

*An exploration of the roles of the parent SGB members in
the SGB: a case study of two selected rural primary schools
in the King Williams Town District.*

By

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Declaration

I, Mzuyanda Percival Mavuso, declare that the contents of this dissertation constitute my own original work except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been or shall be submitted to any other institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

.....
Researcher's Signature

.....
Date

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ABSTRACT

.The aim of this study was to explore the roles of the parent SGB members in the School Governing Bodies (SGB) of two selected rural primary schools in the King Williams Town District. This was achieved by applying the qualitative approach within the parameters of the interpretivist paradigm. Structured interviews, semi structured interviews, document analysis and non-participatory observation methods were used at two sites that were purposely sampled. The samples in both schools were made up of SGB chairperson, SGB secretary, treasurer, one additional member, principal and non SGB parents.

From the findings it emerged that the principal and SGB chairperson work in partnership in the business of school governance. However, principals seemed to dominate their SGB chairpersons who in most cases seem to be less competent than the principals. Parent SGB members seem to be dependent upon the educators in most cases on issues of school governance and they do not differentiate between their role and that of the SMT. Most SGB subcommittees seem to be dysfunctional and it was clear from the data that educators were the persons who dealt with school finances and matters of procurement. The majority of parent SGB members do not know what policies the school must adopt.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

SGB-	School Governing Body
SMT-	School Management Team
DoE-	Department of Education
PGA-	Partnership, Governance and Accountability
SDT-	Self determination theory
EA-	External Advisors
SASA-	South Africa Schools Act
CEO-	Chief Executive Officer

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The idea of involving parents in school governance is a worldwide phenomenon based on the decentralisation of school governance philosophy (Sayed, 2002). This philosophy advocates that the school community ought to own schools and should take responsibility for the education of their children (Bush & Heystek, 2003 and van Wyk, 2004). It further states that stakeholder participation benefits the school and the community it serves (Ibid). South Africa, through the promulgation of South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) legislated stakeholder participation in school governance. SASA was conceived from the decentralisation philosophy. Decentralisation is the strategy by the government to achieve efficiency and provide an equitable and affordable quality of education through increased stakeholder participation (Geo-Jaja, 2006). This means that SASA brought about democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGB) through which all the relevant stakeholders are supposed to participate actively in the governance of the schools (van Wyk, 2004).

In relation to the above developments, this study seeks to explore the roles of the parent SGB members in the context of stakeholder participation. Parents have the largest stake in school governance. According to SASA, parents should hold the majority of 50% plus one member representation, and the chairperson must be a parent member (van Wyk, 2004). The fact that the communities, as

represented by parents in the SGB play such a big role in school governance influenced the researcher's decision to embark on this study.

The guidelines regarding the election of SGBs are consistent (DoE, 1996) and their roles are uniform (SASA, 1996) yet according to researcher's observation, schools seem to be performing differently with regard to school governance. The researcher attributes the staggered performances amongst SGBs to parent SGB members' varied understanding of their roles. The SGB, as required by the SASA (1996), are supposed to ensure that the school is developing in the direction of improving the provision of quality education for all learners. This means, therefore, that the SGB should make the teaching and learning atmosphere in the school conducive for quality education to take place effectively.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that decentralisation would contribute to greater equity, efficiency and improved parental participation that would in turn lead to an enhanced culture of teaching and learning (Geo-Jaja, 2006). The effectiveness of the SGB should be measured against their prescribed roles in the SASA section 20 (1). Divergent arguments have emerged in the literature on parental participation in school governance.

Significant studies have been conducted on parental participation (see Sayed, Suzuki, 2002; Mbantsane, 2006; Lusaseni, 1998; Maclure, 1994; Mathonsi, 2001; Duku, 2006; and Heystek, 2004; Lewis & Naidoo, 2005 and Mncube, 2009). They highlight mainly the importance of involving parents in school governance, forms

of participation, and factors that affect school governance in involving parents. They also give an explanation of parental participation and give their perceptions of the principals' roles in democratic school governance.

On the importance of involving parents, Lewis & Naidoo (2004) note the ideal situation wherein all stakeholders work in unison and make decisions by consensus to achieve common goals. The idea of involving parents in school governance is viewed by Lewis & Naidoo (2004) as important, as it is a means to advance democracy in school governance.

Suzuki (2002) identified two different forms of participation: individual and collective participation. In individual participation a parent exercises the choice of a school for his/her child while in the collective participation parents act together in the SGB representing different stakeholders. Much as Suzuki (2002) mentions individual participation, Suzuki recommends the collective form of participation as important since it brings about the exercise of representative democracy. Some writers discuss factors that affect the involvement of parents in school governance.

There are other studies that identify the factors affecting parental participation in school governance. For instance, Duku (2006) notes that parental participation differs in different sites and some parents do not regard their participation as very vital. They consider school governance to be better understood and carried out by teachers (Ibid, 2006).

Also in discussing factors that affect parental participation in school governance, Brown & Duku (2007) highlight the issues of social identities and policy implications. They give an account of the implications of social identities on parental participation in school governance. "The desire to set aside the leadership role to men seems linked to the socialisation tendencies among parents, where men in the 'deep- rooted' traditional African context are projected as household heads" (Brown & Duku, 2007:151). On the same issue, Heystek (2004) comments on power play and dominance where in most cases the principal dominates the entire SGB or the chairperson of the SGB dominates the principal on behalf of the parents. Some researchers associate the principals' dominance in school governance with parents' illiteracy rates (Mbasu & Themane, 2002; Duku, 2006).

Mbasu & Themane (2002) associate the problems in parental participation in the SGBs with parents' illiteracy and lack of commitment. Furthermore, parents' illiteracy is noted in the parent SGB members' tendency to be unfamiliar with the (school) meeting procedure which has a detrimental effect of school governance (Ibid, 2002). There are also problems associated with the language that is used in these meetings. Other writers identify the roles and responsibilities of the SGBs.

In explaining the roles and responsibilities of the SGBs Karlsson (2002) notes that the overarching mandate of SGBs is to promote the best interest of the school. Motimele (2005) also defines the role of SGBs in school governance as creating, implementing and evaluating of policies of the school and seeing to it that the school is run according to the set policies. Other studies identify the importance of involving parents in school governance.

There are a number research studies that emphasise the importance of involving parents in school governance and the factors that work against it. On the other hand there is dearth of literature on the parent SGB members' specific roles. Even Duku's study (2006), which explores parents' negotiation of their identities in school governance, cursorily addresses parent SGB members' governance roles. Much as SGB roles are outlined in SASA and some research has been done on parental participation in school governance, what are not clear are the specific roles that parent SGB members perform in SGBs. This research seeks to explore parent SGB members' roles and how they perform them in the context of parental participation in school governance.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although SASA outlines the roles of the SGBs, parents do not seem to be implementing accordingly (Duku, 2006). SASA requires that SGBs promote the best interest of the school by providing quality education for all learners. Furthermore, SASA specifies the components of participation in SGBs, (the

parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and even learners in the case of a secondary school) but it does not specify the roles of the various components in the SGB. It only outlines the roles of the collective SGB. The thrust of the matter now is the way parent components perform their roles in the SGB and what they understand as their roles.

In some instances in the SGBs the educators, especially the principals, seem to dominate other SGB members. They seem to have a better understanding of policy formulation issues. The SGB chairpersons on the other hand tend to overstep the role of the principal. This is what Heystek (2004) calls 'power plays and domination' which usually bring about tensions and deteriorating relationships. Hence this study aims to explore the roles played by the parent SGB members in the SGB.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question this study responds to is:

What roles do the parent SGB members play in the SGB?

The sub questions are:

- *What roles are parents tasked to perform as members of SGB?*
- *Does the parent SGB component distinguish between its roles and the roles of the school management team (SMT)?*
- *What do parents do when they are elected as SGB members?*
- *According to parents, what factors affect their roles in SGB participation?*

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In exploring the roles of parent SGB members, professionals such as educators, school principals and education managers will be in a better position to understand parents and their roles in school governance. These professionals will be able to understand parents' needs and interests on issues of school governance. The understanding of parent SGB members' roles by professionals may also lead to enhanced collaboration between educators and parents and between principals and parent SGB members.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The researcher has been a principal of a primary school for three years and held an ex- officio status in the SGB. The researcher gained some experience in working with parent SGB members and during this period, he observed what seemed to be parent SGB members' reliance on educators. Duku (2006) also notes that parent SGB members seem to be reliant on the principal and

educators in matters of school governance. Parent SGB members seemed to be reluctant to participate in some roles. Mbaso & Themane (2002) associate the parent SGB member's reluctance with illiteracy. This observation triggered the researcher's interest in exploring parent SGB members' roles in school governance.

1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This research focused on the SGBs of two selected rural primary schools in the King Williams Town district (KWT). An SGB is a committee tasked with dealing with the entire governance of a school and this study focused on the parent component's understanding of their roles. The chairpersons, secretaries, principals, educators and one additional member of both SGBs will be investigated. Theoretically this study focuses on the parental participation in school governance.

1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the roles that are played by the parent SGB members in the spirit of democracy and parental participation. It seeks to find out what parent SGB members do in the selected communities and why they participate in those roles instead of others. It will further compare such roles with those that have been prescribed by SASA.

In addition to exploring which roles do the parent SGB members perform, this study seeks to determine how they perform these roles.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Exploration: For the purposes of this research exploration means investigating and discussing the roles that are played by parent SGB members in the SGBs.

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

SGB- This research will define this concept according to Xaba (2004) that, the SGB is a body that is elected as “representatives of certain interests connected to the school, which by implication means that governors represent the interests of their constituencies, i.e. parents represent parents’ interests, educators represent educators’ interests and learners represent learners’ interests.” (Ibid, 2004:313). SASA refers to the SGB as a committee that is democratically elected by parents, educators, learners, and non-teaching staff in a particular school to deal with the governance of that particular school.

School governance: For the purposes of this research the term school governance refers to the way in which decisions are taken and implemented by those who have been tasked by the Department of Education. It is the way in

which the relevant stakeholders formulate policies for the school (Lewis & Naidoo, 2006). Sithole (1995) in Mncube (2009) suggests that school governance is the structure mandated to carry out the responsibility of formulating school policies.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1- This is an introductory chapter which gives the background of the study by identifying a gap in the literature on parental participation in school governance. The research questions, statement of the problem, rational and purpose of the study have been outlined.

Chapter 2- This chapter is a detailed discussion of the literature that has been reviewed. Concepts that come out of the reviewed literature are discussed in details and the theoretical framework in which this study is based is also discussed.

Chapter 3- This is a detailed account of the research methodology and design which have been used in this study.

Chapter 4- In this chapter the data which were collected from the field are pressed and discussed.

Chapter 5- In this chapter the researcher has summarised the researcher findings and has come up with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this section the researcher reviews the literature that has been surveyed about parental participation in school governance. This section is divided into historical background, conceptual and theoretical framework. In the historical background the brief history of school governance before the development of SGBs is outlined as well as a rationale for the establishment of the SGBs in South Africa. In this part of this section the idea of democratisation of school governance and its consequences are discussed in detail.

The second part of this section deals with the conceptual frame work. This literature review will help the researcher to form a basis for his research as this review will reveal the already accumulated knowledge in this area. A number of concepts introduced by various writers are discussed. Much as a number of writers have come up with a number of concepts around involvement of parents in school governance, there is little, according to the literature that the researcher has reviewed, that notes the parent SGB members' roles in the SGBs.

Thirdly the theoretical framework which will serve as lenses in the investigation of parent SGB members' roles will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

2.1 Existing knowledge

2.1.1 The development of SGBs in South Africa

In South Africa the concept of the School Governing Body (SGB) came with the advent of democracy after 1994 general elections. Previously schools were governed by the so called school boards or by school committees (Mbantsane, 2006). These committees were mainly expected to serve the interests of the government, more than those of the community they represented. In simple terms the agenda of the government for that particular community regarding the education of the community was implemented by the committee of the school. It was not concerned with, nor did it represent the interests of the community in schools (Ibid, 2006). Yeager (1951: 25) noted, “The school board is an agency of the state *carrying out the will of the legislative assembly*. It is a legislative policy-making body in the community which it represents (italics mine).” This resulted in school committees being unpopular amongst the general members of the communities as they were government agents rather than community representatives. In turn this enmity resulted in their being opposed during the liberation struggle until 1994 (Mbantsane, 2006). “School committees were frowned upon as legitimizing the apartheid system and were therefore not beneficial to the school and the communities they represented. (Ibid, 2006: 1).

After 1994 the debate around the democratisation of education emerged and it brought about the promulgation of the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996

(SASA). This democratisation of education, unlike in the past, meant the involvement of relevant stakeholders in a particular society in matters of school governance (Mbantsane, 2006). The philosophy behind the democratisation of education was that, in a democratic South Africa education should be driven by the people themselves. This was done in a manner that addresses equity and redresses the imbalances of the past, inequalities and discrimination. SASA through which the SGBs were promulgated was used as tool to democratise education in the Republic of South Africa (Ibid).

The idea of introducing SGBs in the Republic of South Africa after 1994 was the actualization of the idea of community involvement. (Bush & Gamage as cited in Bush & Heystek, 2003). The literature reveals that the democratisation of school governance is viewed differently by the different authors on school governance and this resulted in the emergence of a number of concepts such as school governance, decentralisation, participation, partnership and collaboration, community involvement, privatisation deconcentration and inclusion. In reviewing the literature the researcher will unpack these concepts as viewed by different writers. Brown & Duku (2008) view the introduction of SGBs in South Africa as an opportunity for South African parents, learners and educators to participate in school governance and as a shift from authoritarian rule, coupled with racial divisions and socio-economic inequalities to an atmosphere of democracy. Motimele (2005) noted that in the past school governance in South Africa was characterized by a top-down approach in which educators, learners, parents and

communities were not involved in making important decisions about schools. Inspectors and principals were regarded as persons who made decisions in the school (Ibid, 2005). The conceptual framework that is discussed in the next section gives a detailed explanation of the concepts that emerged during the literature review.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

In this section concepts that came out of the literature review are discussed. These concepts are relevant to this study, as they discuss the roles of the SGBs in the spirit of parental participation. Although the roles of the parents in school governance are noted, the specific roles of the parents who are the members of the SGBs are not explained.

2.2 .1 School Governance

School governance is the involvement of the relevant stake holders such as parents, educators, learners and non teaching staff in making decisions about how the school should be governed according to the provisions of SASA (Duku, 2006). The main stakeholders in school governance are the parents since all the decisions taken in a school need to be endorsed by them (SASA, 1996).

SASA (1996) highlights, among other things, the following roles of the entire SGB:

- Promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at school.
- Adopt a constitution.
- Develop the mission statement of the school.
- Adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school.
- Support the principal, educators and the other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

The parental participation in school governance was enhanced with the introduction of SGBs. This system of SGBs ensures the continuous participation of parents in school governance as SGBs hold meetings from time to time to discuss and implement school policies (Mabasa & Themane, 2002). “Whereas school governance used to be characterised by authoritarian and exclusive practices, the new policy requires broad and democratic participation by parents, teachers and learners in the life of the school through the medium of School Governing Bodies.” (Ibid, 2002, 11). The question is what role the parents who are SGB members play in governing the schools.

