in a healthy environment, teenage pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS and other general health issues.

Participants indicated that parenting is a challenge because some parents shunt their responsibilities of taking care of their children to their parents (grannies). Majority of parents, family and community members support learners financially by buying them school's needs such calculators, cell-phone, study guides, textbooks, book covers, paying for school trips, tours, and field excursions.

Learner 7B:

*'Most of the time, they do not have a chance to assist me to solve the challenges I met due to their work commitments and fatigue. I sometimes call the attention of my aunt, grandparents or neighbours to help me with my schoolwork'.*

Participants added that there was a group of young graduates from various institutions of higher learning, who voluntarily taught the learners computer literacy skills, Mathematics, science, and drama skills after school hours. They kept learners in grade 11-12 busy in the afternoon after school hours.

Educator 7B:

*"There was a group of young graduates from the community whose intention was to come and share with learners on career patching and guide learners in computer literacy skills, mathematics, Science and drama skills".*

The participants highlighted that family and community members assist learners by buying them uniform and study related materials such as study guides, magazines and newspapers. Parents assist by buying their children study guides, paying money for attending block teaching and enrichment classes at chosen centre and assisting children with their schoolwork. They further assist their children with history and culture related issues like artefacts, idioms, bead work, cultural games, and narrative stories. Poverty and illiteracy impede parents and community members from doing their best, but they can advise and motivate their children to study harder.

Learner 5A:

*“My parents buy me uniform and study guides. Some learners cannot access information due to their parent’s poverty and unemployment. Illiteracy or low level of literacy bars our parents from assisting us in our schoolwork. They can assist in culturally and religiously related information. There are parents/guardians who support their children from the child support grant”.*

#### **4.3.8 Sharing of resources for School-Family-Community partnerships**

The participants pointed out that the school and community could interchangeably share facilities such as soccer playing ground and a church if the school does not have enough classrooms. Various resources can be collected from the community and school to assist in the education of learners, family, and community members. The community members can also provide funds through fundraising, to introduce and improve sporting codes and provisioning of LTSMs, which are not available at school and in the community.

Educator <sub>3A</sub>:

*“Community-based resources like hall, a church could be used for learners’ choral music competition, concerts, drama rehearsals, debates, and holding of parents’ meetings”.*

Educator <sub>3A</sub>:

*“Community’s living resources such as pastors, traditional headmen; academics, professionals, traditional healers, and the chief would be useful in guiding, supporting learners with respect to ethics, artefacts, morals, culture, background history, health and religion. Old books, bakery, poultry chicken, land and animals in the community could be used as specimens for sciences practical, library and entrepreneurship in learners’ certain subject topics”.*

Beads, bangles, necklaces, and cell phone pouches, just to mention a few, are sewn with decorations of various shapes by community members. Learners would be integrating what they have learnt in Mathematics to the various shapes made on the bead’s artwork. As a result, these boost their academic performance and understanding of the practical value of what they learn at school. Academic and professionally qualified community members can be invited to come and share their knowledge and experience to learners and educators. Professional community-based

pensioners can be invited to come and offer extra lessons to learners after school hours and during evening studies. Community members can be advised to donate computers to the school so that learners, family, and community members can be taught computer literacy skills.

Learner 3A:

*“The artwork done by our parents at home can be integrated to leaning. Community members could be advised to donate computers to the school so that learners could be taught computer skills. Potential and knowledgeable community members could be invited to come and share their knowledge and experience to learners and educators. Community-based educators who are pensioners and those who are working in other schools should be invited to offer extra day and evening lessons”.*

Participants cited that the school and community resources will augment each other in enhancing quality teaching and learning. Community members who volunteered to coach the school’s soccer and netball teams keep learners physically and mental healthy for effective learning. Parents and community members should be ready to share their vocational expertise to learners to integrate the schoolwork and real-life situation. The school and community should interchangeably share resources such as sporting grounds, churches, and a hall for holding event, activities, and functions.

Participants mentioned that the local community clinic is a source where learners could learn about life related processes, mixtures, some chemicals and blood sugar level and pressure.

Learner 7B:

*“Parents and community members should play a pivotal role in assisting learners as they are the future of the community. Resource like the local clinic should be used effectively to ensure that learners are physical and mentally healthy. Sex education learned in life orientation would be brought into practice by nurses at the clinic. Local shops, vegetable gardens, poultry could be used guide learners doing commercial subjects and Agricultural Sciences as a practical example. This could breed to future entrepreneurs. Religious institutions could be used to build learners morally and teach them to abstain from theft, sex, and substance abuse”*

#### **4.3.9 Poor School-Family-Community partnerships:**



Participants stressed the fact that education by itself needs that pedagogic triad being the involvement of teachers, learners, and parents (family and community members). If one of the three components may not participate actively, then the educational performance and achievements of learners, parents and community members become poor. Education is not a one man's show.

Community Member <sub>5B</sub>:

*“Education by itself needs the active involvement of the pedagogic triad, needs to be looked at as something that needs a teamwork of learners, educators and parents. The moment one members of the team is not there, that is where we are going to have a problem. It means that triad is broken. When I am talking of a triad, education must involve teachers, learners, and the parents. If parents are not there to support educators, the relationship between learners and teachers would suffer. If teachers are not actively involved in the education of the children, the relationship between the learner and the parents would suffer. We must all work as a team”.*

Participants lamented that the two stones and shattered pieces of the windowpanes found in the School principal's office are a sign of lack of acceptance and ownership of the school by community members. Furthermore, the community is less concerned about the safety of school's properties.

Educator <sub>7B</sub>:

*“There are only a few elements in as far as I know, even though it might be individual negative elements. But members of the community do not support the school. There is a question of stealing school properties like water taps, fire extinguishers, and computer server. They community members are so quite about that. That is the only negative elements that I have observed. But I would not say they are not there because we use to hear complaints from the night watchman saying that at times individual members from the community will come in the schoolyard for no apparent reasons. Hopefully I should think he is trying to tell us the risks that are underway”.*

It was further indicated by participants that many taverns had been opened in the village than churches. As a result, most learners spend their time in taverns drinking liquor and drugs smoking publicly with family and community members. Music is played loudly during lessons. This is where learners indulge themselves in unprotected

sex. Teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sex related disease are escalating. Parents take no action against this. It was reported that some stepparents abuse their stepchildren with home chores and denying them a chance to come to school.

Learner 7B:

*“The family and community members are playing no role to ensure learner’s success at school. The family and community members allowed more taverns to be opened in the village, hence more learners are morally rotten and perform very poorly at school. Most learners spend their time in taverns drinking and smoking drugs. This is where most learners indulge themselves in unprotected sex. There is higher level of teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDs. Parents take no action against this. There are many children of school going age who are not schooling and are given heavy home chores. Police patrols are rare in the village. When they are there, they also visit the taverns and entertain themselves during their duty time”.*

The participants concurred that other parents take care of learners’ siblings as there are no Early Child Development Centres (ECDs) in the village. Single mothers or fathers do not attend school activities because they have the responsibility of financially supporting their families. Learners from child-headed and families led by old grandparents are not represented in school events, meetings, and functions. There is poor parental care in most families. Learners are free to roam around the streets after school and come back home late at midnight. Liquor and dagga are used randomly and publicly without showing any sign of remorse by both the young and old in the village. The situation is exacerbated by elders who share liquor and drugs with their children. Some learners completely forget about learning starting from Thursday night until the late hours on Sunday evening. Dreadful social maladies such as teen pregnancies, rape, ritual killings, HIV/AIDS, TB, and incest are common in the community.

Educator 1A:

*“It might not be possible because when learners reach home after school, they just drop their books and go to the street until between late midnight. Boys use drugs such as liquor and dagga while girls go for wines. Few girls go for dagga. Learning is not a priority even during examination times. Liquor is drunk publicly, disregarding the age limit because there is rare police patrol in the village. Some parents share these*

*substances with their children. The situation becomes worse on Friday. Some learners run away from school to start drinking earlier. Some will start drinking and smoking on Friday until late Sunday night. These activities make it hard for most learners to cope with school activities, especially on Mondays. Parents do not have a specific time of going for liquor at sheens and taverns. Learners and parents do not foresee problems that may emanate from the usage of drug and liquor. Social ills such as HIV/Aids, TB and teenage pregnancy are at an alarming rate”.*

#### **4.3.10 Family and community members’ involvement in learners’ education**

The participants highlighted that family and community members give learners advice and words of encouragement. There are parents who take learners who are randomly roaming around the village during school hours back to school, accompanying learners to evening studies, encouraging learners to work very hard and attend school regularly and do their schoolwork. The participants indicated that there are parents and community members who give learners enough reading time at home by reducing their daily domestic chores and reducing their time for television.

Principal <sub>2A</sub>:

*“To some extent parents and community members were requested to accompany their children for evening studies. The learner may not benefit anything if he/she is studying alone without his/her colleagues, he/she may need assistance from others. We have agreed in parents’ meetings that the parent and community members should accompany their children to evening studies. All parents and community members were given the school’s phone number so that if anything is not going right, the parents should be able to call any SMT member and inform them of what is taking place”.*

#### **4.3.11 Learner-parent relationship**

It has been stated by the participants that learners do not take any advice from their parents. As such, it becomes hard for them to listen to educators. As a result, learners disobey educators and do not finish their schoolwork. Learners spend most of their valuable time outdoor, coming back home late at midnight. Due to these learners are unable to assist their parent with any home chores. There are learners who steal their parents’ money.

Learner <sub>1A</sub>:

*“Learners do not listen to their parent’s advice. We normally say charity begins at home. Which means learners may not listen or respect educators at school if they were not taught to do so at home. They are the learners who do not do or complete the school. In most cases they are the ones who cause disruptions in class by making noise and not listening to the educators while they are teaching”.*

#### **4.3.12 Family and community members’ role in designing school curriculum**

The family and community members of school did not participate in curriculum design. The community is uneducated as such they cannot be involved in professional matters. Parents and community members mislead their children by choosing for them subject stream that are in line with their career, other than taking the learner’s potential into cognisance.

Parent <sub>5A</sub>:

*“Families and community members are not participating in curricula designing. The DBE do it on behalf of the schools, families and community members. Parents and community members do not have the know-how of matching learners’ subjects in relation to their desired career due to being limitedly well-educated or uneducated”*

Participants stated that parents and community members are not involved in curricula design because they are illiterate. The school decide what best suit the learners needs and interests from what has been provided by the DBE. The DBE’s curricula design gives less attention to stakeholders’ needs and interests and its suitability to various environments. The DBE does not involve parents and community members in curricula design.

Community Member <sub>10B</sub>:

*“A designed curriculum comes from the DBE. The system has got many loopholes in terms of imposing a designed curriculum because when you design the curriculum, you have to design it looking at a particular geographical area. The kind of one size fit all curricula do not cater for cultural and geographical diversity. Somebody who is in Tzaneen (Bolobedu) may not do the same curriculum as somebody who is in Cape Town or Johannesburg (Gauteng). The resources which are in Tzaneen may not necessarily be available in Johannesburg and those which are in Johannesburg may not necessarily be available in Cape Town”.*

Participants indicated that principal and teachers have got the know-how in terms of curriculum design, but the DBE brought a designed curriculum to the schools. It is the responsibility of educators and the SMT to plan and implement the packaged curriculum imposed by the DBE. The SGB and the parent are the one who take the decision to endorse it.

Community Member <sub>10B</sub>:

*“The DBE use the top-bottom approach by imposing curricula without involving educators, families, and community members disregarding the various geographical areas. The South African curricula are a kind of one size fit all curricula.”*

#### **4.3.12 Attendance of meetings by stakeholders**

Participants indicated that parents of learners in school attend parents school meetings very poorly. This opens a gap between the parent and educators. There is no parent-teacher association and as a result their relationship is not better.

Parent <sub>2A</sub>:

*“The poor attendance of school meeting by parents cause poor interaction and ultimately poor relationship between the educators and families. There are parents who only come to school when they are to collect learner’s progress reports”.*

#### **4.3.13 Participation in School-Family-Community partnerships**

Participants indicated that there are parents and community members who are willing to participate in School-Family-Community partnerships but are disturbed by obligatory reasons such as work commitments. As a result, it is difficult for them to attend parent’s meetings during the time selected by the school’s SMT. There are learners who are in the care cater of their grandparents. Some of those grandparents are old enough to walk to school during parent’s meetings.

Principal <sub>2A</sub>:

*“Parents are not always available because of job commitments. Some parents come back home from work on daily basis late in the evening. Some comes back home only at the end of the month. Hence, they are not readily available to attend parent’s meetings. The grannies in most cases are incapable of coping with what is happening*

*at school due to illiteracy. Some grannies are old enough to walk from their homes to and from school; as a result, it is hard for them to attend parent's meetings".*

#### **4.3.14 Improving communication to enhance participation**

Participants stressed that messages may be spread via the local community radio and loud hailing system. Social media such SMSs, twitter, e-mails, and WhatsApp may be used to convey messages and invitation to as many stakeholders as possible, so as to enhance participation of all stakeholders. The above would supplement the commonly used letters system. Communication with stakeholders even takes the form of pasting of notices and at our neighbouring business and other popular public places such as shops, taverns, and churches. Messages are written in an explicitly elaborative to show the time, date, place and agenda. Community leaders like traditional doctors, chief, Induna (headman), pastor or priest are requested to disseminate to the parents, family, and community members. Parents and family members are encouraged to share the information with their neighbours. The messages may also be announced at events like funerals, traditional, communal gatherings, and local radio station.

Educator 7B:

*Currently or as we speak, we communicate with the stakeholders via learners through letters, pasting of notices at our neighbouring business. That in itself is not enough. We should create an archive whereby all stakeholders will be itemised together with their phone numbers, twitters, and e-mails and even WhatsApp texts whereby a school will communicate with other stakeholders about daily, quarterly and annual events of the school".*

Educator 9B:

*"Use South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radios to communicate messages to parents and community members. Most people listen to the local radio stations. Give letters through the learners. You can even send the message via the community leaders such as chief, headman, pastors, chief, priest and traditional doctors. A slot to announce messages and invitations may be requested at funerals, traditional and communal gatherings".*

#### **4.3.15 Involvement of the district (DBE) in improving teaching and learning**

Participants mentioned that the district DBE officials organise workshops for teachers so that educators could be appropriated, well-versed and updated with the content and advanced methodology. During workshops more scope is covered within a short span of time and this does not give educators enough time to grab the information. The Life Orientation and Technology educators had never ever been trained or work shopped in those subjects.

Educator <sub>7B</sub>:

*“Educators who are not conversant with the content they are teaching are invited to workshops whereby they are trained by less informed facilitators within a limited time. More scope is to be covered within that short-given time. They are not given enough time to grab the information due to the limited time. As of now, as I speak most educators are not work shopped in subjects like Life Orientation and technology”.*

It was further stated by participants that block teaching and enrichments classes are organised and by coordinated circuit manger during school' vacations envisioned to augment learners' understanding. The camps are run by principals with the assistance of the SGB parent component. Educators who had achieved outstandingly in external grade 12 examination are given the first priority to teach the learners.

Principal <sub>2B</sub>:

*“The officials even organise camps intended to augment what learners has already treated in class to enhance their understanding. The camps are coordinated by the circuit and run by principals with the help of the SGB parent component. Competitive Educators who had previous performed well in grade 12 given the first priority to teach the learners”.*

District Senior Manager has invited the creamy top fifty learners from our circuit to be motivated and taught by senior curriculum advisors over the weekend. It is a challenge that the district is paying its attention only to the cream learners, disregarding those who desperately need assistance. The district provided schools with TLSMs and stationary.

Educator <sub>8B</sub>:

*“This coming Saturday the District Senior Manager (DSM) has invited the top fifty learners from our circuit to motivate them over the weekend. There are also senior curriculum advisors who had been organised to teach those learners on the said date. It is unfortunate that the district is paying its attention only to the cream learners, disregarding those who desperately need assistance. One of our top learners in grade 12 from our school will be attending the occasion on Saturday. They are doing nothing to those who need their attention more”.*

Participants insisted that the circuit manager ensured that the schools feeding scheme are effective operate in a healthy atmosphere. The curriculum advisors and circuit do organise workshops for educators and assist educators in teaching thought-provoking topics to improve learner’s performance. Unfortunately, some curriculum advisors are poorly informed academically and methodologically. The district officials seldom visit schools whereas circuit ensured that the examinations ran efficiently at school level. The SMT are rarely work-shopped in running the daily school activities.

Principal 1A:

*“We have got this curriculum advisor coming to school, finding teacher X wanting to be assisted on a certain topic, but the curriculum advisor requested to come the next day and never show up. Sometime back in May 2017, I attended a workshop. When curriculum advisor saw me arriving, the curriculum advisor said yes this is the person who should come and do the job. And I went there as an invitee, but I had to took off cajoles and started work-shopping educators”.*

It was cited by participants that the circuit organise block teaching and enrichment classes whereby learners gather at one centre and get taught. Teachers who are grade 12 subjects’ gurus teach topics they excel in and share various expertise and tactics to teach subject topics. As a result, the learner’s and educator’s knowledge gaps get closed and learner’s performance and attainments get improved. Through camping, learners are freed from their home chores and disturbing activities in their homes and communities.

Educator 2A:

*“The district seldom makes supervision and monitoring at school level as compared to the circuit. The circuit officials ensure that the examinations are runs smoothly, guide*



*SMT in running their daily activities, and ensure that each school has enough human resource, organise block teaching and enrichment classes, and TLSMs as per staff allocation and school's order. The circuit further make sure that the schools feeding scheme is effective and efficient and operate in a healthy environment. The circuit sometimes organise workshops for educators while curriculum advisors as well organise the subject related workshops”.*

#### **4.3.16 Vegetable garden**

The parent component of the SGB volunteered to start a vegetable garden in the school yard. A community member's tractor was hired and tilled the soil. Vegetables such as spinach, carrots, beetroots, and cabbages were planted. A disagreement emanated between the principal and the parent. This happened before the produces were ripened. The principal of the school used the grade 12 learners who are doing Agricultural Sciences to take care of the vegetable seedling in replacement of the parent. These reflect that both the SMT of School and the SGB parent component are working against the achievement of the same commonly agreed goal, the achievement of the vision of School-Family-Community partnership. Ultimately when the vegetables produce was ripe, they were used in the kitchen for all learners and also the grade 12 Agricultural Science learners benefitted from the garden.