Mabasa & Themane (2002) identify some problems that come as a result of the democratisation of school governance. These are:

- Unfamiliarity with meeting procedures which means that parent SGB members do not know what to do and how to do things in the SGB and parents' meetings.
- Huge paper work which perhaps may confuse them, as most of them are illiterate.
- The lack of knowledge of appropriate legislation which means that they do not understand the laws that govern the SGB as they are written in a language foreign to them most of the time.
- An inferiority complex and even a lack of understanding of their roles and responsibilities which means that they regard themselves as inferior partners in school governance as they view educators as people who understand everything pertaining to school governance. They perceive their roles as that of rubberstamping what has been agreed upon at higher levels.

The language that is used in most cases is English. This leads to parents not following matters as this is not their language. As a result, parents tend not to know when to make contributions in meetings (Mbasa & Themane, 2002).

It is also assumed that the participation by the people at the level of the school, that is, the school owners, the parents and community members in this case, can actually bring about improved efficiency at schools. Martin & Vincent (1999) in Suzuki (2002) view participation as way of exercising representative democracy

in school governance at a level closer to the people. Sayed (2002:36) argues that:

...Processes of decentralisation in the context of the education sector should not only be seen as ends in themselves, but should ideally promote improvements in the quality of learning. For example, establishment of democratically elected school governing bodies in a country may be a worthwhile achievement in terms of extending participation and entrenching democracy.

Other writers note parental participation as enhancing the children's literacy.

Ludovina (n.d.) argued:

We know that parental encouragement, activities and interest at home, and parental participation in schools and classrooms positively influence achievement. Moreover, it seems that the most useful variety of parent involvement is contact between parents and their children in the home, which encourages and aids school achievement.

This excerpt indicates that parental involvement in school governance brings about improved learner achievement. However the role of the parent SGB members in bringing about improved learner achievement is not indicated. Mestry & Gobler (2007) and Kezembe (2005) further argue, that the main business of the SGB, in which parents are in majority, is to promote the educational interests of the school and consequently of the learners. Lewis & Naidoo (2005) note that the idea of involving parents in school governance was to create a situation in which all stakeholders work together and make decisions by consensus in pursuit of common interests. However, the role that is played by parent SGB members in promoting educational interests, is not explicitly mentioned.

Karlsson (2002) and Motimele (2005) in their studies explain the roles of the SGB in school governance. The SGBs in section 20 schools have their roles stipulated by SASA. Those in section 21 schools have additional roles that include the purchasing of text books for the school (Karlsson, 2002). In other words this writer gives an idea of how SASA requirements should be implemented in the context of parental participation.

2.2.2 Decentralisation

Decentralisation was the strategy by the state to share its power with other stakeholders, particularly those who are closer to the school in order to bring about improved control of the schools (van Wyk, 2004). The debate around problems that seem to prevail in education, especially at a primary level, resulted in an approach that was to bring about reforms (democratisation) in the schooling system. These reforms were done within the parameters of decentralisation (Maclure, 2004). It was hoped that the decentralisation of education would bring about a greater responsiveness to the needs of the particular local people in that school community. A high level of participation was also a focal point in the decentralisation of education (Ibid, 2004). This means that the Department of Education wanted to delegate some of its tasks to community members. Parents were made to participate in school governance by electing the SGBs. The SGBs were expected to deal with all the issues of school governance. These include among other things developing the mission statement of the school; adopting a code of conduct for learners and determining the admission and language policy

of the school within the framework of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (van Wyk, 2004).

USAID (2005) notes that decentralisation brings decision-making closer to the people and affords them a greater opportunity to take part in schooling decisions. It also lends the parents an opportunity to hold the service providers accountable and schools are empowered to develop their own school reforms which are aimed at improving teaching and learning. It is further argued by Mncube (2009) that decentralisation does not by itself bring about school democracy. In order for democracy to prevail in a school, the structure that will allow all the stakeholders to participate democratically in matters of school governance should be established.

Generally educational decentralisation is the situation in which the interests of the local people are represented in a schooling system (MacLean & Lauglo as cited in Maclure, 1994). Cohn & Rossmiller as cited in Malure (1994) further assert that, a more focused view is that educational decentralisation means the existence of schools that are more responsive to community life than those which are solely responsive to the department of education. A greater orientation to community, life, occupations and values could facilitate greater participatory input from local people as well as more adaptable and flexible management strategies that are friendly to the community (Ibid, 1994).

From this assertion it is crucial that the school responds to community needs and for the community to contribute towards the wellbeing of the school. Decentralisation brought about enhanced community involvement. In this study decentralisation is one of the key principles and the researcher seeks to establish the way the parent SGB members apply this principle. This means therefore, that at the end of the study, the researcher will be able to say whether the parent SGB members understand their mandate to run the school in a manner that allows for the high participation of the community or not.

In a newsletter published by USAID's EQUIPI (2005), educational decentralisation is noted as devolution of service delivery roles from national to lower levels of governments and the delegation of service delivery decisions and functions to the level of the school. This means that education decentralisation is twofold. Firstly the national government delegates its responsibilities to the lower levels of government. In this type of decentralisation national government devolves service delivery responsibilities to the provincial or district level.

Secondly, it is the delegation of service delivery decisions to the level of the school wherein the stakeholders at the community level are involved. It is a situation in which school autonomy is important and the school governing body is established to provide an oversight (Ibid, 2005). "Decentralisation moves decision-making closer to the people and may give them greater say in schooling decisions as well as a greater ability to hold service providers accountable" (USAID, 2005). It is noted that weak management capacity, insufficient funding,

inadequately trained teachers and a proper support system make it difficult to realize the positive potential of decentralisation. USAID (2005: 1) further noted, that “Increasing parental participation in school governance, giving teachers the right to select their own text books, and granting directors the authority to recruit teachers contribute positively to education quality”. In South Africa both types (devolution and school autonomy) of decentralisation have been adopted.

“One of the purposes of decentralising education services is to widen the participation of non-education professionals at local community level in the running and management of schools” (Dunne, Akyeampong & Humphreys, 2007: 16). The decentralization of school governance was based on the assumption that decentralised systems are leaner and therefore better at responding to local needs. It was hoped that it would bring about enhanced service delivery in developing countries (Ibid, 2007). “Within the local community context, shared educational concerns, such as a persistent dropout rate, high pupil absenteeism, and utilisation of school fees are expected to galvanize community and local government action” (Chapman, 2000 in Dunne, Akyeampong & Humphreys, 2007: 10). This study therefore seeks to unpack the roles that parent SGB members play in decentralised school governance.

2.2.3 Collaboration

Collaboration is the working together by the parents and educators and learners (in the case of the secondary schools) in school governance in order to promote

the best interest of the school (Heystek, 2004). The nature in which the SGBs are constituted allows greater space for community members to collaborate with educators in school governance. It is of primary importance that each component in the process of collaboration understands its line of operation within the SGB. Where there is a lack of understanding of one's roles and responsibilities the relationships within the SGB are negatively affected. This lack of understanding is referred to as by Heystek (2004) as 'power plays'. Heystek (2004: 309) argues that,

Power plays may be conscious or unconscious but they do happen, e.g. a principal trying to dominate the rest of the SGB or the chairperson of the SGB trying to dominate the principal on behalf of the parents. This power play may have detrimental effect on the relationship of trust and mutual support.

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

Mncube (2009) notes that there are instances when tensions are created by the principals who overplay their roles in the SGBs, especially in rural schools. Sometimes the collaboration between the principal and the SGB chairperson leads to different perceptions regarding the specific role of their mutual support (Heystek, 2004). This may be caused by the fact that the specific roles of the parent SGB members are not specified by SASA. Heystek (2004) also notes the role that is played by the entire SGB in supporting the school principal. SGB members may think they are supporting the principal by taking over some responsibilities such as discussing problems that occur in the class directly with the educator concerned. In doing so the SGB members may think they are helping the principal as he is busy but they are unaware that they are overstepping the professional line of responsibility (Ibid, 2004).

Research findings by Mncube (2009) suggest that most SGB members have a perception that the principal is the most powerful member of the SGB. Furthermore, it is reported further that principals control the SGBs and that many suggestions come from them.

Though Xaba, (2004) notes that there is a perception among educators in the SGBs that parent SGB members have a negative attitude towards the educators in the SGB, it is crucial to establish the cause of this negative attitude. It is reported that SGB educators feel that parents in the SGB have lost confidence in school governance. Perhaps the attitude by the parent SGB members towards

their counterparts is caused by the fact that educators dominate them when policies are formulated. This means therefore that collaboration between the SGB educators and the parent SGB members is problematic. Exploring the roles of the parent SGB members in the SGB might unearth the causes of the attitudes of parent SGB members towards SGB educators.

Xaba (2004: 314) notes, “The SGB formulates a strategy for the achievement of the schools vision and mission whilst the principal and staff are responsible for the implementation thereof.” The question now is which roles are played by the parent SGB members in this strategy formulation. The exploration of the roles of the parent SGB members might assist in revealing how the parent SGB members and SGB educators collaborate in school governance.

The USAID (2006) refers to the inclusion of relevant stakeholders in governance as Partnership, Governance and Accountability (PGA) and holds the view that it is the most effective way of ensuring good governance. PGA could be applied to engage stakeholders and increase their trust in the intentions, actions and aspirations of the partnership. Stakeholders are likely to engage more productively where partnership governance and accountability has been collaboratively developed and monitored, as this leads to achieving their objectives (Ibid: 8). This means that the collaboration amongst the stakeholders, SGB educators and parent SGB members in this case, should bring about enhanced school governance.

The SGBs were introduced to launch a neighbourhood based initiative and indeed govern that initiative which is a school (van Wyk, 2004). This means that SGBs which are comprised of parents, educators, non teaching staff and learners, in the case of a secondary school, work in collaboration to take decisions about the structure of the school and use of funds for this project. However, they generally cannot influence the larger service systems in the education system. Mestry & Globler (2007) for instance argue that, for the partnership and collaboration to be effective, there should be a common bond of interdependence amongst the relevant stakeholders. They hold the view that for this collaboration to be achieved there must be proper communication amongst the contributors. This means that schools must provide information to parents regarding the school curriculum, administration, facilities, and day- to -day running of the institution. Those in school authority should create an opportunity for parents to hold formal and informal dialogue with the staff. This implies that communication is an essential condition for effective collaboration (Ibid, 2007).

From the above discussion one may deduce that, for the school to achieve good results, parents should be involved in taking decisions about the education of their children. It also implies that collaboration between the school and the community brings about the development of the school towards the desired goals. The unearthing of the roles of parent SGB members in the SGB might bring forward the debate about the significance of collaboration between the

school and the community in general and between the SGB educators and parent SGB members in particular.

2.2.4 Community involvement

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

This argument clarifies the role that should be played by the community in school governance and that this involvement increases a sense of ownership amongst community members. However, this definition does not address specifically the roles of parent SGB members. Much as it is required of the parent SGB

members to be actively involved in school activities, it is equally necessary for them to have a clear understanding of what their involvement is all about. Some writers argue that illiteracy can cause low levels of community involvement in school governance matters. "In a school where parents have limited skills, knowledge and experience and even lower levels of literacy, they may find it difficult or impossible to assume responsibility for drafting and managing the budget". (Heystek, 2004: 310). Some writers such as Burde (2004) discuss the effects of community participation in school governance.

Burde (2004) highlights the effects of community participation on school governance. On the positive side he regards community participation as a means to achieve a strong appeal for multiple actors and beneficiaries to counterweigh the traditional top-down approach. This means that the involvement of the community in school governance is the way to counteract the bureaucratic authoritative tendencies that seek to undermine the community whose interests the school serves. Furthermore community involvement can channel badly needed resources into the under-funded section of education and make schooling possible where it has previously been impossible (Ibid, 2004). However, this may cause problems, as majority of the community members in rural areas are illiterate.

Community involvement has the potential to empower communities by including previously marginalized sections in decision-making processes (Ibid, 2004). The

problem is that the community is involved in a matter of which they have little knowledge. On the negative side Burde (2004: 73) notes,

Although participation in school governance is meant to produce multiple benefits for school and society, it may, in the long term, change perceptions on the role of the state, subsequently undermining the social contract between the citizens and the state.

Furthermore, community participation may lead to social divisions that are detrimental to schooling and are more pronounced after a conflict (Ibid, 2004). This means that much as the involvement of communities in school governance may lead to greater parent participation, it may, on the other hand, bring about lower standards in school governance.

2.2.5 Delegation

Suzuki (2002) refers to delegation as privatisation or outsourcing of some responsibilities by the DoE to the communities. For instance the issues of budgeting, curriculum planning and even funding should be done by the SGBs. Parents are the basic providers of the additional finance required by the SGB (Samuels, 2000). Delegating responsibilities to schools and their communities for financing and support of education in the context of scarce resources is an attempt to privatise finance (Ibid, 2001). The SGBs have the obligation to play a vital role in decision making processes and in the resourcing of schools. Maclure (1994) further argued that the community shows a stronger sense of commitment in the making of educational decisions that include generating added resources for school construction and maintenance, teacher salaries, and the like. Since the SGBs have a responsibility to hire labour for the improvement of the physical

structure of the school, the local people tend to benefit as the SGBs appoint person/s from the community for a particular construction task such as painting, building and repairs. Local people tend to go search around for skills that might, at one stage, be required at school (Ibid, 1994).

In exploring the roles of the parent SGB members this study will push the debate on how the parent SGB members go about executing their roles in the context of delegation and parental participation.

2.2.6 Mentoring

Crawford & Earley (2004) note, though in the context of the United Kingdom, the SGB's role as that of appraising the overall performance of the principal as a school leader and the manager. In the South African context SASA section 20 (e) stipulates that SGBs are expected to support the principals and the educators in performing their professional functions. This means that SGBs are expected to act as mentors of the principals and educators in performing their duties. This mentoring is expressed in terms of the collective SGB and not of specific representatives in the SGB. What is not noted is how the SGBs should be providing support to principals and educators. Crawford & Earley (2004) instead suggest that the SGBs be assisted in their duties by what they call External Adviser (EA). Mathonsi (2001:5) notes that, "Parents can make informed decisions provided they are assisted to understand what is expected of them. They can develop policy if there is proper guidance, etc."

This study therefore should uncover how the parents SGB members play their roles in assisting educators and in executing other school governance functions.

2.2.7 Inclusion

Generally inclusion involves the participation of all groups in the community in the processes that shape their lives (Stern, 2003). In the context of school governance, inclusion is a way of including people of diverse backgrounds in terms of gender, marital status, race and age in a particular society in taking decisions about how a school in that society should be governed Brown & Duku (2006). The establishment of SGBs brought about the involvement of school in a wider community and involving the wider community, in the sense of socio-economic diversity, in the school's decision making processes (Ibid). “ It meant that the broad masses of people, regardless of socio-economic standing, or racial divide, are now able to have a ‘voice’ in the decisions that directly or indirectly impact on them in the school communities” (Ibid). The parents from diverse backgrounds are included in the SGB and this study aims to reveal who is included in the SGBs of the two selected schools.

Wylie (2007) states that the introduction of SGBs was a long-seated desire of the DoE to bring schools and their communities closer together. It was hoped that SGB would provide for more localised decision making within accountability frameworks in order to safeguard the expenditure of public money for public purposes, and improve performance. In justifying the importance and benefits of

including relevant stakeholders in school governance, Ontario (2007) makes an example of cake baking when an egg was put in a bowl and mixed with other dry ingredients of the cake to make one homogenous mixture ready for the oven.