#### **4.3.17 Access to school resources**

A community member belonging to a certain political party came to School requesting to use a classroom for holding meetings in the afternoon. The SMT refused them access to use the classroom citing safety as a primary reason. Community people came to school and request for water as the community's communal tap water system was dysfunctional. They were denied access to water by the SMT. Unfortunately, the community members took the law into their hands and broke the fence in the afternoon and get water without the permission. The International Electoral Commission (IEC) is given permission to use the classrooms in school every time it needs. Another group of community member who are subsistence cattle farmers are regularly allowed to use a classroom to hold their meetings. There is also another group of a particular church who had been given the permission to use the same classroom every Sunday.

There has been no evidence observed that the family and community members use the school's resource like classroom or a hall. The school B does not have a soccer ground. The school use a soccer ground belonging to the soccer community club for athletics, soccer practice and to host their soccer visitors.

#### **4.3.18 Parent involvement**

The researcher observed that parents do not visit the school regularly. The researcher observed no parents' visits in his first two days. On the third day some parents came and request for their children's progress report. They had not been able to attend reporting meeting at the end of the quarter. The parents had to wait for the class teacher who was engaged in teaching by the time they arrive. During in-matches only the parent component of the SGB attended. Very few community members from the village attended the netball, volleyball, and soccer match.

Parents do not come to school to find out about their children's progress. In most cases parents visits school only if they are called. During the observation, there was an in-match from the neighbouring school. Parents participated poorly in extra-curricular school activities such as soccer, volleyball, and netball. They attend in very lesser number.

#### **4.3.19 Uncommitted and ill-discipline learners**

There are learners who deliberately left their textbooks at home instead of using them a source of reference at school. Three of such learners in grade 10 came to school carrying only three college exercise scribbler books in one school bag. The scribbler is to be used for all the seven subjects that are taught on daily basis. There are learners who do not pay attention to the educator while she was teaching but made noise during the teaching process. Amongst them there were those learners who did not write the homework, had bunked their periods, and were found in the male learner's toilets. There are four boys who were found at the tuck shops near the school playing gambling machine. Three boys bunked their period and hide in a mobile class and gamble during school hours.

#### **4.3.20 Attendance of meetings by family and community members**

Participants highlighted that the time of holding parents' meetings is a barrier because it is when most parents are engaged in their work activities. Educators who stay in

other villages travel daily and cannot afford to attend evening meeting. Family commitments as well contribute towards educator's failure to attend weekend's meetings. The staff members are not available at the time that suits some of the parents. Parents without children at school are prohibited from participating in the SGB parent component, no matter how interested and knowledgeable they are.

Principal <sup>2B</sup>:

*"School do not invite parents to meetings at the right time. Most parents are working and come back home in the late evening which makes it hard if not impossible for them to attend meetings during the day. Educators are unable to attend evening meetings when parents have returned home due to their various reasons. Most teachers are travelling to and from their work daily, this make it hard for them to be available most of the time".*

Participants mentioned that some parents who are working are not aware that they have the right to ask for permission from their employers to attend their children's school matters. An officiated letter from school serves as a proof of attendance to be submitted to their employer. The parents and community members do not have channels to communicate and address their grievances about the school.

Community member <sup>4B</sup>

*"There are parents who did not know that they should and were afraid to submit invitational letters from school to their work as a proof of attendance. The lack knowledge about the school's communicative channel is also a challenge to parents and community members".*

#### **4.4 STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL AREAS**

##### **4.4.1 Learners' developmental strategies**

Participants mentioned that a programme has been initiated by learners whereby one learner teaches others what she/he understands better. Each learner must play a teaching role during his/her turn. LRC agreed that debate should be introduced as a weekly activity as a strategy to develop learners Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and mother tongue in the future.

Learner 6B:

*“I write plans of what I think and suggestions of how they could be implemented. E.g., Heritage Day could be celebrated by wearing traditional clothes, cook traditional food, singing and dancing traditional songs, narrating, and reciting culture and history related events. In grade 11, we have initiated a programme whereby one learner teaches us a topic that she/he understands. Each learner has turn to teach others. We circulate in teaching each other and in turn build on our confidence. In the future, I with that debates could be introduced and be year out programme. Learners should be engaged in activities such as debate, singing and various sports activities under general”.*

Participants mentioned that there are learners who do attend their lessons even though there are those who do not always attend. They also accept educator’s word of advice and encouragement. Learners still do make themselves available in the afternoon and on weekends when educators offer extra lessons.

Learner 2A:

*“Educators do teach us and give enough time to ask question. Educators keep on encouraging us to work harder every now and then. They try their best to treat learners equally without any favour. Some go an extra mile by using their spare time in weekends to teach us”.*

#### **4.4.2 Educators’ strategy to improve teaching and learning**

Educators of school ensure that teaching and learning takes place every school day without and interruptions. Educators use different source of references like old textbooks, previous standardised question papers, and internet to beef up the teaching process. Learner are drilled with extra classwork, tests; homework, assignments, and projects to consolidate the learnt information. They further attend workshops, in-service-training, personal development programmes in order to keep themselves abreast with the changing curriculum, more especially CAPS.

Educator 1A:

*“Educators are teaching learners relevant and quality education. Educators use information gained from workshops, in-service-training, personal development programmes and internet as reference to teach learners. Educators use various resources such as internet to add more value to their work. Educators give learners extra work in the form of classwork, tests; homework, assignments and projects as a means of assessing learners understanding”.*

Participants have shown that at the end of every year after resulting learners the school plan in terms of improving the performance of learners. The developed strategies are based on the previous overall school performance. Various departments are also given a chance to give their alternative improvement strategies. Strategies from various departments form the school’s improvement strategies. Educators are encouraged to be life-long learners to cope with the newly established curriculum like CAPS. Educators can conduct extra lesson, Saturday studies to cover their syllabi. Educators enjoy the advantage of outsourcing within and outside for topics which they are challenged.

Educator <sub>8B</sub>:

*“As part of the SMT, we sit down and plan for the coming year. The planning involves allocation of subjects and duties, extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities for educators (like being responsible for LTSM, NSNP, etc.). These do not exclude the formation of a School Improvement Plan (SIP) which reflects the strategies that will be implemented to improve learner’s performance as well as infrastructure development”.*

#### **4.4.3 Family’s strategic contribution towards learner’s education**

Participants highlighted that parents are supportive by ensuring that the children wake up early and come school. To some extent they do report when a child is to be absent from school. Minority of parents agreed to accompany their children to evening studies for safety’s sake. Parents further reported a family whereby learners are always given heavy domestic chores. The work makes learners unable to come to school in time. The learners are also not given time to do their schoolwork at home. The atmosphere created at the learner’s home is completely not conducive for learning.

Learner <sub>8B</sub>:

*“Some community members when they see a school child in uniform at a tavern they do come to the principal and report such a learner has been seen at a tavern at a particular time. Some parents do come and report their colleagues who abuse children with home chores and denying them a chance to come to school and do their schoolwork at home”.*

It has been stated by participants that to a lesser extent there are family members who help their children with homework's, assignments, and projects at home. But the effort the family members are exerting is not enough because they are uneducated to provide enough assistance. There are those who can help their children.

Community member <sup>1A</sup>:

*“There is a minor support they are giving to their children. There are family members who had not been empowered with skills to help their children with schoolwork”.*

#### **4.4.3 Community members' strategic contribution towards learning**

For quality teaching and learning to be achievable, participants stressed the fact that family and community members who are educators, retired educators and new graduates should volunteer to teach learners, family, and community members as a form of ploughing back to their community. The community and school-based educators would advise each other in terms of applying CAPS related policies, preparing lessons in advance, and applying various assessment techniques to cater for learners of various intelligences.

Community Member <sup>1A</sup>:

*“The community-based professionals should be actively involved to improve the quality teaching and learning. The involvement and engagement of community-based educators, retired educators, and new graduates in teaching learners; family and community members should be encouraged and practised”.*

Educators, family and community members, circuit and district officials, and businessmen and women should work collaboratively for achieving quality education for learners, family and community members.

Community Member <sup>1A</sup>:

*“There is a need for a bonding between learners, educators, parents, community members and senior officials of the Department of Education (DBE) to work collaboratively for the effective functioning of the School-Family-Community partnership”.*

Participants highlighted that a group of community members volunteered and shared career related information with learners. This encouraged learners such that grade 11 learners joined the grade 12 learners in afternoon and evening studies. Two former learners who are working in an Information Technology company (ITC) requested the school to build a strong room. They promised to offer the school some computers laptops once the strong room has been erected. Pastors often come to our school pray for our school as a means of offering spiritual support.

Educator <sup>8B</sup>:

*“Young community graduate volunteered to teach learners computer skills using two desktops aimed at curbing the problem of going to tertiary without computer skills. The training was conducted after school hours and weekends. Furthermore, they teach 10 to 12 learners drama rehearsals, soccer, Mathematics and Physical Science. Two former learners employed in an ICT company promised do donate laptops to school if the school could build a strong room to safeguard them. Pastors often come to our school to offer religious sermons and pray for our school as a means of spiritual support on Mondays and Fridays”.*

#### **4.4.5 School’s involvement in addressing educational, economic and social needs**

Participants cited that learners at school are the reflection of the family and community members’ needs and interests. The community’s needs assessment should be compiled and that would remind the school time and again of what the community’s needs and interests are. The families and community members should be assisted educationally to eradicate their illiteracy challenge by introducing Adult Based Education and Training (ABET) and Adult Educations Training (AET) centres. Some community members may be advised to register with Further Education and Training colleges (FET) to acquire their vocational education. The school should play its transformational of increasing lifelong learners in relation to their needs and interests.

Participants insisted that the school should further keep on assisting learners who had passed their grade 12 in applying for bursaries so that they could further their studies.

Community Members <sup>6B</sup>:

*“The school should motivate and strengthen the learners, family and community members to do well academically and professionally. They should be taken through application of bursaries. Learners should enrol to various institutions of higher learning to achieve their dreams. It is then that the children’s needs and interests would be met. Organise learning programmes such as parenting, ABET and AET to develop parents and community members academically and skilfully”.*

Family and community members are encouraged to participate in Heritage Day celebrations would serve as a tool to strengthen their self-identity, social background, and self-acceptance. Agents of transformation such as nurses, social workers, NGO like “Love Life”, school’s alumnus, and motivational speakers also intervene in socially, economically, and educationally transforming learners, parents, and community members for the better.

The NGO also visited the school in March 2016. The purpose was to assess the school’s assets. They advised the principal to submit a letter of request for the construction of classes to replace the mobile classes. It was found that the school did not have enough classes, chairs, and tables. The environ-loo toilets were also inspected. They were found to be in good order. It was also noted that Project for grade 11 promised to develop the school sporting grounds.

In January 2015 the DBE in collaboration with the Limpopo Department of Sports, Arts and Culture build school court wherein the following sporting codes could be played tennis, table tennis, basketball, netball, and volleyball. These had been a huge boost for the school in terms of extra-curricular resources. The NGO holding visited the school in March 2016 to conduct a school assessment paying attention to school building, environ-loo toilets and taking picture. It was recorded that they are in a satisfactory state.

Educator <sup>7B</sup>:



*“One other thing, we need to make the community conscious that through education, they will be able to secure employment within their own hometown. After they have completed their studies, I should think the community will be economically viable. The community that is economically viable has no social problems”.*

Participants agreed that the school should make the family and community members aware of the social maladies they are in. It is from the level of consciousness of their societal problems that people immediately will be moving a step further towards addressing the socio-economic problems that exist. The intervention by both the SMT and the educators should be directed at empowering the family and community members at address their disparities.

Parent 5A:

*“The school should make parents and community aware of their problems and make provision of programmes relevant in addressing their social, educational and economic needs and interests. By providing learners with resources for quality education, in directly the school would be developing the parents and community members. The school should help when the community is in a plight like shortage of water, shelter, and classroom for holding meetings”.*

The school’s alumnus and motivational speakers should be invited as mentors to support and motivate learners, family, and community member to study hard and get better performance and achievements.

Educator 4A:

*” Educationally the school organise motivational speakers to advice and motivate learners to take their education seriously and aim high. Invite the school’s alumnus to mentor, support and motivate learners to study harder and get better performance and achievements”.*

School invited social workers intervene in guiding learners, parents and community members how to deal with social maladies like bullying, sexual abuse and substance abuse. Social workers also assist those who desperately in need financial assistance by securing them social grants and mentor learners interested social work as a career.

Educator 4A:

*“The school allowed social workers from the Department of Social Welfare to assist learner, parents and community members with respect to their social matters like having better social interactions, deal bullying, sexual abuse and substance abuse. Social workers should take a further step of assisting those who desperately need financial assistance by securing them social grants”.*

#### **4.4.6 Capacity building programmes for family and community members**

There is only one ABET centre in three villages which is far to be accessed. These made it hard for parents and community members to travel such a distance to access it.

Educator 6B:

*“Programmes that could make them aware of their importance and the role they had to play in the education of their children are necessary”.*

Family and community members *do not* follow on their children’s progress and assisting where learners encounter some challenges.

Educator 7B:

*“Parents do not attend school activities, events and functions. Maybe it is because family and community members did not receive enough education to know what is expected of them. Family and community members are illiterate. Those that come closer to the school seem to be lacking knowledge on how they can work closely with educators”*

PROGRAMMES: In October 2016 the police delivered magazines from Limpopo Army Support Base with the aim of recruiting learners who were interested in joining the South African Defence Services. The police further promised to occasionally visit the school to randomly search all learners starting from January 2017.

#### **4.4.7 Capacity building programmes for educators**

The participants stated that the DBE official supported educators by continuously visiting schools for supervision and monitoring. The DBE provided educators with opportunities to attend workshops, computer literacy programmes, in-service training

and to further their studies at universities to keep them educationally and professionally updated. Educators are free to outsource their colleagues in order beef up their content and methodology skill. There are no programmes for counselling educators who are emotionally and socially challenged for the benefit of the School-Family-Community partnership.

Educator<sub>2A</sub>:

*“The DBE officials visit the school for supervision and monitoring purposes and solve educators’ content and methodology challenges in workshops, in-service training, enrolling with universities. Some consult their colleagues who excel in teaching the same subject for assistance, and organise staff retreats whereby educators meet to discuss previous challenges encountered and come up with commonly solution”.*

Participants mentioned that all educators need to be retrained to acquire advanced subject methodology and content knowledge in their field of specialisations, ill-disciplined learners, computers skills, child development. Communication skills, emotion management, adolescence learners, psychological challenges learners and how to handle parents and community members are imperative.

Educator<sub>8B</sub>:

*“In-service training and workshops need to be organised so as to be empower educators. Educators should be advised to enrol to further their studies in relation to their major subjects, method and computer skills and child development in institution of higher learning”.*

#### **4.4.8 National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP)**

In the logbook it is noted that the NSNP officer visited the school in March 2016 for monitoring and support. The school’s feeding register should be filled on daily basis. The school does not have a vegetable garden. Generally, the school is doing very well. The preparatory cooking area and utensils are cleaned on daily basis. Food is being taken to classrooms. Keep up the good work.

It is recorded in the logbook in September 2017 that the NSNP officer visited the school for monitoring and support. The findings were that the attendance register for food handlers was not available as expected. Invoices that show the delivered quantities

against the expected were not available. The duty list that should be on the wall was also not available. The quantity of food cooked for the learners was done accordingly except that maize meal was less cooked. The officer advised the food handlers to measure equal ration of soya and beans when cooking in order to save them from getting rotten before use.

In the logbook it was noted that the officials from the DBE visited the school four times between October 2015 and October 2016. Their visit focused on monitoring and support about the implementation of the NSNP. It was found that the NSNP was implemented as per the conditional grant framework. The report further highlighted the following challenges: food handlers were not cooking all types of foods; they cooked less maize meal and soya beans; they did not keep their daily feeding register; the NSNP administrative work was not up to standard and thus records of delivered quantities against expected quantities were not available. The achievements, however, were that learners were fed in a hygienic atmosphere; food handlers were personally clean, they cleaned the cooking area, storeroom, and cooking utensils. Each class had food containers for the learners.

#### **4.5. CONCLUSION**

In the next chapter five the researcher seeks to outline the findings in chapter four. Furthermore, the information from the three sources of data collection, being observation, interviews and documents shall be reconciled into one summary of data. The researcher would furthermore give some recommendations in relation of the discovered findings.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The study sought to find out the challenges affecting School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at gaChuene in Limpopo Province. In order to achieve the above aim this study identified:

The internal (school) factors that hinder involvement in School-Family-Community partnerships in rural areas at Mogodumo Circuit.

The external factors (family and community) that hinder involvement in School-Family-Community partnerships in these areas were identified.

The study went further to develop educational programmes that may promote School-Family-Community partnerships in these areas.

#### **5.2 Major conclusion drawn from literature**

Recent studies have shown that rural communities including the school under study are challenged by poor economic development opportunities, youth unemployment, lack of career guidance, incompetence educators, and insufficient educators' training (Modiba & Sefotho, 2019:7; National Council for Community and Education

Partnerships (NCCEP), 2014:1). Hence, learners who are attend rural schools from poverty-stricken families lack transport to school, are faced with poor health conditions, indulge themselves in substance abuse and practise unsafe sex. As a result, teenage pregnancy is at an alarming rate as well as increased sick visits to the local clinics (Modiba & Sefotho, 2019:7; NCCEP, 2014:1, Motshekga, 2009:3 Lonsdale, 2011:3).