This discussion suggests that inclusivity focuses on ensuring that stakeholders can bring about improved learner achievement which is a consequence of school development. Furthermore, members share a prominent social standing within the group so minimise the potential for feelings of marginalisation or alienation that may interfere with interpersonal relationships. Feeling of marginalisation could hinder the introduction of innovative ideas and insights, robust debates, sharing of information and collective decision-making processes (Ibid, 2007).

Other writers such as Kelly (1997) and Duku (2006) in the issue of inclusion highlighted gender imperatives. In the African societies, men assume leadership roles and are in positions of authority (Duku, 2006). The men occupying leadership positions are known for their boldness (Kelly, 1997). Female leaders on the other hand are reported to have good intuition and communication skills and therefore can make good leaders (Ibid, 1997).

Kabacoff & Soffy (2001) on the other hand suggest that age is an important factor in the issue of inclusion. They argue that, for an organisation to be progressive, it must have a multigenerational outlook at the leadership positions. The inclusion of elder and younger leaders in an organization will create a balance that is necessary for organizational development (Ibid). However, adults

seemed to be reluctant to accept youth in school governance as this is regarded as an adult matter. This might have a bearing on the cultural belief in African communities that a child will remain a child and must listen to adults because adult judgment is always correct (Mabasa & Themane, 2002; Duku, 2006, & Carnaby, 2009).

2.2.8 Summary

In the above discussion one may deduce that the democratisation of education led to the decentralisation of school governance. Though the parents and community are involved in bringing about greater effectiveness and efficiency in schools, the roles of the parent SGB members in the SGB has not been discussed by any one writer. For instance Suzuki (2002) has a lot to say on parent perceptions of participation in SGBs but he deals mainly with accountability rather than explaining in depth the roles of parent SGB members.

Interviewing relevant people such as principals, SGB educators, parent SGB members and non SGB parents will be a good step towards getting data about specific roles that parent SGB members play in the SGB. The interrogation of a number of the literature has really indicated a need for this research as there are gaps in the roles that are played by the parent SGB members in the SGB.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

This research is based on three theories namely Bruner's cognitive development theory, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Self –Determination Theory (SDT). Bloom's taxonomies have been used to expatiate and substantiate Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and to define understanding.

2.3.1 Bruner's Cognitive development theory

According to the cognitive development theory, learning involves one's realization or discovery of what one is capable of doing and thinking for oneself (discovery learning). It is the rearrangement or transformation of the current phenomenon so that one is able to come up with new information or insights. In this theory the importance of language is stressed (Mwamwenda, 1989). This theory is relevant to this study because when members of the SGB parent component are elected, especially for the first time, they are exposed to the general rules and pieces of legislations of the SGB regarding school governance. For instance in section 20 of SASA there is, among other clauses, a clause that states, "Promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school" (SASA section 21, 1996:32). This is one of the roles of the SGB. Understanding this particular role does not necessarily mean knowing the literal meaning of the statement only but also what it is that the parents do in executing this role. There is a lot that could be said in showing understanding of this

particular role. The 'how or what to do question' regarding this particular role could produce a lot of answers. This means that behind this particular role there are a number of issues that one must be able to account for when one is interrogated. For example one might be engaged in a driving lesson and be able to drive. If that particular person does not understand the fact that driving involves vigilance, responsibility, cautiousness and patience it means he/she does not understand driving. In simple terms this means that when SGB members are exposed to their roles as outlined in SASA they should develop insights into what is expected of them in the SGB.

2.3.2 Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory

The researcher has also chosen to use Vygotsky's social learning theory that says that learning takes place through assistance, that is, the environment one interacts with is critical to learning (Schunk, 1996). "Gradually, through interaction with others, the child develops an awareness and understanding of self, and a capacity for thinking about self and others" (Baumann, Bloomfield & Roughton, 1997: 66). This study investigates what the parent SGB members view as their roles. In other words how has the novel environment (SGB) in which the parents find themselves changed their understanding of school governance. In establishing their understanding of their roles it will also be important to establish whether they have learned something from the new environment. This research is about investigating whether the new culture (school governance) that the parents find themselves in has made them understand better parental roles in the

SGB. (Whether there are some workshops, documents, seminars and the like that are conducted by the DoE in making parent SGB members perform effectively their roles in the SGBs).

In trying to expatiate on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and defining the concept 'understand', the researcher relied on Bloom's taxonomies. Bloom's taxonomies is the classification of educational objectives, that is, what kind of behaviour is displayed as a result of participating in some form of instruction or learning activity (Curzon, 2000). Bloom's taxonomies comprise three divisions or domain viz the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor. In the cognitive domain information and knowledge are key. Attitudes which are as a result of certain stimuli are the characteristics of the affective domain (Ibid). This research is about investigating the understanding of parents of their roles therefore the researcher believes that the cognitive and affective domains fit well.

The researcher sees it as necessary, first to define the concept 'understand' before dwelling on Bloom's taxonomies that will be used as lenses to measure understanding in this study. The researcher chooses to define this concept so that the reader is able to know exactly what he (the researcher) refers to when he uses this concept. This concept is a complex term that could be used to refer to different targets (White & Gunstone, 1992). This suggests that a process of learning or some unit of instruction must have been administered before one is able to understand something. White and Gunstone (1992) in defining

understanding note that, it is not only a mere acquisition of knowledge and the ability to recall facts but also the ability to use knowledge to solve the new problems. The question that the researcher asks is, what do parent SGB members do when they are elected to the SGB? Much as understanding is the ability to use knowledge to solve novel problems, the concept understanding could be used for different targets. “A first step in describing understanding is to sort out the targets we talk about, and then try to see what lies behind the understanding of each” (White & Gunstone, 1992 :3). White & Gunstone (1992) identify six targets of understanding namely: concepts, disciplines, elements of knowledge, extensive communication, situations and people. The target of this study is the understanding of concepts and of situations. The understanding of concepts involves having information about each concept, which means having propositions, images, episodes, strings, intellectual skills, and motor skills. Understanding of situations means seeing parallels between it and earlier experiences, that is, having an image for it (Ibid,1992).

Having defined the concept ‘understand’ in the context of this study, it is now necessary to outline the cognitive domain. The cognitive domain is mainly about information and knowledge. This information and knowledge come as a result of participating in the learning process. The SGB parent component is elected to the SGB and some form of orientation is done to familiarise them with school governance issues. This orientation workshop aims at giving and imparting knowledge to SGBs especially the parent component (SASA section 19, 1996).

In the cognitive domain the researcher finds the word 'understanding' which is another basic concept of this research. "This domain is based on the continuum ranging from mere knowledge of facts to the *intellectual process of evaluation* (Curzon, 2000: 173) italic mine. This domain is divided into six categories viz, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Knowledge is seen to be at the lower end of the hierarchy and evaluation to be at the top. Generally knowledge presupposes understanding and because of that the researcher locates this study in the six categories of this domain. In the knowledge category an individual is expected to deal with specifics such as terminology and facts, knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics and knowledge of abstraction such as theories, principles and structures. The second category of this domain is comprehension which involves grasping and utilising the meaning. The third category is the application category which involves the utilization of the learned material. The analysis category involves the ability to break learned material into parts so that the organisational structure is made clear. Synthesis involves the ability to combine separate elements to form a new whole. Lastly evaluation involves the ability to give a value to something (Curzon, 2000). This means that this study in exploring the roles of the parent SGB members also uncovered how much value they give to their participation in school governance. The reason the researcher locates this study on this domain is that this study will deal with what the parent SGB members know, comprehend (understand), apply, analyse, synthesise and value in school governance.

The second domain of Bloom's taxonomies is called affective domain. This domain is attitudinal in concept and ranges very widely, from heeding the simple reception of stimuli to the complex ability to characterize by use of value concepts" (Curzon, 2000: 174). This domain also features in this research because the attitudes of the parents and those of principals and educators will be dealt with. In the affective domain, there are five categories and this study compatibly fits into all of them. They are; receiving which involves awareness and willingness; responding which involves arousal of curiosity; valuing which involve recognition of something; organizing and conceptualizing which involves the beginning of the building of value system; and value concept which involves ability to see as a coherent whole ideas, attitudes and beliefs (Curzon, 2000). All these five categories will be the lenses of measurement of the understanding of parent SGB members of their roles. This implies that a certain level of understanding brings about a certain level of attitude. In this case willingness and high curiosity in school governance by parent governors would imply a better understanding of their roles and unwillingness would be the portrayal of lack of understanding.

2.3.3 Self Determination Theory (SDT)

The Self Determination Theory is based on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is the motivation which is not inherent in the behaviour while intrinsic motivation is inherent in the behaviour (Mwamwenda, 1989). This model posits that when individuals are supported in a particular activity they become willing to engage in that particular activity. For example when the mathematics

teacher supports the learners in their mathematics studies, the probabilities are that the learners become self determined and motivated (Miquelon, 2007).

Individuals will develop a more self-determined motivational orientation when participation in an activity leads to the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs. These needs include *competence, autonomy, and relatedness*. *Perceived competence* involves a feeling of being effective at a certain task. *Autonomy* is perceiving choice and control over one's own behavior. Finally *relatedness* is a feeling of belongingness with significant others (Deci & Ryan, 1995, Ryan & Deci, 2000, in Miquelon, 2007: 50).

One of the research questions requires an answer that will explain the tasks that the elected parent SGB members perform. In trying to answer that question further the level of determination will be established. In this theory the environment and the nature of activity are the principal factors that can encourage the individual to engage with determination in a particular activity. According to the SDT the reasons why the individual persists in an activity can be organized along a continuum of self determined behaviour which consists of intrinsic at the most, extrinsic in the center and motivation or lack of motivation at the least (Ibid, 2007). When an individual is intrinsically motivated it means he/she persist in an activity or task because he/she enjoys it. Extrinsically motivated individuals engage in a task for the rewards such as praise, recognition, awards and the like. Extrinsic motivation can lead to an intrinsically motivated person Mwamwenda (1989).

At school pupils are exposed to external motivation initially, in a form of marks for their performance, smiles in recognition of desirable behaviour, and praise for satisfactory academic performance. The ultimate objective, however, is intrinsic motivation, so that they engage in learning activities or desirable behaviour purely because of pleasure and satisfaction they derive there from" (Mwamwenda, 1989: 182).

It seems that there is a relationship between what the parent SGB members perform as their roles and the amount of motivation that is given by those who advocate parental participation in school governance. Should the SGBs be given enough motivation in the form of rewards they would develop more interest in their task and in turn gain better understanding of what they are expected to do. This interest and better understanding of their roles would lead to a mastery of performance of their roles in school governance which would then lead to an improved sense of belongingness.

2.4 Conclusion

The theoretical and conceptual frameworks that have been discussed in this chapter will assist the researcher to discuss the findings that will emerge from the research. This means that the findings regarding the roles of parent SGB members in the SGB will be related to the concepts that are raised in this chapter. Theories will serve as lenses by which the roles of the parent SGB members are explored.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to unpack the research approach (qualitative approach) and methodology used in this study. It further explains the relevance of the qualitative research approach to this study, its strengths as well as its limitations. In unpacking the relevance of the qualitative research approach the definition has also been outlined.

As this study follows the qualitative approach the interpretivism paradigm was relevant and has been discussed. Sampling methods and data collection strategies that have used in this research have also been discussed. The method of analysing data has been dealt with in this chapter and the reason why the researcher has located this research under the case study has been outlined.

3.1 Research Approach – Qualitative

Qualitative research is an approach in which researchers are concerned with understanding the meaning which people attach to their experiences or phenomena within their society (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The researcher used qualitative research because this study was about exploring the roles of the parent SGB members in the SGB and the meaning they attach to these roles.

According to Letherby & Bywaters (2007: 73) “Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate in the experience of under-researched groups and/or groups that are misunderstood”. Qualitative research was used in this study because this study was mainly concerned with exploring peoples’ lives and their everyday behaviour (Silverman, 2000 and Schwandt, 2001).

The qualitative approach puts emphasis on the knowledge and practice that are studied at the local level (Flick, 2006). In emphasising the usefulness of individuals’ experiences of their environment Mouton (2005: 53) noted that qualitative researchers have always primarily been interested in:

- describing the actions of the research participants in great detail and then
- attempting to understand these actions in terms of the actors’ own beliefs, history and context. It is also for this reason that the researcher chose this approach. In this study the parent SGB members were interviewed about their roles in the SGB.

One advantage of the qualitative approach is that it gives a researcher the opportunity to create a deeper and clearer picture of what is going on in a particular situation (Elliott, 2005). Interviews (structured and semi structured), observations and the documentary analyses helped the researcher to have a better understanding of what the SGB parent members do when they are elected to the SGB. This enabled the researcher gain an insight of the SGB parent

members' roles in school governance. Lincoln (2000: 3-4) argued that, "qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. It is understood, however, that each practice makes the world visible in a different way". Researchers using the qualitative approach strive to understand the ways in which individuals interpret or make sense of their lives. The qualitative approach aims at developing theories and understanding circumstances. Qualitative research is based on an unstructured and flexible approach that seeks to explore the nature of the problem, not its extent (Kumar, 2005). Leedy & Ormrod (2005) also asserted that one of the most important things about the qualitative approach is that it serves as an interpretation, in that, it enables the researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon and as a result the researcher is able to develop new concepts about that particular phenomenon.

According to Mouton (2005) the qualitative research approach is the one in which research takes as its departure, the point when insiders or participants give their views or perspectives on social action. The parent SGB members described for instance how they manage school finances and what they think should have positive impact in school governance. Mouton (2005:53) noted, "The goal of the research is defined as describing and understanding (*Verstehen*) rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour." Through structured interviews the researcher was able to understand the participants' experiences and perspective in school governance. One of the features of a qualitative inquiry is

that it is naturalistic in essence (Maharaj, 2005). In this approach the researcher does not manipulate the research setting and is never sure of the outcome of the research.

The limitations of the qualitative approach are:

“It lacks relevance for everyday life because it is not sufficiently dedicated to exactly describing the details of a case in its concrete circumstances” (Flick, 2006:12). In responding to this limitation the researcher observed the SGB and the parents’ meetings. In observing the SGB and the parents meeting the researcher was exposed to what the parent SGB members do.

It is based on a subjective meaning which is a mere narration of one’s experiences (Ibid). The qualitative approach is criticized as being unable to establish the extent of a problem it only gives the description of the problem whereas on the other hand the quantitative approach gives the extent of a problem (Kumar, 2005). In trying to counteract this limitation the researcher analysed the minutes of the SGB and the parents’ meetings and this enabled the researcher realise the extent of the problem. The structured interviews also assisted the researcher in understanding the roles of the parent SGB members.

Qualitative research is criticised for being contemplated at early or exploratory stages of a study (Silverman, 2000). The researcher used the observation and documentary analysis as means of trying to estimate the extent of the problem in the school governance situation. The researcher attended SGB and parent

meetings to observe personally the real situation rather than depending on a narration on the situation by respondents. “Qualitative research can be used to familiarize oneself with a setting before the serious sampling and counting begins” (ibid: 2005:9).

The analysis of the minutes of the SGB and parents meetings also assisted the researcher to establish the nature of the problem because whatever is discussed and done is reflected in the minutes.

3.2 Research paradigm –Interpretivism

The Interpretive paradigm is about understanding the everyday lived experiences of people in a specific area or historical setting (de Vos, 2002). Interpretivism is about epistemology that advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand humans’ roles as social actors and the meaning the humans give these roles. This research falls within the parameters of the interpretive paradigm in that it sought to explore how the parents perform their roles in the SGBs. The explanations and descriptions the parents gave served as a source of the meaning they gave to their roles as school governors. This paradigm advocates that the world be studied in its natural state, rather than in controlled laboratory-type experiments, and with minimum intervention by a researcher (Ibid, 2000).