Many schools in rural areas are characterised by poor resources and infrastructure and low academic performance. The poor School-family-community partnerships counter learners' academic development. Learners are demotivated career wise, socially, and emotionally (Modiba & Sefotho, 2019:7; American School Councillors Association (ASCA), 2016:53; NCCEP, 2014:1; Zachariah; Mbugua; Kibet; Muthaa, & Nkonke, 2012:1; Wolhuter, 2014:1)). School are poorly staffed which leads to poor quality of teaching and learning. The negative attitude of teachers and learners towards each other leads to poor performance. Hence, the numbers of learners become pyramidal as they progress to the higher grades (Modiba & Sefotho, 2019:7; ASCA, 2016:53; Wolhuter, 2014:1; Nkonke et al., 2012:1).

There are learners who have behavioural problems, especially those who are at their adolescence stage (Jung & Sheldon, 2020:10; Tyler, 2017:30; Mchunu, 2012: 1). There is poor attendance of parents' school meetings and other school functions by family and community members. Educators have a poor attitude towards parents, which build up to poor relationships between them. Most parents work and others come home only at month end. Other parents, family and community members do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to assist their children with schoolwork at home (Jung & Sheldon, 2020:10; Tyler, 2017:30; Mchunu, 2012:1).

### **5.3 Major conclusion drawn from the study**

#### **5.3.1 INTERNAL FACTORS (SCHOOL) THAT AFFECT SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL AREAS**

##### **5.3.1.1 Punctuality**

In both schools, punctuality is a serious challenge that needs an urgent intervention. Educators and learners are not reporting early enough. They attend their periods late and educators leave the class before the end of the period. In this way, more contact

time for effective teaching and learning is lost. Learners cited more home chores as the cause of coming late to school. The learners are characterised by insufficient written work, shortage of written tasks and poor performance and achievement. These problems lower the performance and achievement of both the two schools.

#### **5.3.1.2 Educators' lack of obedience and honesty**

Educators do not sign the actual time they had reported or knocked off in the time book. There is no one to supervise and monitor the time book. There are no recovery strategies for educators who go on leave. Daily there are classes which are left unattended by educators and often cause disruptions to their neighbouring classes. Hence, learners generally poorly perform year in year out.

#### **5.3.1.3 Poor management**

Educators do not manage their classes effectively because learners make noise in their presence. Attention is not given to learners' work completion, lesson attendance and absenteeism. SMTs are not trained to manage their departments, are overloaded, make no class visits to develop educators and educators and learners' work is poorly supervised. SMT, SGB and educators lack expertise to orient newly employed staff members.

#### **5.3.1.4 Poor communication**

The schools use letters as the only form of sending messages to parents, family and community members. Letters sent to parents do not reflect the agenda and some learners do not deliver them to the parents. Learners submit dysfunctional cell phone numbers as those of their parents. This made it hard for the school and families to communicate effectively. The community members without communicating with the school took learners out of their classes to reinforce their protest to lodge their grievances. The usages of foreign languages in communication impede understanding and promote misinterpreting of information by family and community members.

#### **5.3.1.5 Poor parental involvement**

It has been found that parents of learners in grade 12 in both the schools play an active role in organising enrichment lessons during the school vacations. Parents play a security role, pay for learners, and cook for them throughout the enrichment session. Despite the positive impact made by a minority of parents, most of them do not

participate in school activities and functions. The illiteracy level of some parents account for their poor or non-participation in the education of their children.

#### **5.3.1.6 Absenteeism**

Absenteeism is at an alarming rate in both schools. It is more prevalent in boys than girls, occurring mainly on Mondays and Fridays. Some learners do not attend classes, but they appear during lunch time when food, from the school's feeding scheme, is given to all the learners.

#### **5.3.1.7 Overloaded educators**

It was discovered that educators are overloaded including the SMTs, teaching at least 40 periods per week and performing other duties such as being a class teacher, participating in extra-curricular activities, acting as principal in the absent of the principal and SMTs assisting in administrative duties. This situation makes it hard for the principal, HODs and educators to diligently execute their duties effectively and efficiently.

#### **5.3.1.8 Insufficient extra-curricular activities**

Soccer, netball, and volleyball have been established in the target schools. Educators are more conversant with these sporting codes. For learners to be developed in totality and achieve the School-Family-Community vision, other sporting codes such as golf, rugby, cricket, tennis, basketball, and indoor activities like chess, table tennis, snooker, gymnasium, and dance should be introduced.

#### **5.3.1.9 Discouragement from educators to learners**

Some educators say to learners that they have inherited slowness of learning from their parents and as a result they are not going to make it educationally. There are learners who have proved the educators wrong, that unique as they are, they can make it. There are educators who are working against the schools' visions.

#### **5.3.1.10 Ill-disciplined and uncommitted learners**

Some learners are ill-disciplined. There are those who refuse to acknowledge their mistakes and exchange words with their educators. Peer pressure leads certain learners to be mischievous and disrespectful to educators. There are learners who had appeared before the disciplinary committee for saying vulgar words to other learners or educator, found in possession of weapons, bullying other learners, and



contravening the school's code of conduct by using cell phones in class during periods or lessons. This is against the schools' vision statements and the agreement of the SGB.

#### **5.3.1.11 Lack of resources**

It has been learnt that the two schools do not have enough furnishers and books. The schools do not have a library, laboratories, and enough classrooms. Mobile classrooms and been supplied with mobile classrooms by DBE to curb the shortage of classrooms. There is no community resource centre in the target schools where learners, parents, and community members can be supported for their homework, workshops about child discipline, self-esteem, stress management and so forth.

#### **5.3.1.12 Overpopulated classes**

Classrooms are overcrowded with learners and some accommodate more than double the DBE's envisaged 33 learners per class. In some classes learners are about 70. It is hard for educators to walk between the desks while teaching to give learners individual attention. As a result, individual attention cannot be given to due to learners due to congestion.

#### **5.3.1.13 insufficiently trained educators**

The introduction of the new curriculum in South Africa has left many educators lacking sufficient knowledge regarding to new topics, and this naturally impedes quality teaching and learning. The DBE invited educators to workshop in order to familiarise them with the curriculum, but very limited time was given to workshop coordinators. Training that deserves to be done in a period of three months was given one or two days. As a result, educators were not well versed with what was taught during such workshops. Moreover, educators are not trained or workshopped in assisting learners with behavioural challenges, peer group pressure, bullying and child development and different behaviours displayed by learners in a learning environment.

#### **5.3.1.14 Lack of safety**

Both target schools are not properly fenced. They do not have security guards because the DBE deny schools to use norms and standards to hire security guards. People who enter the schoolyard are not searched. Some parents come for learners' consultation while under the influence of liquor. This situation leaves learners and

educators vulnerable, unsecured, and unsafe. Parents and community members do not take care of the schools' properties after hours. The schools are vandalised and remain vulnerable to community thugs. Consequently, the schools' infrastructure looks very old, unattractive, and dilapidated.

#### **5.3.1.15 School based barriers**

The school' infrastructure, communication and engagement systems are a barrier because they are not designed and resourced for inclusive education. Parent and learners with disabilities cannot access education or participate in the education of their children because even the transport system available in the country does not have that kind of facility to accommodate everybody. The schools hold meetings when most parents are at work. Educators cannot afford evening meetings when parents have returned home because the educators travel a long distance to and from their work daily. The schools do not disseminate information to the stakeholders on time and it becomes hard for stakeholders to decide at their places of work.

Some educators do not involve the parents in the education of their children. They think that the parents would interfere with their daily duties. Parents who are working do not know that the school can give stakeholders who attend meetings letters to submit to their places of work as proof of attendance. Furthermore, incompleteness and non-follow up of the agreements reached in school-parent meetings by SMT do not encourage future engagement and participation of stakeholders in school activities. Some SMTs and SGBs avoid giving clarity to issues and being accountable by not inviting knowledgeable stakeholders.

#### **5.3.1.16 Schools' involvement in addressing the communities' educational, economic, and social needs**

Learners who are interested in following social work as their career, for example, are given proper guidance. Learners can practise their cultures and traditions at school. This engagement grows the culture and the sense of appreciation in learners. This further increases learners', parents', families' and community members' self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-appreciation, and allows them to have confidence in the school system.

Sex education is eminent to learners starting from grade 7. Moral regeneration programmes are vital to these communities to assist in rehabilitating learners, parents,

family, and community members from prostitution, teen pregnancy, drugs and liquor addiction. Peer pressure drove young girls to have children at a tender age so that they could access child support grant.

### **5.3.2 EXTERNAL FACTORS (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY) THAT AFFECT SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **5.3.2.1 Poverty stricken families**

The majority of learners in the target schools are from poverty-stricken families. Their parents work in various parts of South Africa to alleviate their families from poverty. Consequently, they are unable to attend parent's meetings, take care of their children, assisting and guiding them in their schoolwork. Poverty and unemployment forced some parents many a times to steal food meant for the school's feeding scheme for their survival. There are learners who are heading their families who are financial supported by their next of kin or the social grant.