As we have seen, the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience...To retain the integrity of the phenomenon being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and to

understand from within. The imposition of external form and structure is resisted, since the viewpoint of the observer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison , 2000:13).

The interpretivists argue that reality is pluralistic and is constructed in language and interaction (Leavy & Hesse-Biber, 2006). The interpretivism paradigm states that actions are only meaningful to us as long as we are able to ascertain what those who are studied intend to do (Ibid, 2006). This paradigm is relevant to this study because the actions and experiences of the parent SGB members were explored. Their actions and experiences were explored in a manner that establishes their roles as parent SGB members.

Lincoln & Norman (2000), in explaining the interpretivism paradigm argued that human sciences aim to understand human action. "From the interpretivist point of view, what distinguishes human (social) action from the movement of a physical object is that the former is inherently meaningful" (Ibid: 191). The actions of the SGBs through observation of meetings, the way they expressed certain feelings and analysing of minutes gave the meaning attached by parents in their SGB roles.

Interpretivists are concerned with the understanding the social world people have produced and which they produce through their continuing activities. This everyday reality consists of the meanings and interpretations given by the social actors to their actions, other people's actions social situations, and natural and humanly created objects. (Blaikie, 2000: 115).

This study is based on thick description in that it sought to emphasise the importance of understating the parent SGB members' views in the context of the

school governance as the main stake holder in the SGB (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Some writers such as Blaikie (2000) referred to the interpretivism paradigm as a research strategy by which theory is developed after the collection and examination of data. After the examination of data the researcher was able to come up with a theory. Qualitative researchers build the structure from the data itself and thereafter systematically analyse it to build themes or patterns (Adams, 2007).

In the context of this study the researcher visited the selected parent SGB members of the selected schools and listened to their experiences in their roles as SGB members. The researcher also became aware of what the parent SGB members perform as their roles in the SGB.

3.3 Sampling

Sampling is about deciding the place or site and the respondent or person from who the data will be collected (Punch, 2006). The process of selecting a particular sample for particular entities in a study is called sampling (Ormrod & Leedy, 2005). Flick (2002) noted that the issue of sampling is about making a decision on which persons to focus on when a researcher makes an inquiry. In an interview study for instance the researcher should decide which persons to interview (Ibid, 2000). Samples are chosen because researchers want to have findings in a particular situation at a particular time and apply these findings more generally. In this study sampling was done because the researcher wanted to

have a detailed interpretation of the roles of the parent SGB members so as to be able to generalise them to other similar situations (Robson, 2000).

This research used purposive sampling because the selected (schools) and the selected respondents were chosen for a specific purpose regarding what the roles of parent SGB members in the SGB. In purposive sampling the researcher's interest is important and the researcher satisfies the study's specific needs (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

In purposive sampling, people or other units are chosen, as the name implies, for a particular *purpose*. For instance, we might choose people who we have decided are 'typical' of a group or those who represent diverse perspective on an issue (Ibid, 2005:206).

Schwandt (2001) notes that in purposive sampling the units or characters are not chosen for their representativeness but for their relevance to the research question, analytical frame work and explanations given in the research.

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the research site and the respondents as follows:

3.3.1 Sampling the research sites

In this study the researcher used the purposive sampling method to choose research sites. The researcher identified two primary schools in the King Williams Town District. These schools were chosen because they are both in black, rural and formerly disadvantaged villages. There are diverse definitions of rural areas used by different writers. They include,

The typical definitions of rural schools or rural places involve demographic characteristics or distances from cities... a residential

category of places outside urbanized areas in open country, or in communities with less than 2,500 inhabitants, or where the populations density is less than 1,000 inhabitants per square mile (Oliver, 2007:1).

Other writers have used factors such as isolation as a measure to define rural areas (Ibid, 2007). UNESCO (2006) noted that rural villages are the areas where there is a high incidence of undernourishment and illiteracy. It further argued that rural villages are the areas where there is high level of gender inequity and high concentration of poor people (Ibid, 2006). In this study these schools were referred to as School A and school B.

For the purposes of this study the rural primary schools are schools situated in areas that are far away from an urban center (approximately 40 kilometres) and where there is a high level of unemployment and poverty.

The research sites were both relatively small schools, in that, their enrolment is less than 200 learners. School A has 170 learners and school B has 110 learners. The size of the school in terms of learner numbers determines the size of the SGB (DoE, 1997). There are eight educators in school A and six educators in school B. The number of educators in a school is also determined by the number of learners (DoE, 1996). The Department of Education guidelines in electing SGBs specifies the number of parents to be elected to the SGB according to the number of learners in that particular school. In a primary school where learners number less than 160 the number of parents elected to the SGB is four. A primary school that has more than 160 learners but less than 719 learners qualifies for five elected parent SGB members. A primary school that

has more than 719 qualifies for six elected parents SGB members (DoE, 1997). It is for this reason that there were five elected parent SGB members in school A and four elected parent SGB members in school B.

3.3.2 Sampling the respondents

In sampling the respondents the researcher used purposive sampling because each sample element was chosen for a specific purpose (Wysocki, 2004). Furthermore, “in purposive sampling, samples or respondents are chosen because they are representative, knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon the researcher is investigating” (O’ Leary, 2004). Thirty five respondents were sampled and they are referred to as respondent number one to thirty five.

In each school the researcher sampled the following respondents:

The SGB chairperson: The chairperson was sampled because the researcher wanted to know what the SGB chairpersons do when they are elected to the SGB. They were also sampled because the researcher wanted to get a general understanding of what they think their roles are.

The SGB secretary: The secretaries were sampled because the researcher, as with the chairpersons, wanted to know what roles they play as secretaries in the SGBs. Furthermore the researcher wanted to have an understanding of what the secretaries understand to be their roles and whether they really play these roles.

The treasurer: The treasurers were sampled because the researcher wanted to know how the treasurers manage school finances and what other roles they think they should play in the SGB.

One additional SGB member: Additional members were sampled because the researcher wanted to know their view in relation to parent SGB members' roles.

Non-SGB parent: Non SGB parents were sampled because they are the people from whom the SGB is elected and who elected the parent SGB members. In sampling the non SGB parents the researcher hoped to get an understanding of what they think should be parent SGB members' roles in the SGB.

Principal: Principals were sampled because they are the professional heads of the institutions and therefore have an ex-officio status in the SGBs. It was hoped that the principals would give their version of what the parent SGB members' perform as their roles and what they (principals) think parent SGB members should do in executing their roles. The principals were also sampled to augment the data that was collected from the parent SGB members.

The researcher sampled these persons because they are the key persons in school governance and, therefore, they should be more conversant with their roles as they have hands-on experience in school governance.

3.4 Research Design- Case study

A case study is a research in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon within a specified space of time and using a variety of data

collection procedures to gain detailed information about such an entity or phenomenon (Punch, 2006; Leady & Ormrod, 2005). Furthermore, a case study “is a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied” (Goode & Hatt: 1952 in Blaikie: 2000: 215).

This study followed a case study design in that the researcher explores the roles of the parent SGB members in the two selected schools of the King Williams Town District. In exploring the roles of the parent SGB members the researcher hoped to have a deeper understanding of what happens in rural schools on matters of school governance. Huberman & Miles (2002) noted that a case study focuses on understanding the dynamics prevail within one entity.

The researcher hoped that the information that he gets from the selected schools would be generalised to other similar situations. This means therefore that a case study was necessary because context- based knowledge served as bases for the broader knowledge in a field of SGBs (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium & Silverman, 2007). In the process of exploring parent SGB members’ roles the factors that affect school governance were also looked into. In the case study the focus is on the understanding of the particulars of that case (parent SGB members) in its depth and complexity.

The limitation of the case study is that the researcher cannot be sure of the generalisability of its findings to other situations, especially if one case is involved

(Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In responding to this limitation the researcher selected two schools. In each school a continuum of respondents ranging from parent SGB office bearers (chairperson, secretary and treasurer), SGB educators, SGB additional members, principals and non SGB parents were investigated.

3.5 Data collection methods

In the spirit of qualitative research, this study made use of multiple data collection methods as follows:

- *Structured interviews*

The interview is any formal person - to - person interaction between two or more people with a specific purpose or objective in mind on a specified date and time (Kumar, 2005). The researcher used interviews (structured and semi structured) to collect data from the respondents. This means that there were sessions during the data collection, in which the researcher had to visit the respondents in order to get information.

In using structured interviews (see appendixes G and H) the researcher probed respondents' reasoning because he wanted them to respond to a standard set of questions without giving any clarifications (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). A structured interview is a technique that is easy to administer because it permits the researcher to have a well defined role of sitting with questionnaire in his/her lap (Plummer, 2001). The interviews were administered to the sampled SGB members and non SGB parents. The reason for choosing these people was that

they are the people whom this study was about. In this type of research method, a researcher gained the relative security of knowing both what to ask and what was likely to be heard in reply (Plummer, 2001). This means therefore that structured interviews used pre-established questions that are asked in a predetermined order (O'Leary, 2004).

- *Semi- structured interviews*

After the administration and analysis of the structured interviews the researcher used semi-structured interviews for the selected SGB members and principals (refer appendix I and J). Semi-structured interviews are neither fixed nor fully free and yet they are a flexible research technique or method (O'Leary, 2004). This means that the order of the questions as advised by (Robison, 2002) was changed depending on the situation the researcher encountered.

In following up with the semi structured interviews the researcher wanted the respondent to expatiate as much as they could on certain points. This also gave a chance to the researcher to probe the respondents' reasoning and to ask clarity seeking questions (Bless & Smith, 2000).

- *Documentary analysis*

Document analysis is the situation in which the reader reads and analyses important documents such as minutes of the meetings, news paper articles and historical archives and previously gathered census data (O'Leary, 2004). The process of documentary analyses is done with the aim of understanding the

participants' actions and the meaning they attach to their actions or events (Mouton, 2005; Plummer, 2001).

Documentary analysis was used to analyse the SGB minute books of the SGB and parents meetings. Four sets of minutes of the SGB meetings and four sets of minutes of the parents meetings in each school were analysed. In this study the researcher coded the sets of minutes as minute one to eight.

- *Non-participant observations*

Observation is a systemic method of data collection that relies on a researcher's ability to gather data through watching the behaviour of a person or a group of people or an event in a certain place for a specified length of time (O'Leary, 2004; Gomm, 2008).

The method of observation that was used in this research was non-participatory observation and the researcher developed an observation guide that guided him during the observation stage of data collection (see appendix K). For the non-participatory observation, the researcher did not participate but remained an outside observer in the SGB and parents meetings (Bless & Smith, 2000; Mouton 2005). The researcher attended three SGB meetings and two parents meetings. In this study the SGB meetings are coded SGB meeting one to SGB meeting three. Parents meeting are coded parent meeting one and parent meeting two.

3.6 Negotiation of entry

Negotiation of entry occurs when the researcher seeks permission to conduct a research in a particular community (de Vos, 2002). Furthermore, entry into the community by the researcher must be negotiated before hand and the researcher should introduce himself to the community in which the research will be conducted (Ibid, 2002). In this study the researcher had to get permission from the principal, the SGB and the parents of both schools. In other words, it would not have been possible for the researcher to conduct this research without negotiating entry to these schools.

The researcher wrote letters to the principals of these schools requesting permission to conduct research (see appendix A). Attached to these letters was a letter from the University of Fort Hare Department of Education introducing the researcher as a student in this institution (see appendix B). The permission to do research in school B was not granted. The reason that was given by the principal was that the SGB was not willing to divulge any information about their school to an outsider. The principal of this school reported that the SGB viewed the researcher as a person who may find faults with their governance.

After having been denied access to school B, the researcher approached, in writing, the principal of another school. The principal of this school introduced the researcher to the SGB and he was granted permission to come and conduct the research. The researcher coded this school as school B.

After giving the principals these letters the researcher made a follow-up telephone call to explain further the purpose of the research. The researcher was thereafter called to the SGB meetings to be formally introduced to the SGBs. In the subsequent parent meetings in both schools the researcher was also invited to be introduced to the school parents. After the researcher introduced himself to the selected schools he sought permission from the DoE circuit manager to conduct research at these schools (see appendix C and appendix D). From there the researcher made appointments with individual respondents and each respondent signed a letter of consent (see appendix F).

3.7 Data collection

Data collection is the stage at which the researcher decided which research method to use first and which information to look for in the field. This means that the researcher structured his way of collecting data by following a sequence he had decided upon (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). In the Data collection stage after the researcher was granted permission to conduct research in the selected schools he structured the way in which he would collect the data. As has been indicated earlier on, after pilot study, the researcher used structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, observation and documentary analysis. The researcher planned the data he intended to collect through that particular method. The researcher first administered structured interviews. The structured interviews were followed by the semi-structured interviews. The observation of the meetings was done concurrently with other methods as this was dependent upon the dates of the meetings in the selected schools. The last method that the researcher

administered was the documentary analysis. The following were the phases of data collection:

3.7.1 Phases of data collection

Data for this study were collected in five phases as followed:

(a) Piloting phase

Piloting is when the researcher carries out a study in order to investigate the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study (Kumar, 2005). The pilot study is exploratory in that it seeks to gather new data and to determine whether there are interesting patterns for research in the data (Ibid, 2005). In this study the researcher visited one of the rural primary schools in the King Williams Town District to determine the feasibility of carrying the research on the exploration of the parent SGB members' roles in the SGBs. Another reason that the researcher did a pilot study was to orientate himself to the project he had in mind (de Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2002).

The researcher first wrote a letter to the school in which the piloting was to be done (see appendix A). Before the piloting was done, the researcher approached the principal and explained to her his intention to visit the SGB particularly the chairperson, secretary, treasurer and one additional member. During their conversation the principal showed interest in the study in the hope that the study would also assist the SGB members of this school in executing their duties. The principal informed the researcher of the date of the SGB meeting in which the

researcher would be formally introduced to the SGB. The researcher made appointments with each of the members and no one refused to participate.

The findings of the piloting were that most SGB members had less than three years experience as members of the SGB but there was a balance in terms of gender. There was also a balance in terms of age, that is, the SGB was representative of young and elder parents. The interview questions for structured interviews were designed in English but they were administered in isiXhosa as interviewees were comfortable in their language. The interviewees gave different reasons for their election to the SGB and what their roles are in the SGB.

After the piloting of this study the researcher was, as advised by de Vos et al (2002), able to make modification to the tool he used to conduct the research. The researcher modified the tool by deleting question 12 and 13 because these were confusing. The researcher then decided to rephrase these questions by asking an open-ended questions that sought explanation of the factors that affect school governance. The researcher also saw the need to develop structured interview questions for the non SGB members. The reason for the development of these questions was that the researcher wanted to get their views as the people who elect the SGB and who are directly affected by school governance.

(b) Structured Interview phase

After designing the structured interview questions the researcher visited the interviewees individually at their own preferred time, mainly in the evenings and during weekends, in their homes. The reason the interviews were conducted in the evenings and during weekends was that the interviewees indicated that they would be busy with their households business during the course of the day. The appointments were in all cases made telephonically as this was the agreed upon convenient method of communication.

The questions were designed in English but in administering them the researcher had to use isiXhosa so that the interviewees could understand them. The respondents were very cooperative and willing to explain what was asked by the researcher. Most of the interviewees were excited about the interviews to such an extent that they would give answers to questions that were sometimes not asked.

(c) Semi-structured interview phase

As in the case of the structured interviews, the stage of data collection took place in the evening and during the weekends. The questions were designed in English but were administered in isiXhosa which was the language of the respondents. The interviewees were given a chance to explain freely the roles that parent SGB members perform in SGB. The researcher used a tape recorder, the use of which he negotiated with the interviewee.

The advantages of the semi structured interviews were that the researcher was also able to ask follow-up questions seeking clarity on certain issues. The respondents could elaborate as much as they pleased on certain points. The semi structured interviews allowed the researcher to gain an insight into the situation of the interviewee. The interviewees were very excited about the interviews, especially when they knew that they were being recorded.

Lee (2000) noted one of the disadvantages of interviews as being that interviews sometimes create attitudes because respondents would want to try to manage their impressions in order to maintain their good standing in the eyes of the interviewer. Interviews are also criticised as bringing a foreign element into the element they would describe and they are accessible to those who cooperate (Ibid, 2000). The researcher, in trying to manage these disadvantages, told the interviewees that he was not on a fault finding mission and that the respondents should feel free to respond to questions and even to ask questions of their own. Secondly the researcher highlighted the significance of the study. The researcher also employed other methods of data collection in trying to respond to the disadvantages of the interviews. These were the documentary analysis and observations. By employing these methods the researcher was able to have a sense of what the parent SGB members do when they are tasked with policy related matters. It also helped the researcher to be aware of what the parent SGB members do not do in performing the roles of the SGB.

(d) Documentary analysis phase

In analysing the minute books of SGBs and SGB subcommittees, the researcher got an understanding of what the parent SGB members do and what meaning they give to their roles. The principals could not give out the minute book, as they are not allowed to give them to outsiders. The alternative to that was to make copies of them and only the meetings of the current year were given to the researcher. The minutes were written in English in some meetings and in isiXhosa in others. In most cases the minutes were written in short hand and the dominant voice seemed to be that of the principal.

Through document analysis, the researcher got knowledge of not only what the parents do or have done but also of their plans. This also helped him to compare and contrast what is documented and what the parents said regarding of their roles in the SGB. The minutes were mainly about the reports on certain school projects that were underway. There were no reflections on issues such as school policy formulation, budgeting or year planning. This knowledge helped the researcher to understand the way parent SGB members perform their roles in the SGB. Through analysing the minutes of SGB meetings, the researcher was able to answer the following questions:

- Which roles are parents tasked to perform as members of the SGB?
- What do parents do when they are tasked with policy related functions?

(e) Non – participant observation phase

The researcher attended SGB and parents meetings from both schools to observe what the parent SGB were doing. In these meetings the researcher also observed the way in which the parent SGB members conducted themselves. Through observing these meetings the researcher, as advised by Adams, Khan, Raeside & White (2007), gathered information and recorded it in a notebook. According to Kumar (2005), non-participant observation is the method in which the researcher does not get involved in the activities of the group but remains a passive observer by watching and listening to its activities and drawing conclusions. The observation helped the researcher understand the experiences and actions of parent SGB members with regard to school governance. The researcher also observed attitudes amongst SGB members. The researcher in a the qualitative study conducts an observation in a manner that shifts focus from one thing to another as new significant objects or situations that have the potential of adding value to the study manifest themselves (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

It helped the researcher to answer the following questions:

- Does the SGB parent component distinguish between their roles and the roles of the school management team (SMT)?
- What do parents do when they are tasked with policy related functions?

3.8 Ethical considerations

Each profession has its set principles that change according the expectations of the particular society it serves. Research, like any other profession has its principles. Kumar (2005) noted that ethics are the accepted principles of the code of conduct for a particular profession to accommodate the ever changing ethos, values, needs and expectations of that particular profession. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) noted that ethical issues involve looking into the implication of focusing on human beings in the research or investigation. The principles of code of conduct were considered when the researcher investigated the respondents (Krumar, 2005). The researcher's ethical responsibility was to take into cognisance the overarching principles of honesty and integrity and respect as well as sensitivity towards other people who were affected in the study (Punch, 2006). It has been indicated above that ethics should accommodate the expectations of the profession. There are certain unacceptable principles in a research that need to be looked into. These principles include causing harm to individuals, breaching confidentiality, using information improperly and introducing bias (Kumar, 2005). In this study the following ethical issues were considered.

(a) Collecting information

The thrust of this ethical issue is that in order for research to be conducted in a particular community, the research is required to improve conditions of that particular community and the participants or respondent must see the value of the research to be conducted in their community (Kumar, 2005). This aspect of ethics is concerned with the question of whether the respondent should give the information to the researcher and whether the researcher has the right to knock

at someone's door to seek information (Ibid, 2005). It is important therefore that the relevance and usefulness of the research is explained to the stakeholders, particularly the respondents, so that they do not see the research exercise as wasting their time. The researcher explained the significance of the study to the respondents, so that they understood that this research was about improving the conditions they were operating under.

(b) Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality involves the manner in which the information is safe guarded and the identity of the people and the institutions involved are protected (Punch, 2006). "Sharing information about a respondent with others for purposes other than research is unethical" (Kumar, 2005:214). This means therefore that the researcher collects or identifies a person's responses and does not essentially do so publicly. In this research the interviewees were assured that their names and the names of their schools would not be publicised.

In this research issues of confidentiality were taken care of. Codes and numbers were used to ensure a better performance on this guarantee. The information given by individual respondents, for example, some are widowed, never been to school, earn social grants, illiterate and so on, was not exposed publicly with the respondent's. This means that the researcher should always be careful of disclosing the information that will embarrass the respondents. The disclosure of information must not endanger their home life, jobs and the like.

(c) Voluntary Participation

In social research people are often required to reveal personal information that may not be known by their friends or relatives. No person should be forced to participate in the research process (Kumar, 2005).

Informed consent implies that subjects are made adequately aware of the type of information you want from them, why the information is being sought, what purpose it will be put to, how they are expected to participate in the study, and how it will directly or indirectly affect them.” (Ibid, 2005: 212).

In this research this ethical principle was preserved since the respondents were not forced to participate in the research. There was no pressure of any kind put on the participants to take part in the research. As de Laine (2000) advises, the researcher requested permission from the participants to interact with them. This was to ensure that their participation was strictly voluntary and those who participated had a mental capability to make such decision. In this study the researcher also ensured that trust was built and that there was no deception involved. To ensure this principle the researcher explained to the principals first the purpose and the importance of the research. He explained to principals the value of participating in the study and that the decision to participate depended on them. This means that the researcher did not force the principal to participate in the study. The researcher also used the same approach with the parent SGB members. In telling them the importance and the value of participating in the study, the researcher made them participate willingly in the study.

(d) Providing incentives

According to Kumar (2005) it is unethical to offer inducements to respondents. The important thing that a researcher could do is to make the participants realise the importance of the study and the importance of their participation in the study that is, the benefits the study would have in improving their condition (Ibid, 2005). The researcher explained to the principals of the selected schools that this study would identify gaps and the researcher upon identifying these gaps would plan a workshop to assist the parent SGB members. This means that researcher acted in a beneficent way, in that, he based his motives on the morality that is based on willingness to help the parent SGB members to improve their condition (Benevolence broadly speaking, consists of affirmative undertakings in response to human needs of well-being (E:/bebevolence.mht). Terre Blanche et al (2006) noted that a philosophical principle that obliges the researcher to maximize the benefits that the research will afford the participants as beneficence. It is the principle that advocates that participants benefit through knowledge gained during the study and these benefits should not be in the form of payment of money to participants (Ibid, 2006). Kumar (2005) argued that giving the respondents small gifts as a form of token of appreciation is not unethical. Respondents should not be given gifts before the research as this is unethical. In providing the incentives in line with beneficence principle the researcher planned to conduct a workshop in which the SGB parent governors would be capacitated in their roles. This workshop would be designed in a manner that parent governors are clear of their roles in the SGBs

(e) No Harm to the Participants

In this study the participants were not harmed. Questions that required the participants' deviant behaviour were avoided since asking for such information would harm the participants (O'Leary, 2004). For instance asking for information about their demeaning personal characteristics, their emotionally trying times and the like would make them feel uncomfortable and it was avoided (Ibid, 2004). Social research should never injure or harm the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study (Kumar, 2005). This means therefore that the respondents should not regret having participated in the study. Information that could lead to anxiety and harassment was not asked in this study (Ibid, 2005). The principle of no harm to participants was relevant in this study in that SGB parent SGB members came from different social backgrounds.

The following ethical considerations pertaining to researcher were considered:

(f) Avoiding bias

Bias on the part of the researcher is unethical. It is a deliberate attempt to hide or to highlight something disproportionately to its true existence (Kumar, 2005). Bias is different from subjectivity. Subjectivity is related to educational background, training and your philosophical perspective (ibid). The researcher tried to be as objective as possible in this study by giving the findings as reflected in the responses by respondents.

(g) Inappropriate use of the information

This refers to the manner in which information obtained from respondents is handled or utilized. The use of information in a manner that directly or indirectly negatively affects the respondents is unethical (Kumar, 2005). The information that would affect negatively the study population was handled with care. The researcher told the respondents that some information that is not good for them would be divulged in order to make recommendations where necessary. However, the respondents were given an opportunity to decide if they wanted to participate. The example that was used by Kumar (2005:215) here is “a study to examine the feasibility of restructuring an organisation. Restructuring may be beneficial to the organisation as whole but may be harmful to some individuals.” This example is suitable in this study because the information that was found regarding the performance of parent SGB members’ roles might help to bring about better solutions to SGBs. In other words respondents were made aware of the fact that information against them would be asked but that the information would help improve the organisation (Ibid, 2005).

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis is any approach, qualitative or quantitative, to reduce the complexity of the information and to come to an interpretation of what is real and what is not real (Martin, Bauer & Gaskel, 2000). As advised by Punch (2003), the researcher, after having collected the data, went back to think about the central role of the research questions. The researcher, after having collected the data

began to summarize, reduce and create the variables. After having created the variables the researcher showed the distribution of the variables across the samples. In doing so the researcher was able to realise which data were needed. In this research the data were collected in four phases that are in accordance with the research methods that were indicated above. The data were analysed according to the phases in which they were collected. The following are the four phases in which the data were analysed:

(a) Analysis of data from the structured interviews

The researcher, after having finished the collection of data by means of structured interviews, sorted them according to themes. These themes were biographic information, composition of SGB, roles of SGB members, roles of parents in school governance, managing school finances, ensuring the culture of teaching and learning and factors that affect school governance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The main task in the data analysis stage was to identify common themes from participant's description of their experiences (Ibid, 2005). The researcher organised, categorized, indexed and arranged the data in such a manner that he was able to identify the essence of the content (Collins, du Plooy, Grobbelaar, Puttergill, Terre Blanche, van Eeden, van Rensburg & Wigston 2000).

(b) Analysis of data from the semi-structured interviews

Another method of data collection that was used in this study was the semi-structured interviews. This method was used as a follow-up to augment the information that was gathered in the structured interviews. In analysing the data from the semi-structured interviews, the research categorised the information according to themes that were identified in the structured interviews. Hardy & Bryman (2004) noted that the major preoccupation of the data analyst is the paring down and condensing of the data that have been collected by a researcher during fieldwork. The data from the tape recorder were combined with the notes that the researcher compiled during the interviewing process and condensed relevant themes. This means that the researcher categorized the information and removed what was irrelevant from what is relevant for this study. As this research falls within the phenomenological study, the researcher identified statements by participants that relate to the topic, grouped them into meaningful units and sought divergent perspectives.

(c) Analysing data from the non-participant observation

In analysing the data from the observation the researcher compared and contrasted the data that he had gather from different observations. He sorted them and connected them to the themes that that were identified in the structured interviews. Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein (2006) argued that sorting data involves making connections among several related sources as in qualitative research. This means that no single piece of data stands alone by itself as evidence. The

data that had no connection to these themes was further categorized and grouped into new themes. The theme that was identified during observation was the procedure of meetings.

(d) Analysing data from the documentary analysis

The documents that were used as another source in this research were minutes of the SGB and parents meetings. The researcher made notes by summarizing these minutes. The summarizing of these minutes helped the researcher to interpret them. In interpreting these minutes the researcher was able to identify related themes from different minutes. These themes were connected to the themes that had already been identified in the other research methods. By analysing the minutes the researcher was able to get the detailed information related to parent SGB members' performance of their roles. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) noted that data analysis in the case study involves the organisation of the details about the case, categorization of data, interpretation of single instances, identification of patterns and synthesis and generalisation.

During the data analysis stage the researcher organized the specific facts about the case and arranged them in a chronological order. Data were categorised so that data with similar features or characteristics were grouped together. During the observation the researcher had an opportunity to notice what the SGBs do when they are tasked with policy related matters. This exposure to the SGB meetings offered an opportunity to the researcher to identify what was right

practice from what was wrong practice. The researcher observed the procedure of meetings and this gave him an insight and better understanding of the situation. The inputs by different components of the SGBs and by different members in different portfolios during SGB meetings were analysed so as to see whether there were any variances. This assisted the researcher to answer the question: 'what do parents do when they are elected as SGB members?'

In interviewing the SGB members the researcher was able to know when the SGB members did not have the same understanding of some issues of school governance. Same responses were put under one category and this helped the researcher to understand the trends in certain issues. The categorisation of the data helped the research to come up with certain concepts. The approach in which the concepts or theories emerge from the field in the course of research is referred to as the 'grounded approach' (Singleton & Straits, 2005). The data that did not fit or match the research questions were discarded. In this study the researcher used the qualitative data analysis method in which the information on individuals or other units of study such as schools or villages were classified according to their kind rather than their amount. The example of qualitative data analysis in this study is when people were classified according to the kind of education they received (e.g. primary, secondary or technical). The other qualitative data analysis in this study was when the researcher classified the SGB members according to age and sex categories that is, youth, elders, males and female.

3.10 Data trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness involves trusting the integrity and credibility of the data, and the historic criteria to judge data trustworthiness are validity, reliability, generalizability and objectivity. (Rossman, 2003). According to Elliot (2005: 23) “While reliability is generally defined as the replicability or stability of research findings, validity refers to the ability of research to reflect an external reality or to measure the concepts of interests” This means therefore that there is an interrelationship between reliability and validity and that research findings should be consistent and be able to be proved as a reality. O’ Leary (2004) argued that validity is premised on the assumption that what is being studied can be measured, proved or captured. It involves seeking to confirm the truth and accuracy of these measured and captured data, as well as the truth and accuracy of any findings or conclusions drawn from the data (Ibid, 2004). This means that the parent roles can be measured by what they do when they are tasked to perform SGB matters or policy related matters. Also the answers that the parents gave when they were asked questions related to SGB matters can measure performance of their roles though the answers and performance are synonymous. Hardey and Bryman (2004:23) note that, “validity is concerned with the issue of whether a variable really measures what it is supposed to measure”. This means, therefore, that in this research the answers that were given by the parents gave the researcher an idea of whether the parents perform their roles or not. Two schools were chosen for this research and the researcher observed the SGB meeting and analysed the minutes of the SGB meetings of both schools.

The variables in the answers given by parents and their practices served to validate the concept of 'understanding' of their roles. "Reliability is concerned with the consistency of a variable" (Hardy & Bryman, 2004:22).