#### **5.3.2.2 Teenage pregnancy**

Teenage pregnancy is at an alarming state in learners from both schools, especially learners in grades 9 and 10. Some learners persist to come to school even if they are highly expectant. Parents of pregnant teenagers do not respect the decision taken by SGBs, that they should accompany their pregnant children daily to school. This was meant to ensure that the parents are always nearer when the learners need any attention, be it parental or medical. This is a serious problem to both learners and educators as the latter do not have the midwifery skills to assist expectant learners when the time to deliver may unexpectedly come. Such pregnant teenagers are faced with serious health, socio-economic and educational challenge. The provision of social grants to teenage mothers, promotes pregnancy of children of school-going age.

#### **5.3.2.3 Lack of transport**

Most learners walk on foot to and from school for a distance of about 2 kilometres. Learners travel from their nearest target school to the next target school or vice-versa. There are paraplegics and community members who are blind who find it hard to travel to these school where their children are enrolled due to the shortage of transport. This problem exacerbates late coming of learners and parents to school and parents' meetings.

#### **5.3.2.4 Theft and burglary**

Theft of schools' resources by community members remains a huge challenge. The two schools have lost a computer server due to burglary. Computer rooms were also affected. Learners at the two schools' complete grade 12 without having computer skills and entering tertiary institutions without such essential basic skills. The DBE had electrified and installed fire extinguishers in each classroom and office in both the target schools, but this equipment were also stolen.

#### **5.3.2.5 Substance abuse**

Liquor and nyaope (very addictive kind of dagga) are commonly and readily available in these two rural villages. The participants complained that more taverns and liquor restaurants are opened in the two villages than churches. Furthermore, police rarely patrol the two villages. This intensifies the usage of liquor and other drugs publicly by most community members in general. There are parents who share liquor and drugs with young ones at home, in shebeens and even in taverns. There are learners who have been caught in possession of dagga and weapons at school. Some learners are fronted by drug dealers to sell drugs in the village as well as at school. Drugs and liquor abuse also contributes hugely to the learners' absenteeism.

#### **5.3.2.6 Community is devalued**

There are some local languages in both communities which are not used at the target schools. Only Sepedi and English are used. Family and community members whose languages are not used at school feel demeaned and devalued. Schools do not recognise the religion practised by learners in their various homes. Only the Christian religion is practised at both the target schools. Parents and the schools agreed that when a learner is ill or absent, parents should report. One parent reported that she took her child to consult a traditional healer. Unfortunately, the learner became the victim of such circumstance and a letter from the traditional healer was denied. The learner was disciplined. The school's practices contradict with the cultural belief system of some community members. The fact that the cultural belief system of some

community members is not recognised causes poor relationship between the schools, the family and community members.

#### **5.3.2.7 Lack of parental care**

In the target schools, parents do not play their parental duties of following on their children's progress and assisting them with learning challenges. There are several child-headed families who do not enjoy parental care. There are also learners who come to school having not done their schoolwork. This shows that parents do not play their parental role in the education of their children. There are learners who are indisciplined, exchange words with educators, bully other learners and display behavioural problems. This also reflects the lack of parental care.

#### **5.3.2.8 Community denied access to school resources**

Family and community members are denied the use of school resources such as water and classrooms. This led some family and community members to take the law into their own hands and break the school fence to access water.

#### **5.3.2.9 Poor health status of learners**

The general health status of learners is poor because every single school day three to five learners ask for permission to visit the local clinic. The local clinic has been invited many a times to guide learners at school as far as good health is concerned. There are those who are suffering from chronic diseases like epilepsy which disturbs them from attending some periods. There are also symptoms of poverty related disease such as malnutrition.

#### **5.3.2.10 Community's contribution towards learners' success**

Community members are not contributing towards the learners' success. They create a non-conducive learning environment and are less interested in education. Some families who live near the school premises play loud music during school hours.

Despite what has been mentioned above, one group of young community members who are university graduates assisted grade 12 learners in computer literacy, mathematics, physical Sciences, and drama in the afternoons. One community member volunteered to coach the school's soccer team. Two former learners who are

working in an Information Technology company (ITC) have promised to offer the school some computers and laptops once the strong room has been built. Pastors often come to the schools to pray for the learners as a means of providing spiritual and pastoral support. The parents, family and community members are supportive, waking up learners very early in the morning to be at school on time. Parents also agreed to accompany their children to evening studies, as a safety measure.

#### **5.3.2.11 Parents and community members' ignorance**

The level of ignorance on the part of some parents and community members is extremely high. There are parents who do not know the grade in which their children are, as well as the subjects and streams they are doing. Furthermore, they do not bother themselves to collect their children's progress reports on a quarterly basis. Other parents do not care as to whether their children come back from school on time or not. Learners are so loose from the care of their parents to the extent of spending the whole weekend with their friends and coming back home the next Monday. This reflects the level of ignorance that the parents of the target schools have, and ignorance is not one of the measures that could be used to support School-Family-Community partnership vision.

#### **5.3.2.12 Uncooperative family and community members**

Some parents are not willing to attend parents' meetings even if they get this information early enough. Some do attend the meetings and functions but offer no ideas for the betterment of the school. There are those who mentioned that as long as their children do not respect them at home, then they will not cooperate with the school for whatever issue that involves their children.

#### **5.3.2.13 Poor funding**

The target rural secondary schools are not exceptions as far as funding is concerned. The only funding that is accessed is the norms and standards from the DBE. The fund is used for the daily running of school activities. The schools are still using old, dilapidated classrooms. The DBE is doing very little to redress the situation. It must be remembered that these are previously disadvantaged schools, also receiving very little during the apartheid era.

#### **5.3.2.14 Involvement of DBE district officials in the teaching and learning**

The Circuit manager organised, coordinated, supervised, and monitored camps for school vacation enrichment classes and block teaching for the grade 12 learners envisioned to supplement what has been taught, to augment learners' understanding. The principals and SGB parents' component managed the camps. Furthermore, the Circuit ensured that the examinations ran smoothly and the schools feeding scheme were functional. Learners are supplied with study guides of different content subjects. The Circuit officials do intervene at school's processes when learners are not doing well by finding the root cause of poor academic performance. They come up with possible developmental strategies.

The District Senior Manager (DSM) invited the top fifty learners from the Circuit to motivate them over the weekend and be taught by senior curriculum advisors. It is unfortunate that the best learners are assisted, while those who genuinely need assistance are not. The DBE designed the pacesetters of various subjects in the curriculum and ensured that they were delivered to all the schools. The DBE organised workshops to assist educators in their teaching.

### **5.3.3 DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGIES**

#### **5.3.3.1 Participants' understanding of the school's vision**

A schools' vision is a set goals or a set objective that has been agreed upon by all stakeholders. It gives you direction about how the institution should be conducted, defines your character as learners, educators, family, and community members, and develop the school's culture. It is about the education development of learners, parents, and community members in various sphere of education. A vision is the driving force of stakeholders to achieve their goal and give the school the potential to survive and sustain itself. The schools' vision is aimed at empowering learners to be self-sufficient, self-reliant, self-acceptance, sustaining their lives, be progressive, be future responsible adult, and be good decision makers equipped with skills to be globally competent.

### **5.3.3.2 Ensuring that the school's vision is shared by all stakeholders**

The principal of schools did not repeatedly remind the stakeholders about the school's vision. The SMT do not encourage the stakeholders to know the school's vision by heart and live it. The stakeholders are encouraged to share and transfer the vision to their friends, family members and other stakeholders.

Traditional leaders like chiefs, headmen (induna), traditional healers and church leaders were not involved in spreading the school's vision to their followers. The school's vision may be posted to learner's parents via e-mails, radio, newspaper, the school's website, Facebook, WhatsApp, and the internet. Fliers could also be distributed to parents and community members as a means of sharing the vision of the school. Pamphlets and placards may be pasted at local popular places such as churches, shops, and street electric poles as a way of disseminating pertinent information to all members of the community.

### **5.3.3.3 Developmental programmes**

There are teachers who do not have computer literacy skills and are not conversant with the advanced subject methodology and content. Universities have not intensified the training of prospective educators in pedagogical methodology and classroom management. The DBE does not increase the salary scale of educators who have developed academically and professionally but pay them a once-off payment performance bonus. Communication, inclusive education, and discipline-oriented programmes have not been organised to empower educators with such skills. Parents and community members were not trained in assisting children at home, in parenting, and child development.

### **5.3.3.4 Involvement of stakeholders in the school's strategic planning**

As part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), stakeholders participate actively to ensure the implementation and feasibility of any strategic plans agreed upon. Each member of the committee has a responsibility to assist in strategic thinking to reinforce the functioning of the committee. By so doing, stakeholders are assisting in the overall



strategic planning of the school towards the achievement of the school's vision. Stakeholders should be actively involved in the formulation of policies such as Admission Policy, Attendance Policy, Communication Policy, Enrolment Procedure Policy, Health Services Policy, HIV/AIDS Policy, Student Profile Policy, Student Record Retention Policy, and Withdrawal Procedure. Stakeholders should be involved in solving emerging problems and challenges.

#### **5.3.3.5 Improving communication to enhance stakeholders' participation**

The information received is not disseminated to all relevant stakeholders in time. This denies stakeholders the opportunity to prepare themselves. Messages are sent to stakeholders through learners to deliver them. The result is some letters are not delivered. There are SMT members who use English when addressing family and community members. Because of the level of illiteracy in the rural areas several community members do not get the essence of what is being communicated.