When the results are consistent, stable and repeated we say there is reliability in the study (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). The reliability in this study was achieved by having follow-up interview questions which, to a large extent, sought explanations on some responses given in the questionnaires. In other words some questions requiring certain answers in the research questionnaire were rephrased in a way that they did not lose their intentions. For example asking: 'how is your SGB constituted?' and giving options in the questionnaire and asking: 'how many components are in your SGB?' is one and the same question. "Reliability and validity are the criteria used to assess the extent to which a particular empirical indicator represents a specified theoretical or hypothetical construct. Reliability concerns consistency of measurement- the extent to which the test is internally consistent and yields the same results on repeated trials" (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000:340). Singleton & Straits (2005) argue that reliability is achieved when applications yield consistent dependable results.

3.11 Data completeness

The researcher used data from different sources to verify the information he got. The using of different sources to verify the information gives stability to a study and this is known as data completeness (Collins et al, 2000). This helped the

researcher to understand his biases and to try and eliminate the influence his biases might have on the study by placing them in competition with each other and the information he got from the research (Ibid,2000). Data completeness gives texture, depth and even credibility to a study (Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein, 2006). Data completeness is common in the qualitative approach. A researcher might embark on many informal observations in the field and conduct in-depth interviews, then look for common themes that appear in the data collected from both methods (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

3.12 Conclusion

The research methods and design that were employed in this study were effective in that all of them provided answers to the research questions that were asked in chapter one. These methods also helped the researcher gather the information that is relevant to the title of this research. The use of different methods helped the researcher to have an insight into how the parent SGB members perform their roles in the SGB.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present, analyse and discuss the findings and to correlate them with the conceptual framework in chapter two. The data were generated through structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, documentary analyses and observations. As has been indicated in previous chapters the researcher generated the data relating to SGB parent members' performance of their SGB roles in two selected rural primary schools in the King Williams Town District. The schools have been coded as school A and school B. In presenting the findings that responded to the research questions, this chapter is structured as follows:

Section 4.1: Biographical information of the respondents

This is the section in which the information about the respondents and the research sites is presented. The biographic information from both schools has been outlined by means of tables. The issues of gender, age, educational qualifications and the portfolios have been shown in each table.

Section 4.2: Presenting and analysis of the findings

This section is divided into the following:

4.2.1 Composition of the SGB

This theme unpacks the data relating to the composition of the SGB as reported by the parent SGB members, non SGB members, SGB educators and principals of the two selected schools. It unpacks the data that relate to the SGB composition in terms of SGB components and in terms of the SGB portfolios. The data is compared with what SASA prescribes on the composition of the SGB.

4.2.2 The roles of the SGB members

Regarding the roles of the parent SGB members the researcher analyses the data that were collected from the respondents. Under this theme the researcher reveals through data analysis the divergent answers that emerged from the different respondents. The following were the themes that emerged from the data:

(a) Chairing SGB and parents meetings

This theme refers the roles of the parent SGB members in chairing the school meetings.

(b) Calling SGB and parent meetings

This theme discusses the reports of respondents on how the SGB and the parents' meetings are communicated. It also gives an account of who calls

these meetings and why it is this particular person's role to call the school meetings.

(c) Formulating and ensuring the formulation of school policies.

This theme highlights the roles of parent SGB members in formulating and ensuring the implementation of school policies. It further unpacks what the parent SGB members do in executing their roles in matters of school policy formulation.

(d) Managing school finances

This section deals with the way the school finances are reported to be managed. It also unpacks the roles of parent SGB members in managing school finances.

(e) Parental participation in school governance

This theme deals with what parent SGB, SGB educators, principals and non SGB parents reported regarding the participation of parents in school governance.

(f) Ensuring a culture of teaching and learning

In this section the researcher unpacks the data that relate to the roles of parent SGB members in ensuring the culture of teaching and learning in the school.

4.2.3 Factors affecting school governance

This theme deals with data that were collected in relation to factors that affect school governance positively. It also deals with the factors that affect school governance negatively. This section is structured in such way that it first deals

with factors that affect school governance positively followed by the factors that affect school governance negatively.

Section 4.3: Discussion of findings

In this section the researcher discusses the findings and relates them to the literature that was discussed in chapter two.

Section 4.5: Conclusion

In this section the researcher discusses the relevant aspects of the research findings. This section also summarizes the research findings and relates them to the literature review.

4.1 Biographic information

4.1.1 Description of the research sites

The following table shows the number of educators, learners and parent SGB members in the SGB.

Table 1

SCHOOL NAME	NO. OF EDUCATORS	NO. OF LEARNERS	NO. OF PARENT SGB MEMBERS	NO. OF SGB EDUCATORS	NO. OF SGB NON TEACHING STAFF
School A	8	170	5	2	1
School B	6	110	4	2	1

As was indicated in chapter 3, two primary schools both in the rural villages of the King Williams Town District were sampled. There were, as indicated in

chapter 3, five elected parent SGB members in school A and four elected parent SGB members in school B. Each school has 1 SGB non teaching staff members. SASA allows the SGB to co-opt additional parent members on the bases of expertise but in both schools there was no indication that the SGBs have co-opted other parents.

4.1.2 Respondents profile

The researcher described respondents by means of tables. Table 1(a) represents school A and table 1(b) represent school B. Below are the tables that show that description of respondents. Tables A and B below, specify the components or respondents, their age cohort, gender, educational qualification and portfolios.

Table 2 (a) - School A

COMPONENT/ RESPONDENTS	AGE					GENDER		EDUCATION			PORTFOLIO		
	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61and Above	F	M	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
SGB													
Respondent 1		√					√		√		√		
2 (PRINCIPAL)				√			√			√			
Respondent 3			√			√			√				√
Respondent 4	√						√		√				
Respondent 5				√		√			√				
6 (SGB EDUCATOR)				√		√				√		√	
7 (SGB EDUCATOR)		√				√				√			
NON SGB PARENTS													
Respondent 8					√		√	√					
Respondent 9					√		√	√					
Respondent 10					√	√				√			
Respondent 11			√				√			√			
Respondent 12		√				√			√				
Respondent 13					√		√			√			
Respondent 14				√		√			√				
Respondent 15				√			√		√				
Respondent 16				√		√			√				
Respondent 17			√			√			√				
Respondent 18					√		√		√				
Respondent 19					√		√			√			
Respondent 20		√					√		√				
Respondent 21		√				√				√			
TOTALS	1	5	3	6	6	10	11	2	11	8	1	1	1

Table 2(a) above indicates the number of respondents that participated in school A. The table has been divided into SGB and non SGB sections. Twenty one (21) respondents participated in this study, all of whom were Black Africans. Respondents one to seven are SGB members, while respondents eight to 21 were the non-SGB parents.

(a)Age cohort in school A

The above table indicates that fifty seven percent (57%) were above the age of fifty years. Only five percent (5%) of persons involved in school governance were less than thirty years old. Thirty eight percent (38%) were between thirty and fifty years. It is clear from the data that the persons who dominate in school governance in school A were older members.

(b) Gender representation in school A

In school A, the total number of male respondents was fifty two percent (52%) and the total number of female respondents was forty eight percent (48%).

(c)Educational qualifications in school A

Fifty two percent (52%) of the respondents had secondary education and ten percent (10%) had primary education. Thirty eight percent (38%) had tertiary education and fourteen percent (14%) of this population were educators. This

means, therefore, that only twenty four percent (24%) of the parent respondents had tertiary education.

(d) SGB portfolios in school A

In school A the SGB chairperson was male and his age is in his thirties. His educational qualification was secondary education. The SGB secretary was a female educator who is in her fifties. The treasurer was a female SGB parent who is at her forties and whose educational qualification is secondary education. The principal in school A is male.

Table 2(b) represents the biographic information that was collected in school B.

COPONENT/ RESPONDENTS	AGE					GENDER		EDUCATION			PORTFOLIO		
	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and Above	F	M	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
SGB													
Respondent 22					√		√	√			√		
23 (PRINCIPAL)			√			√				√			
Respondent 24					√	√				√			√
Respondent 25					√		√		√				
26(EDUCATOR)			√			√				√		√	
27 (EDUCATOR)			√			√				√			
NON SGB PARENTS													
Respondent 28	√					√			√				
Respondent 29					√		√		√				
Respondent 30					√	√			√				
Respondent 31					√	√		√					
Respondent 32					√		√	√					
Respondent 33				√		√			√				
Respondent 34		√				√		√					
Respondent 35					√	√			√				
Respondent 36		√				√				√			
TOTALS	1	2	3	1	8	11	4	4	6	5	1	1	1

Fifteen (15) respondents participated in this study in school B. They are respondents number 22 to 35. Respondent numbers 22 to 27 were SGB members, while respondent number 28 35 were non- SGB parent members.

(e) Age cohort in school B

Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents were above the age of fifty years. Only seven percent (7%) of the respondents were less than thirty years of age. Thirty three percent (33%) were between thirty and fifty years old.

(f) Gender representation in school B

In school B, the number of female respondents was seventy nine percent (79%) while the number of male respondents was twenty one percent (21%). This indicated that more female respondents were available to participate in this study.

(g) Educational qualification in school B

Thirty three percent (33%) of the respondents had tertiary education. Forty percent (40%) had secondary education and twenty seven percent (27%) had primary education.

(h) SGB portfolios in school B

Regarding SGB portfolios the same trends appear except for the chairperson who was in his sixties and whose educational qualification was primary education. The principal in school B was female.

Overall, the trends were similar in both schools except for gender. School A had forty seven percent (47%) females and school B there was seventy three percent (73%) females. However, the overall female population from both schools is sixty percent (60%) which makes them the majority of respondents.

The chairpersons from both schools were males and this may be an indication that males in the rural villages are regarded as more suitable for leadership positions. Their holding of the leadership positions might be a result of cultural old traditional beliefs. Duku (2006) and Brown & Duku (2007) noted that male figures were regarded as the leaders of households. Furthermore, according to Kelly (1997) men are associated with boldness and boldness tends to be associated with leadership and authority which is in most cases regarded as masculine. According to Brown & Duku (2007), where females occupy leadership positions they (female leaders) are filled with anxiety. If they are elected for leadership roles, they regard the leadership positions as meant for men. For instance respondent 24 noted, "Yes females are elected as SGB chairpersons but it is good to have males as SGB chairpersons as they have that male voice and respect".

It is also important to note that both SGB secretaries were female educators. This is in spite of the revelations by other studies that females have good communication skills and good intuition capabilities (Kelly, 1997). It is possible that the position of the secretary is associated with communication skills and good intuition since it is the secretary who is expected to take minutes.

Respondent 1 an SGB chairperson from school B reported, “Educators have writing, listening and reading skills and they are able to remember what was discussed”.

Six SGB members (2 educators and 4 parents) and the principal in school A participated in this study. Five SGB members (2 educators and 3 parents) and the principal participated in school B. Fourteen (14) non SGB parents from school A and nine (9) from school B also participated in this study.

Table 1(a) above indicates that in school A the principal was male whereas in school B the principal was female. In school A, out of fourteen (14) non SGB members, fourteen percent (14%) once served on the SGB. Fifty seven percent (57%) of the non SGB members were married, twenty two percent (22%) were widowed, fourteen percent (14%) were single and seven percent (7%) were divorced. The fact that the large percentage of the population of the SGB were the married people could be an indication of what Duku (2006) refers to as ‘traditional habitus’ in which unmarried individuals are excluded from leadership positions. Unmarried males are viewed in traditional society as persons whose minds are preoccupied by the unmarried females. Unmarried females on the other hand are viewed as persons who are likely to be disrespectful as they do not have husbands to respect (Ibid, 2006). The SGB parent members and those who once served in the SGB gave similar reasons for their election to the SGB. All of them indicated that they are active in meetings. Sixty percent (60%) of them cited literacy as the likely reason for their election to the SGB. This could be

a fact, as it is shown in the tables that there are more parents who have secondary and tertiary education in the SGB. Forty percent (40%) of the population of these respondents also noted strictness, respectfulness and community leadership as some reasons for their election to the SGB. Much as they do not believed in African Traditional Religion, forty percent (40%) were not against the ancestors and all of them see democracy as important. All the SGB parent members were unemployed and fifty percent (50%) of them were pensioners.

4.1.3 Distribution by experience in SGB

The researcher also designed a question that sought to determine the number of years each parent SGD member has served in the SGB. Table 2 below shows this information.

Table 3

Experience	Number of respondents	Percentage
0-3 years	8	80
4-7 years	2	20
7 and over	0	

The above table depicts that eighty percent (80%) of the SGB members had less than four years service in the SGB. This could be because the majority of

parents, as depicted in table1 (a) and 1(b), who attend parents' meetings in addition to being elected to SGBs were older than fifty years. This may result in only older people being elected to the SGB. Another consequence may be that these older members may not have the opportunity to serve a second term on the SGBs as a result of their age.

4.2 Presentation and analysis of the findings

This section seeks to unpack the roles of the parent SGB members in relation to school governance as reported by the respondents from both schools. The data also relate to the action of the parent SGB members, their roles and assumptions they have about their roles. The section seeks to explore whether the parent SGB members are able to distinguish between their roles and those of the SMT. Furthermore, the factors that affect school governance, as well as the composition of the SGB will be discussed. In general this section is about giving the explanation of who does what in the SGB and why specifically that particular person.

The data, as Leedy & Ormrod (2005) advised, were collected and have been presented and grouped together into themes that relate to the research questions. The main task in the data analysis stage was to identify common themes from participant's description of their experiences. Hereunder are the themes that have been identified from the data collected and they are

consistent with the research questions. In the latter part of this section the data presented in this section was analysed.

4.2.1 The role of parents in school governance.

The data that were collected revealed the roles that are played by parents in executing their roles in school governance. Regarding the roles of the parents in school governance diverse responses came from both SGB and non SGB members. Amongst the SGB members themselves there were divergent views in as far as the role of parents is concerned. The majority (70%) of the respondents view the role of parents as attending SGB and parents' meetings and cleaning the school buildings. They did not view SGB meetings as exclusively for parent SGB members. This emerged when the parents were required to indicate the roles of parents in school governance. They also indicated that parents must attending SGB meetings. One hundred percent (100%) of the respondents indicated that parents should be involved in drawing school policy.

Fourteen percent (14%) of the respondents did not indicate anything in this section while seven percent (7%) indicated the role of parents in school governance as that of cleaning the school building and drawing school policy. This may mean that the parents did not see the difference between their role as parents and the role of parents in the SGB. It could be that they confused parents meetings that are called by the SGB with the SGB meetings. Seventy percent (70%) of the parents were unable to differentiate between the roles of parents on the SGB and the non SGB parents. When the parents were asked if they

assisted in school activities, sixty percent (60%) reported that they did, forty percent (40%) reported that they sometimes assisted. In connection with assisting in school activities, be it regularly or sometimes, they mentioned fundraising activities such as the collection of money for donations and looking after school buildings.

The researcher's observations revealed that usually parents ask questions that seek clarity on progress made on any matter that was agreed upon in the previous meeting. The principal and educators led these reports and the parents in both schools tended to address the principal when they asked clarity seeking questions. The observations helped the researcher to have an idea of numerous aspects of social behaviour in meeting situations. This means that the researcher was able to observe how the parents conduct themselves in the meetings. They rarely made any suggestions in the meetings. For instance in meeting 1 the researcher observed in school A that respondent 4 had a suggestion on school nutrition. He compared what he saw at another village with the situation in his school. He stated,

Kubalulekile uba siyijonge le ndlela batya ngayo aba bantwana. Phaya KuQoboqobo ndikhe ndabona into entle abantwana bephekelwa ukutya., Isipinashi, ukutya okuya egazini ndaziva ndinokhwele ke noko, yangaske le nto yenzeke nalapha esikolweni. Ndingumntu onokhwele mna .

The English translation is:

It is important that we monitor the way the learners are fed. At Keiskammahoek I saw a beautiful practice where a full meal is cooked for learners. They eat nutritious vegetables like spinach. I wished this could happen even in our school. I am a person who likes progress.

This means that it is important that they look at the way they feed their learners, and that they would like to see the school cooking nutritious food for the learners. This may be an indication that parents are very concerned about the welfare of their children at school.

Educators, on the other hand, had different responses in as far as the role of parents is concerned. Their responses included:

Respondent 23: *"We call the parents to discuss the literacy of their children".*

Respondent 26: *"When we go for educational tours we seek assistance from them and they select amongst themselves persons to accompany their children".*

Respondent 7: *"When there are big events like farewells we involve parents more especially in cooking".*

Respondent 6 did not respond to this question on the role of parents. This may indicate that she did not see any the role for parents in school governance. Three percent (3%) of the parents from both schools noted the fact that advising educators on fundraising issues is the role of the parents.

Twenty five percent (25%) of the respondents reported that the parents attend SGB meetings, SMT meetings and clean school buildings. This may indicate that some parents are unable to distinguish between the SGB and the SMT. When respondent 1 was asked how the SGB should keep the parental participation high, he answered, *"We make announcements in community meetings and*

include parents in policy formulation". Respondent 3 on other hand noted, "We regularly report on progress in the school and motivate them to participate in school activities". Respondent 22 narrated how parents help each other. He interestingly reported,

When for instance the learners go to an educational tour and there is a learner who can not pay the money that is required, the parent of the concerned learner comes to the SGB and explains her problem. The SGB would make means by requesting other parents and teachers to assist so that the learner can go with other learners.

He further reported that they regularly report to parents on progress in the school. He noted the fact that it is critical to report about school finances. He asserted,

We make reports to the parents about school finances, and we tell them that if they want receipts they are available. The parents perceive us as persons who can misuse school finances for our own gains. To convince them so that they believe in our financial management we must do financial report regularly.

It is clear from the above responses that the role of parents in school governance is limited to attending meetings and asking for clarity on issues that are reported on by the SGB and endorsing policies that have been initiated by the educators. Respondent 2, a principal in school A, on the other hand reported,

We ensure parental participation in school governance. We involve them in a number of activities such as fundraising, going with them to educational tours and the like. We also involve them in catering activities when there are certain big events such as farewells at school.

Respondent 22 narrated the experience he had when he went with learners on an educational tour. He narrated this story with delight and excitement.

Sibona izinto ezininzi esingazange sazibona. NjengaseCawa kukho ipayina elikhulu abantwana abangena kulo. Kukho neevenkile

ngaphakathi kulo kodwa xa ulijongile lipayina. Lo nto ithetha ukuba nathi malungu ekomiti siyafunda kwezinye izinto njengoba silapha nje.

The English translation is:

We see many things that we have never seen before. Like at Port Alfred there is a big pineapple shaped building which learners entered into it. There are shops inside this building but from outside it looks like a pineapple. This means that the parent SGB members also learn.

This means that at Port Alfred they saw a pineapple-shaped mall that has a number of shops in it. This may indicate that the parents also learn on educational tours when they accompany their children. They see things that they have never seen before. It was clear from the data that the issue of educational delegation as argued by USAID (2005) prevailed, that is, parents had a sense of responsibility in taking decisions about their children's education. However, the respondents seemed to have different views on the roles that the parents must play in school governance.

4.2.2 Composition of SGB

(a) SGB components

The majority of the respondent (57%) in both schools (SGB and non SGB parents) reported that the SGB at a primary school is composed of parents, non teaching staff and educators. All the SGB members from both schools form part of this fifty seven percent. This is an indication that SGB members, through the training that was reported to have taken place, know the composition of the SGB. Sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents in school B did not mention the non teaching staff. The reason for this could be that they do not participate actively in

school activities such as attending parents' meetings and, therefore, were not aware of the composition of the SGB. Of the 16% of respondents who did not mention non teaching staff members six (6%) are below the age of thirty. It could be that they see the non teaching staff as people who could not be elected to the SGB. Perhaps they view SGB as the business of educators and parents only. Five percent (5%) of the respondents in school A did not note anything on the section that required them to indicate the components of the SGB. The reason for this could be that they did not regularly attend parents' meetings. Another five percent (5%) in school A indicated that the SGB is composed of only the parent component. This may indicate that these respondents view parents as the only people who are eligible for election to the SGB. Another reason could be that they view educators as having ex officio status in the SGB. The educator component (100%) from both schools indicated that the SGB is composed of the teachers, the parents and the non teaching staff at primary school level.

(b) SGB portfolios

Regarding the portfolios in the SGB sixty three percent (63%) of the respondents (educators, SGB parents and non SGB parents) in both schools noted that the SGB portfolios comprised of a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, a secretary, a deputy secretary and a treasurer. Thirty seven (37%) percent mentioned, in addition to the above portfolios, the SGB coordinator and the SGB organiser. Five percent (5%) did not indicate the deputy chairperson as a portfolio in the SGB.

From the above presentation the researcher can deduce that that both SGB members and non SGB parents have different views on the composition of the SGB. Perhaps those who indicated additional portfolios in the SGB against what SASA prescribes conceive these portfolios as necessary in the SGB. A hundred percent of the SGB members indicated that the Department of Department of Education sometimes workshops the SGB on school governance matters. Respondent 22 a chairperson in school B commented,

Sikhe sabizwa sizikomiti zezi zikolo sisondeleneyo safundiswa imigaqo ethile enxulumene nathi zikomiti. Hayi noko umphathi sekethe uzamile kodwa mfondini abanye bethu sesibadala noko wena. Sinikwe iincwadana ezithile zokufunda. Ufika ndisazamana nalo ncwadi apha. Lthath'ixesha ke ukuyifunda ndixakekile nazezekhaya kaloku.

The English translation is:

We and the other neighbouring SGB have been recently called by the DoE to attend a workshop where we were trained in issues relating to school governance. The Circuit manager did well though some of us are too old to grasp some issues. We were given booklets to read. When you arrived I was trying to read that book. It takes time because I am busy with household matters as well.

This means that the SGBs of the nearby schools have been recently called to a workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to capacitate the SGBs on school governance matters. This respondents identified his age as something that could delay his understanding of the school governance issues.

4.2.3 The roles of the parent SGB members

This section explores the roles performed by the parent SGB members in school governance as reported by parent SGB members, SGB educators, principals and non SGB parents. These roles as reported by the respondents include chairing SGB meetings, calling SGB meetings, formulating and ensuring the implementation school policies, managing school finances and ensuring a culture of teaching and learning.

(a) Calling the SGB and parent meetings

The minutes of the SGB meetings and responses given by both parents and educators indicated that meetings are communicated by notices given to the learners. As has been indicated earlier, the researcher observed three SGB meetings and two parent meetings in both schools. In all the instances the meetings were opened and closed with a short prayer which was always conducted by a parent SGB member. All the people that were present in these meetings would observe a moment of silence by standing up and their eyes closed. The opening and closing of the meetings with a prayer may be an indication that all the parents embrace the values of Christianity. All the sets of the minutes of the meetings revealed that in all the meetings the prayers were offered by the parents. Whenever the meeting started apologies were forwarded and there was no indication of whether they were written or not. The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting and proposed an acceptance of the

minutes. Matters arising were discussed thereafter. Fifty seven (57%) percent of the respondents in school A and B noted that it is the role of the principal to call the SGB meetings. Respondent 15 a non SGB parent in school A reported, "He knows everything in a school". Respondent 26 an SGB educator believed that it is the role of the principal, chairperson and the secretary to call SGB meetings. She further noted, *"They are the people who should stick to the year plan"*.

Fifty six (56%) percent of the respondents in school A and B indicated that it is the role of the principal to call SGB meetings. They gave different reasons for this.

Respondent 18 a non SGB parents in school A reported: *"The principal is the CEO of the school and he is the one who administers the entire school governance"*.

Respondent 33 a non SGB parent in school B noted: *"The principal is the head of the school therefore it is his role to call the SGB meetings"*.

The 56% that indicated the principal should call SGB meetings further reported that the principal is the person who comes with issues from the Department of Education and who has first hand information. Thirty one (31%) percent of the respondents noted that it is the secretary who calls SGB meetings. This 31% noted that the stationery is kept by the SGB secretary and that he is the person who writes minutes of the meetings. Thirteen percent (13%) noted that the principal and the chairperson call SGB meetings. Respondent 17 noted,

The principal receives information from Department of Education. He passes it on to the chairperson who then has to inform SGB members. After the SGB meeting the parents are called.

Respondent 22 the chairperson of the SGB in school B, when asked about his role answered,

Besides chairing the SGB and parents meetings, I monitor the activities of the SGB and I am the first person to be informed by the principal of any development in the school. Together with the principal we decide on the date that we should call SGB meeting.

He further reported visiting the school from time to time to look after the school buildings. He also reported visiting the school even during weekends and phoning the principal whenever there was anything wrong.

It was clear from the data that parents have different opinions on the roles of each SGB member. However, a hundred percent (100%) of the respondents who are SGB members and the principals of both schools held the view that the role of the principal is that of informing the SGB about any developments that come from the Department of Education. They saw the principal as the person to interpret documents that come from the Department of Education for the SGB. The secretaries of both SGBs do not see themselves as having any role other than writing minutes of the SGB and parents meetings. Both Secretaries viewed themselves as persons who write notices inviting parents to meetings. The SGB Secretary from school B reported, "My role is to write minutes of the SGB and parents meetings and to write letters inviting SGB members to the meeting".

(b) Chairing the SGB and parent meetings

Eighty two percent (82%) of the respondents in school A and B reported that the chairing of the meetings is the role of the chairperson. Furthermore they indicated that the law requires the chairperson to chair the SGB and the parent meetings. They further noted that the school belongs to the parents therefore the chairperson needs to be a parent. Respondent 25, an SGB educator, in explaining the reason why the SGB meetings should be chaired by the chairperson argued,

He has been elected based on the fact that he can lead and give direction in a meeting. Further more parents respond positively when they are led by someone close to them and who lives with them.

The 84 % who identified the chairperson as the person to chair SGB and parent meetings gave different reasons for this.

Respondent 8: *“He works hand in hand with the principal. He can influence the community to understand school activities”.*

Respondent 11: *“The powers vested in him qualify him to chair the meetings”.*

Respondent 26 an educator in school B: *“He is the person who is elected and this is according to the duties assigned to him by the community and the Department of Education”.*

Respondent 5 noted: *“He is the person who is always involved in the school and the one who can influence the community”.*

Eleven percent (11%) reported that it is the role of the principal and chairperson to chair SGB and parents meetings while five (5%) percent reported this as the role of the principal. This is how he views his role as the chairperson of the SGB. The 11 % who identified both the principal and chairperson as responsible for chairing meetings further indicated that the principal and the chairperson work together. Respondent 28 who is the non SGB parent commented, *“When the principal brings the issues from the Department of Education he calls the chairperson”*. The five percent (5%) who noted that it is the role of the principal to chair SGB meetings noted that communication from the Department of Education come through him. Respondent 11 reported, *“He calls parents and explains issues from the department to the parents”*. They indicated that he is the person who knows the agenda and who works closely with the principal in matters of school governance.

Fourteen percent (14%) in school B reported that it is the principal and the chairperson who should chair meetings, as they are the people who have information from the DoE. Respondent 29 was unsure about the person who should chair the SGB and parents meetings. The reason for this respondent being unsure could be that the principal always gave directions in the meetings. Another reason for her not being sure who should chair SGB meetings might be that she reported that by her own admission she had never been elected as SGB member being a young parent who in her twenties. Another reason, as observed by the researcher, could be that the principal was the person who in most cases

gave the ruling on any item under discussion. This may lead to some respondents thinking that the principal may also chair the meetings.

The meetings that the researcher observed were chaired by the SGB chairpersons. Only in one instance was the meeting chaired by the principal in the presence of the SGB chairperson. This may be an indication that the principal and the SGB chairperson work in collaboration in the businesses of the SGB. In this meeting (meeting 1) the issues discussed were: the election of the new SGB and reports on the progress of school renovations. In this meeting the principal seemed to give direction to the SGB. It was very likely that the SGB chairperson could not explain issues concerning SGB elections, as it is the principal who should inform the SGB of school governance matters (SASA, 1996).

The researcher also analysed four sets of minutes of SGB meetings (4 in each school). Seven of them revealed that the meetings were chaired by the chairperson. Only one set of SGB minutes were not clear whether the meeting was chaired by the principal or the SGB chairperson. This is the meeting in which the researcher observed the principal chairing it.

However, both SGB chairpersons admitted that it is their role to chair meetings. Principals seemed to provide leadership in each meeting by providing clarity on questions that are asked, that the parent SGB members could not answer.

(c) Managing School Finances

Another role identified by the respondents was that of managing school finances. By managing school finances respondents meant banking the money that had been collected for the school, keeping receipts, signing cheques and reporting to parents about school finances. There was no indication that SGB parents are involved in issues of budgeting. Even the minutes that the researcher analysed had no indication of budgetary processes.

Respondent 3 and respondent 24, treasurers from both schools noted that their role was to see to it that school finances are properly managed. To them financial management simply meant banking money regularly. The treasurers also indicated that when there was something that school needed to purchase they were called by the principal to sign a cheque. This was evident in the minutes of the SGB meeting that the researcher observed where the task of procurement was handled by educators only. In this instance it was agreed in an SGB meeting that educators get quotations from different shops. Respondent 23, the treasurer in school B reported, *"In some instances the cheque book is sent to me to sign a cheque"*. She reported that she had to sign a cheque for the educators to be able to purchase whatever is needed in the school. There was no indication that the SGB subcommittee responsible for procurement sits to discuss issues of purchasing. Both of treasurers were silent about their role in the SGB finance committee. They further suggested that a financial report be made by the SGB to parents. Respondent 22, chairperson of the SGB of school B noted,

Ilali yona isoloko inesikrokrwana ngoba ingqondo yabo bacinga ukuba yonke la mali ithunyelwa ngurhulumente emva kokuba kwathiwa ischool fees siyekisiwe kufuneka isebenze kuzo zonke izinto. Abasafuni kwenzanto. Abanye bayabuza le mali ithunyelwa ngurhulumente yenzani. Siyabanika iphepha elichazayo kodwa aboneli.

The English translation is:

The community is always suspicious on issues that deal with school finances. They think that the entire school fund should come from the DoE ever since the payment of school fees was stopped by the DoE. The community does not want to pay anything towards the school fund instead they asked why we expect them to pay money whereas there is money from the DoE. We give them paper-budget but they are not satisfied.

This means that the community is always suspicious about school finances. They expect the funds from the Department of Education to be utilized in all school activities. There is no indication of their interest in paying money towards the school's needs. Even though they are given reports they are always dissatisfied.

A hundred percent (100%) of the SGB educators in both schools reported that, the finance committee is responsible for preparing the financial report. When asked about the composition of this sub committee, all the educators responded that it is composed of the treasurer as its chairperson and other SGB members (educators and parents). This was one aspect the parents were silent on. The reason that the parents were silent could be that the parents are not actively involved in the preparations of financial reports. It also emerged from the selected principals that the finance committee meets and their meeting is about preparing financial reports to be submitted to the SGB. Both principals stated that the finance committee is composed of some parent SGB members and SGB educators. They reported that the treasurer is the chairperson of the finance

committee. However, there was no indication in the SGB minutes that the finance committee does meet and make reports to the SGB. None of the respondents indicated anything about fundraising activities that are initiated by the finance committee and endorsed by the SGB. Both principals reported that the entire SGB plans the fundraising activities.