#### **5.3.3.6 Decision making process**

The parents, educators and SGB members play equal roles in decision making because most of the schools' policies finance, disciplinary and budget just to mention a few - are approved by the parents. The policies drawn are presented to the parent component of the SGB, and then it is the parents who ultimately approve it. When the government's financial provisioning is not enough, parents are invited to come and decide on how to raise funds to augment what the state has provided. Sometimes they take resolutions that bind all parents to supplement the inadequate norms and standards funds provided by Department of Basic Education (DBE). Some of such decisions made by parents ultimately become policies.

#### **5.3.3.7 School's strategies to address and improve local community's needs**

Various committees are formed annually, and stakeholders are delegated to head one or two committees. Each head sits with members to formulate strategies that would enable them to run the committee effectively and efficiently for the success of the school. The committee plan, implement and gauge the aftereffects and feasibility of the plan to accomplishing the school's vision in line with the country's constitution. Social workers intervened among learners who displayed behavioural changes, social, and psychological challenges.

Sometimes they addressed all learners. Some community members had been given that latitude to sell ready-made food and snacks to learners and educators at the schools' main entrance. This assisted community members in generating income.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to achieve solutions of the challenges presented in this study, the researcher recommends the followings:

- Stakeholders should collaboratively work towards establishing and sustaining a School-Family-Community partnership that is built of a foundation of respect, trust, and active involvement of stakeholders.
- Partnership should improve communication channels and language, establishing PTAs, make available various communication means, be involved in decision making processes and the formulation of policies.
- The school, families, and community members should collaboratively work towards safety and security in schools, fundraising and resources to all, establish income generating projects, education promoting asserts, and creation of a conducive learning environment at school and home.
- The partnership should employ highly competent officials and establish School-Family-Community partnership's developmental programmes to empower stakeholders in various skills.

#### **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The researcher recognises the following limitations in this current study:

The fact that this study included the experience of only thirty-two participants from the schools limits the findings. The two target schools chosen as case study from a sample space of twelve secondary schools and their specific settings limit the findings. The non-sampled schools may have different challenges to the target schools. Purposive sampling limited the number of participants with the aim of getting rich descriptive data. The inaccessibility of the participants and their inexperience in interviews also limited the findings of the study.

It was not easy to access the two principals and the three educators at work due to their work demands. The researcher had to pay them a visit at their respective homes during weekends. The researcher was not given a venue at the target schools to interview the participants due to a shortage of classes. One Good Samaritan educator offered his car wherein the interviews were conducted.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

The school as an agent of change did not involve parent and community members at the forefront of organising, establishing, implementing, and sustaining the School-Family-Community partnerships.

The learners, family and community members were not involved in vision formation, policies and strategies and decision-making process towards achieving their needs and interests.

The community leaders, the most influential members of the community were also not involved in School-Family-Community partnerships. As a result, there is poor participation of parents and community members in school events, activities, and functions.

The developmental programmes in line with the interests and needs of learners, family and community members were not organised to solve their challenges.

The school's communication channels and means needs to be improved for effectively disseminating information to all stakeholders. By so doing, the school will be working towards achieving the needs and interests of learners, family, and community members.

Both the school and community-based resources were not used to enhance learning of learners, family, and community members.

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## APPENDICES

### LETTERS REQUESTING FOR PERMISSION

#### APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Enquiries: Ribane, M. S P O Box 971

Cell Phone: 0848155936 Dwarsriver

E-mail: ribanesam.2016@gmail.com 081

The Circuit Manager

Department of Basic Education

Mogodumo Circuit

P O Box 1846

Mogodumo

0735

Dear Sir/Madam

#### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. I'm a Master's student in Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo.
3. My research topic is: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A Case Study.*
4. The copy of this research and information will remain confidential to me and the University to guard the anonymity of the participants.
5. Attached please find the researcher's proof of registration from the University of Limpopo.
6. I am under the supervision of Dr M. M. Maphutha.

Yours faithfully

Ribane M.S

## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Enquiries: Ribane M S

P O Box 971

Contact no: 0848155936

Dwarsriver

E-mail: [ribanesam.2016@gmail.com](mailto:ribanesam.2016@gmail.com)

0812

University of Limpopo

Private Bag X 120

Sovenga

0727

Dear Sir/Madam

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. I, M. S. Ribane, Student No: 9641643, am a registered student at the University of Limpopo, studying towards a Master's degree in Education in the School of Education (Community and Continuing Education)
3. I am hereby requesting for permission to conduct research at two secondary schools at ga-Chuene.
4. The topic of my research is: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas at Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A case study.*

Yours Faithfully

Ribane, M.S.

## **APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Enquiries: Ribane, M. S

P O Box 971

Cell Phone: 0848155936

Dwarsriver

E-mail: ribanesam.2016@gmail.com

0812

The Principal

Thogoa Secondary School

Mogodumo Circuit

P O Box 1846

Mogodumo

0735

Dear Sir/Madam

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. I am a Master's student in Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo.
3. My research topic is: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A case study.*
4. The copy of the research and information will remain confidential to me and the University to guard the anonymity of the participants.
5. Attached please find the researcher's proof of registration from the University of Limpopo.
6. I am under the supervision of Dr. M. M. Maphutha.

Yours faithfully

Ribane MS



**APPENDIX D: LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Enq: Mohloana T. P  
Cell: 0729546169

Thogoia Sec School  
P O Box 1846  
Mogodumo  
0735  
14/02/2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

AUTHORISATION (RIBANE MOTSHEKGA SAMUEL)

This letter serves to confirm that the SMT and SGB of Thogoia Secondary School have authorised RIBANE MOTSHEKGA SAMUEL to conduct a research study within the auspices of our school.

For any information regarding the above, please do not hesitate to call should you need any clarity.

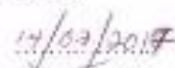
Yours Faithfully

The principal  
MOHLOANA T. P

Signature



DATE



## **APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Enquiries: M. S. Ribane,

P O Box 971

Cell Phone: 0848155936

Dwarsriver

E-mail: ribanesam.2016@gmail.com

0812

The Principal

Leshikishiki Secondary School

Mogodumo Circuit

P O Box 1845

Mogodumo

0735

Dear Sir/Madam

### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH**

1. The above matter refers.
2. I am a Master's student in Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo.
3. My research topic is: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas in the Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A Case Study.*
4. The copy of this research and information will remain confidential to me and the University to guard the anonymity of the participants.
5. Attached please find the researcher's proof of registration from the University of Limpopo.
6. I am under the supervision of Dr. M. M. Maphutha.

Yours Faithfully

Ribane MS

**APPENDIX F: LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Enq: Ramphele S. M

Cell: 0725623948

Leshikishiki Sec School

P O Box 1845

Mogodumo

0735

18/01/2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

AUTHORISATION (RIBANE MOTSHEKGA SAMUEL)

This letter serves to confirm that the SMT and SGB of Leshikishiki Secondary School have authorised RIBANE MOTSHEKGA SAMUEL to conduct a research study within the auspices of our school.

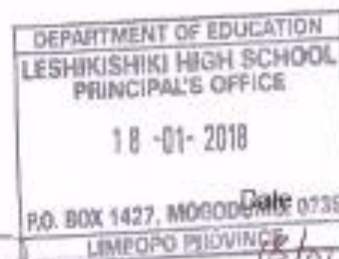

For any information regarding the above, please do not hesitate to call should you need any clarity.

Yours Faithfully

The principal

RAMPHELE S. M

Signature



Date

18/01/18

**APPENDIX G: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

I declare that I have been informed about this research study. I have also read about the nature and the aim of this study.

I therefore agree to participate in this study and understand that my foster child can withdraw participation in the study if he or she so wishes.

Parent/Guardian's name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## CONSENT FORMS

### APENDIX H: CONSENT FORM FOR THE LEARNERS

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following study: Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: *A Case Study*. I am informed about the study and the procedures to be followed for taking part in the study. I understand that there are conditions to be met for me to participate in the study. I am informed of the nature and the aim of the study. I am aware that I do not have to take part in the study unwillingly and may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time or any stage of the study proceedings. Under these conditions I am willing to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant:..... Date:.....

Signature of Witness:.....Date:.....

**APENDIX I: CONSENT FORM FOR THE PARENTS**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following study: Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo province: *A Case Study*. I am informed about the study and the procedures to be followed for taking part in the study. I understand that there are conditions to be met for me to participate in the study. I am informed of the nature and the aim of the study. I am aware that I do not have to take part in the study unwillingly and may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time or any stage of the study proceedings. Under these conditions I am willing to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant:..... Date:.....

Signature of Witness:.....Date:.....

## APENDIX J: CONSENT FORM FOR THE EDUCATORS

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following study: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province. A Case Study*. I am informed about the study and the procedures to be followed for taking part in the study. I understand that there are conditions to be met for me to participate in the study. I am informed of the nature and the aim of the study. I am aware that I do not have to take part in the study unwillingly and may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time or any stage of the study proceedings. Under these conditions I am willing to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant:..... Date:.....

Signature of Witness:..... Date:.....

**APENDIX K: CONSENT FORM FOR THE PRINCIPALS**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following study: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A Case Study*. I am informed about the study and the procedures to be followed for taking part in the study. I understand that there are conditions to be met for me to participate in the study. I am informed of the nature and the aim of the study. I am aware that I do not have to take part in the study unwillingly and may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time or any stage of the study proceedings. Under these conditions I am willing to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant:..... Date:.....

Signature of Witness:..... Date:.....



**APENDIX L: CONSENT FORM FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following study: *Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnerships In Rural Areas in Mogodumo Circuit, Limpopo Province: A Case Study*. I am informed about the study and the procedures to be followed for taking part in the study. I understand that there are conditions to be met for me to participate in the study. I am informed of the nature and the aim of the study. I am aware that I do not have to take part in the study unwillingly and may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time or any stage of the study proceedings. Under these conditions I am willing to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant:..... Date:.....

Signature of Witness:..... Date:.....

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **APPENDIX M: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS**

#### **INTERNAL (SCHOOL-BASED) FACTORS**

1. What is your understanding of the school's vision?
2. How are your educators involved in the provision of quality teaching and learning at your school?
3. What contributes to poor relationships between learners and educators?
4. What contributes to poor relationships between educators and families?
5. What contributes to poor relationships between families and the school?
6. What contributes to poor relationships between community members and the school?
7. What are the communication challenges amongst school, family and the community?
8. How are your parents involved in your school decision-making process?
9. What school based barriers hinder family and community members' participation in school activities?
10. How are your families and community members engaged in designing your school curricula?
11. What educational developmental programmes could solve learners', educators', parents', and community members' challenges?

#### **EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BASED) FACTORS**

12. In your opinion, what causes parents/family/community members not to be involved in school activities?
13. How are your parents/family supporting you in your schoolwork?
14. Why do you think community resources could be used to enhance learning?

## STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

15. How do you ensure that all stakeholders participate in the formation of the school's vision?
16. How do you ensure that the vision of your school is shared by all the stakeholders?
17. How are you involved in the strategic planning of school activities?
18. How can communication be improved towards enhancing participation of all the partnership members?
19. How are the officials at the district Department of Basic Education involved in the teaching and learning process?
20. What strategies can be employed to improve the involvement of your school in addressing local community needs?
21. Some community members are willing to volunteer, what role could they play in your school?

## **APPENDIX N: INTERVIEWS GUIDE FOR THE EDUCATORS**

### **INTERNAL (SCHOOL-BASED) FACTORS**

1. What is your understanding of the school's vision?
2. How are educators involved in the provision of quality teaching and learning at your school?
3. What contributes to poor relationships between learners and educators?
4. What contributes to poor relationships between educators and families?
5. What contributes to poor relationships between families and school?
6. What contributes to poor relationships between community members and the school?
7. What are the communication challenges amongst school, family and the community?
8. How are parents involved in your school decision-making process?
9. What school based barriers hinder family and community member's participation in school activities?
10. How are families and community members engaged in designing your school curricula?
11. What educational developmental programmes could solve the educators' challenges?

### **EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BASED) FACTORS**

12. In your opinion, what cause parents, family, and community members not to be involved in school activities?
13. How are parents/family supporting learners in their schoolwork?
14. Why do you think community resources could be used to enhance learning?

### **STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

15. How do you ensure that all stakeholders participate in the formation of the school's vision?
16. How do you ensure that the vision of your school is shared by all stakeholders?
17. How are you involved in the strategic planning of school activities?
18. How can communication be improved towards enhancing participation of all the partnership members?
19. How are the district DBE officials involved in the teaching and learning process?
20. What strategies can be employed to improve the involvement of your school in addressing local community needs?
21. Some community members are willing to volunteer; what role could they play in your school?

## **APPENDIX O: INTERVIEWS GUIDE FOR THE PRINCIPAL INTERNAL (SCHOOL-BASED) FACTORS**

1. What is your understanding of the school's vision?
2. How are educators involved in the provision of quality teaching and learning at your school?
3. What contributes to poor relationships between learners and educators?
4. What contributes to poor relationships between educators and families?
5. What contributes to poor relationships between families and school?
6. What contributes to poor relationships between community members and the school?
7. What are the communication challenges amongst school, family and the community?
8. How are parents involved in your school decision-making process?
9. What school based barriers hinder family and community member's participation in school activities?
10. How are families and community members engaged in designing your school curricula?
11. What educational developmental programmes could solve the principal's challenges?

## **EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BASED) FACTORS**

12. In your opinion, what causes parents/family/community members not to be involved in school activities?
13. How are parents/family supporting learners in their schoolwork?
14. Why do you think community resources could be used to enhance learning?

## **STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

15. How do you ensure that all stakeholders participate in the formation of the school's vision?
16. How do you ensure that the vision of your school is shared by all stakeholders?
17. How are you involved in the strategic planning of school activities?
18. How can communication be improved towards enhancing participation of all the partnership members?
19. How are the officials at the district Department of Basic Education involved in the teaching and learning process?
20. What strategies can be employed to improve the involvement of your school in addressing local community needs?
21. Some community members are willing to volunteer, what role could they play in your school?

## **APPENDIX P: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENT INTERNAL (SCHOOL-BASED) FACTORS**

1. What is your understanding of the school's vision?
2. How are educators involved in the provision of quality teaching and learning at your school?
3. What contributes to poor relationships between learners and educators?
4. What contributes to poor relationships between educators and families?
5. What contributes to poor relationships between families and the school?
6. What contributes to poor relationships between community members and the school?
7. What are the communication challenges amongst school, family and the community?
8. How are parents involved in your school decision-making process?
9. What school-based barriers hinder family and community members' participation in school activities?
10. How are families and community members engaged in designing your school curricula?
11. What educational developmental programmes could solve educators' challenges?

## **EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BASED) FACTORS**

12. In your opinion, what causes parents/family not to be involved in school activities?
13. How are parents/family supporting learners in their schoolwork?
14. Why do you think community resources could be used to enhance learning?

## **STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**



15. How do you ensure that all the stakeholders participate in the formation of the school's vision?
16. How do you ensure that the vision of your school is shared by all the stakeholders?
17. How are you involved in the strategic planning of school activities?
18. How can communication be improved towards enhancing participation of all the partnership members?
19. How are the officials at the district Department of Basic Education involved in the teaching and learning process?
20. What strategies can be employed to improve the involvement of your school in addressing local community needs?
21. Some community members are willing to volunteer, what role could they play in your school?

## **APPENDIX Q: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

### **INTERNAL (SCHOOL-BASED) FACTORS**

1. What is your understanding of the school's vision?
2. How are educators involved in the provision of quality teaching and learning at your school?
3. What contributes to poor relationships between learners and educators?
4. What contributes to poor relationships between educators and families?
5. What contributes to poor relationships between families and the school?
6. What contributes to poor relationships between community members and the school?
7. What are the communication challenges amongst school, family and community?
8. How are parents involved in your school's decision-making process?
9. What school-based barriers hinder family and community members' participation in school activities?
10. How are families and community members engaged in designing your school curricula?
11. What educational developmental programmes could solve community members' challenges?

### **EXTERNAL (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY-BASED) FACTORS**

12. In your opinion, what causes parents/family/community members not to be involved in school activities?
13. How are parents/family/community members supporting learners in their schoolwork?
14. Why do you think community resources could be used to enhance learning?

### **STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

15. How do you ensure that all stakeholders participate in the formation of the school's vision?
16. How do you ensure that the vision of your school is shared by all the stakeholders?
17. How are you involved in the strategic planning of school activities?
18. How can communication be improved towards enhancing participation of all the partnership members?
19. How are the officials at the district Department of Basic Education involved in the teaching and learning process?
20. What strategies can be employed to improve the involvement of your school in addressing local community needs?
21. Some community members are willing to volunteer, what role could they play in your school?

## OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

### DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Infrastructure
2. Vegetable garden
3. Access to school resources
4. Communication
5. Parental involvement
6. Punctuality
7. Extra curricula activities
8. Discipline
9. Learners' class accommodation

## LETTER FROM TREC



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: noko.monene@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS  
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 03 November 2016

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/214/2016: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** Challenges of School-Family-Community Partnership in Rural Areas: A Case Study

**Researcher:** Mr MS Ribane

**Supervisor:** Dr MM Maphutha

**Co-Supervisor:** N/A

**School:** Education

**Degree:** Masters in Education

  
**PROF. T. MASHIGO**  
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

**Note:**

- i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
- ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.  
**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

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**LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**



**DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION**

Ref: 2002      Cor: MC Makoa Ph:      Tel: No: 015 790 9400      Email: [education@limpopo.gov.za](mailto:education@limpopo.gov.za)

Ribane M.S.  
P O Box 2  
Dwaarsrivier  
0812

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

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: "CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL AREAS IN MOGODUMO CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE: A CASE STUDY"
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term

*Request for permission to conduct Research: Ribane M.S*

CONFIDENTIAL

Corr. 113 Bricard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

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