(d) Formulating and ensuring the implementation of school policies

In interviewing certain members of the SGB, observing parents and SGB meetings and analysing minutes of the SGB, the researcher was able to know what the parents SGB members do when they are tasked with policy related matters. Eighty percent (80%) of both SGB members and non SGB parents reported that one of the most important SGB roles is to formulate school policies. Eighty percent (80%) of parents were of the view that the formulation of school policies and school code of conduct is the role of parents whereas SASA defines it as the role of SGB.

The parents both (SGB and non SGB) were of the view that the role of planning by the central authorities had been delegated to the community and the SGBs in executing their tasks represent the community.

Respondent 23 reported, *“I SGB imele abahlali esikolweni yonke ke into eyenzayo kuneka ijonge iimfuno zesikolo nezabahlali, ingenzi nje unothanda.”*

The English translation is:

“The SGB represents the interest of the community in the school and it must promote the best interest of the school and not do as it pleases”.

This means that the SGB represents the community which the school serves and must look after the interest of the community.

Diverse responses were given by different respondents (SGB and non SGB) in as far as the formulation and ensuring the implementation of the school policies is concerned. These included:

Respondent 4: *“We sit down as SGB members and decide on rules that the SGB members, learners and educators should abide by in the school”.*

Respondent 23: *“We formulate the policies as SGB and bring them to parents to have a final say on them”.*

Respondent 22: *“When policies are formulated we sit together as parents, educators, SGB and the Department of Education”.*

When asked about the roles of the chairperson respondent 23, a principal in school B reported,

He is the person who assists with the school governance, who comes to school regularly. He only assists in matters of school governance not in matters of school management. He assists the principal in seeing to it that the school runs effectively and efficiently.

The teacher component, especially the principals, seem to have a lot to say about the roles of the SGB. Both principals reported the role of the chairperson

as that of leading the SGB towards the accomplishment of the goals of the school.

There were mixed views on the roles of each SGB component regarding the drafting of the agenda. Thirty eight percent (38%) viewed teachers as drafting agenda for the parents while sixty two percent (62%) viewed the drafting of the agenda as joint exercise.

Even though the SGB members revealed that the role of the SGB is that of formulating school policies their responses differed from respondent to respondent regarding what this role entails. Respondent 1, an SGB chairperson in school A, seemed to have a lot to say about roles of the SGB than other parent SGB members. For instance, on the policies that the school has developed he reported, "*We have a mission, vision, code of conduct, disciplinary policy, finance policy and maintenance policy*". He also indicated that he is the person who ensures that these policies are implemented. In ensuring the implementation of school policies, chairperson 1 reported that he encourages other SGB members to stick to the decisions that have been taken in the meetings. Furthermore, he reported that he visits the school to learn from the principal if there are any problems. However, this report was not supported by any other parent SGB member and there was nothing in the minutes that supported it. The SGB parent member number 1 seemed to be unaware of these policies. Perhaps, the reason for this is her level of education and the fact that she is older than sixty years. Parent SGB member number 2, the additional member in the SGB, when asked the same question seemed to be reporting what was discussed in a

particular meeting not the policies that are in existence in a school. Respondent 3, a treasurer in school A, also seemed to be aware of some policies such as the disciplinary policy. She reported, *“When a learner shows an act of ill discipline we have a way of disciplining that particular learner”*.

During SGB meeting B in school B, eighty seven percent (87%) of the SGB members participated in the discussions. It was only one SGB member (a non teaching staff member) constituting thirteen percent (13%) of the SGB, who was of silent. The issues that were discussed in this meeting were the financial reports, the election of the SGB and a report on the purchase of a ball. The meeting was dominated by the questions that needed clarity from the principal and educators. The parent SGB members participated by asking the questions from the principal and the educators.

Sixty six percent (66%) of the parent SGB members who were interviewed seemed to be unable to list all the policies that the school must have. The responses that were given by eighty percent (80%) of the parents (both parent SGB members and non SGB parents) indicated that the main role of the SGB is to look after the physical environment of the school. Other roles such as management of school finances, discipline, ensuring a culture of teaching and learning, formulation of school policies crafting of a vision and mission and the like are second to the physical environment of the school in the ladder of priority. This is evident in the response given by the respondent :

We see to it that the school is clean. The walls are regularly painted and the school yard is well fenced.” We make sure that vegetables are planted in the school garden.

When both principals were asked about school policies they gave a longer list than their counter parts. They mentioned policies such as the maintenance policy, the finance policy, the HIV/AIDS policy, the procurement policy, the retrieval policy, the language policy, the code of conduct and the disciplinary policy. However, the responses given by the principals revealed that the only functional committee was finance committee. Furthermore, both principals indicated that there were no other SGB subcommittees to monitor the implementation of other policies.

When asked about his role, respondent 1 an SGB chairperson in school A answered, *“I ensure that rules and policies of the school are implemented. For example when a learner misbehaves I see to it that proper disciplinary measures are followed”*.

Ninety percent (90%) of SGB members are of the opinion that the SGB should sit and write proposals to be discussed in parent meetings. They reported that the final approval in as far as policy formulation is concerned should be done by the parents at a parents’ meeting. Respondent 2 a principal in school A when asked about how the policies are formulated reported,

Educators sit in a meeting and come up with proposals on certain issues. These proposals are taken to the SGB by those educators who are in SGB. The SGB discusses and draft a policy to be presented to the parents meeting. The parents are the last persons to have a say and it is endorsed as a policy of the school by the parents.

There were no indications that the parents in their meetings initiated issues which become part of school policy. As has already been mentioned above, the parents meetings were dominated by reports by the SGB and the parents participated by asking for clarity on certain issues. Educators seemed to give direction in meetings. They answered questions raised by the parents and in most cases provided solutions to problems. For instance, during the SGB meeting in school A the researcher observed that parent SGB member 3 was given a platform to report on the issue of educational tour. She reported on that particular issue but she sought additions from the educators.

In ensuring the implementation of school policies one hundred percent (100) of the SGB members noted that school governance is also about monitoring the implementation of school policies. Respondent 4 reported, *"We just monitor the implementation of policies and if they are not implemented we remind each other in our meetings"*. Respondent 1 reported that the SGB monitor these policies and when something has gone wrong these policies serve as a point of reference. They cited the example of the policy on finances that requires one to have evidence in a form of receipts when money has been utilized. Respondent 23, the principal in school B, responded, *"Whenever a learner breaks the policy the parent of that particular learner is called to account for her misbehaving child"*. Respondent 1 from school B reported,

For instance there were boys who assaulted other boys from a nearby village. We went around the village and identified these boys and some of them were learners in this school. We called their parents who suggested that the learners be punished by means of corporal punishment. We

refused to do this because as the SGB we know that the law prohibits us from doing this. The parents insisted and we so we asked them to punish their own children and they did that in front of us.

A hundred percent (100%) of the SGB members from both schools noted that school governance is also about influencing staff to implement school policies. Respondent 1 reported that when there is a problem with a learner, for instance incidents of smoking in school or disrupting a lesson SGB should be called to deal with the matter. He further explained that,

For instance if an SGB member does not attend SGB meetings we call him to remind him about his responsibility. If he does not come after three times of our call we sit down and decide to bring this matter to the attention of the parents so that parents could decide on bi-elections.

Fifty percent (50%) of the members of the SGB also indicated that the SGB visits the school to monitor the progress of the day and they also encourage parents to examine the work of their children. Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents indicated that the role of the SMT is to ensure that policies are formulated and implemented. Much as the seventy (70%) indicated that it is the role of the SMT to ensure that policies are implemented, eighty percent (80%), as has been indicated earlier, noted that it is the role of the SGB to ensure that policies are formulated and implemented. Respondent 25 reported, *“The SGB must come to school to monitor the school and if there is anyone who breaks the policy the SGB must adjudicate on that case”*. From this the researcher inferred that the SGBs sometimes do encroach the roles of the SMT because according to DoE (1996) (Performance Measures) it is the responsibility of the SMTs to detect non implementation of policies in schools. As far as this policy is concerned, the SMT

reports to the SGB on any misdemeanor in the school and the SGB must adjudicate on the matter.

Respondent 4, when asked about policy formulation reported the discussions and on the resolutions that are taken in their normal SGB meetings. Although he viewed these meeting resolutions as policies he did not indicate that there are specific policies for specific purposes. Respondent 24 in school B, when asked whether they have these policies, responded by saying that they do not have school policies yet. She reported, *"Much as we have a guide, this has not been formulated into school policies"*. Asked how does she think school policies should be formulated she answered, *"I think the policy of the school is guided by the mission and the parents and educators should be brought on board when formulating school policies"*. In ensuring the implementation of school policy sixty percent (60%) of the parents responded by saying the policy should emphasize the development of the school more especially the physical appearance of the school.

The minutes of the SGB meetings of school B were dominated by reports which were mainly given by the teacher component of the SGB (educators and the principal). The SGB meetings were also dominated by questions that ask for clarity after a particular report had been given. There were no indications of SGB sub committee meetings. The SGB seemed to discuss all the matters that affect the school from their initial stages. There are no matters that were deferred to the SGB subcommittees. Through the analysis of the minutes of the SGB and

parents' meetings the researcher was able to have a sense of the aspirations and intentions of the period to which the minutes referred.

It also emerged from the responses given by principal that policies are explained to parents and whenever a learner for instance contravenes any policy, the parent is called to a school to answer to the SGB. One principal also noted that the SGB chairperson visits the school to see to it that policies are implemented and whenever there is a problem he reports it to the SGB meeting.

(e)Ensuring the culture of teaching and learning

Respondents also noted parents' roles in ensuring the culture of teaching and learning. Ensuring the culture of teaching and learning implies encouraging parents to look their children's work and visiting the school to see to it that teaching is taking place. Kazembe (2005) argued that parental participation in the development children's literacy is very important. Furthermore, fathers, in the Malawian context, play a more vital role than the mothers as they are also the providers of material resources and supplies, and mothers supplement what is done by the fathers (Ibid, 2005).

One hundred percent (100%) of the respondents (SGB members and non SGB member) noted that one of roles of parent SGB members is to see to it that a high level of teaching and learning is maintained. Furthermore, parent

respondents, SGB and non SGB, indicated that it is the role of the SGB to ensure that educators teach and learners do their work. When the parent SGB members were asked to explain the way they ensured a high level of teaching and learning, different answers emerged. Sixty percent (60%) of SGB parent members noted that the SGBs visit to schools to see if the educators are present at school and are doing their work. Respondent 4 reported,

We encourage parents to check their children's books. This makes a parent able to detect whether educators are doing their work. We encourage them to go to teachers when they are not satisfied with their children's work.

However, fifty percent (50%) of educators on the other hand noted that the SGB are not supposed to be part of ensuring that teachers and learners do their work. They view this as the work of the SMT. On the role of parents in ensuring the culture of teaching and learning, respondent 2, a principal in school A, responded: *"The SGB has nothing to do with the work of the educators. The work of educators is professional issue which is managed by the principal and his SMT"*. Respondent 1 noted that the SGB should look into the curriculum of the school, that is, it is the mandate of the SGB to formulate the school curriculum. This respondent only passed grade twelve but he seemed to have a passion for the business of school governance. His confidence when expressing himself indicated his love of education. This may be the reason why he seemed to have a lot to say on the roles of parents in their children's education. Respondent 4 on ensuring high level of teaching and learning reported,

We as parents must see to it that learners' books have dates as evidence that educators are doing their work, and that we as the SGB must from

time to time visit the school to check that educators are doing their work by visiting them in their classes.

Eighty percent (80%) of the parent SGB members indicated that they encourage parents to go to school to check on the progress of their children from educators.

Respondent 4 reported,

To assure a culture of teaching and learning we visit the school. Our visits are in the morning. We watch learners as they come to school and monitor their punctuality. Those who are late are denied entrance whilst morning prayers are in progress, and they are thereafter reprimanded for having come late.

Much as both principals view ensuring of culture of teaching and learning as one of the roles of the SGB they seemed to have different approaches to how this role should be executed. Respondent 23 reported that the SGB visits the school sometimes to see to it that teaching is taking place. She further explained, *“Whenever there are changes in the curriculum we explain to the SGB as teachers so that they are aware of these changes”*. It also emerged from this principal that the SMT deals with learners who do not do their work. and the SGB is asked by the SMT to call the parent of that particular learner. Seventy percent (70%) of parents, both the SGB members and non SGB members indicated that the parents in the SGB should reprimand educators who are not doing their work. Respondent 5 reported, *“Sithi simbize utitshala ongawenziyo umsebenzi wakhe simngxolise siyi-SGB.”* The English translation is: *We call the educator who is not doing his work and reprimand him as SGB*” This means that the SGB reprimands the educators who do not perform their duties. However, this is not indicated anywhere in the minutes of the SGB.

It was apparent from the different responses given by different participants, that there are different signals in as far as the role of ensuring a high level of teaching and learning is concerned. In their responses both the SGB and non SGB parents indicated that the SGB must see to it that educators teach. Furthermore, they also indicated that the SMT should ensure that educators carry out their duties which means therefore that it is the responsibility of both the SGB and the SMT.

4.2.4 Factors affecting school governance

The responses by both principals gave the indication that communication is a critical area that affects school governance. They further suggested that the principal establishes sound communication between himself and the SGB. Principal 2 reported, *“The principal must inform the SGB of every development that comes from the Department of Education”*. She noted the fact that this communication should not be one sided, but must be reciprocal, with parent SGB members on one side raising their concerns to the educators and the principal likewise raising the concerns of educators with the SGB.

Another issue that one hundred percent (100%) of the respondents highlighted was commitment and dedication. They reported that for school governance to be sound the SGB members need to be committed and dedicated to their work. By this they meant attending SGB and parents meetings regularly. Thirty percent parent (30%) of the SGB members recommended that SGB members be given stipend as an incentive for attending SGB meetings. Furthermore, they viewed

this as something that could even enhance parental participation as parents would realise that attending meetings could result in being considered for an SGB position. Forty percent (40%) also noted planning as enhancing the effectiveness of the SGB. It was further noted that planning would allow the SGB a chance to evaluate its work from time to time. The issue of proper planning by the SGB was also mentioned by fifteen percent (15%) of non SGB parents. In her response to a question that seeks explanation on factors that affect school governance positively, respondent 20 stated, *“Ikomiti kufuneka ihlale phantsi icwangcise izinto ezifunayo zesikolo.”* The English translation is: *“The SGB must sit down and plan the needs of the school”*. This means that it is the role of the SGB to plan for the school.

Trust was another aspect that emerged from the responses that were given by one hundred percent (100%) of both the SGB and non SGB components. They further suggested that if SGB members work in a spirit of trust conflict would be avoided. Respondent 23 answered, *“Trust must exist amongst SGB members so that a team work spirit will exist as SGB members are more like one family, After all the SGB is in a position of trust”*.

Eighty percent (80%) of the SGB members indicated that collaboration amongst SGB members plays a very vital role in school governance. Sixty percent (60%) of SGB members noted that parental support helps the SGB to work with determination and pride. Responded 24 stated,

School governance becomes sound when there is proper communication between parent SGB members, teachers and parents, and dedication and

interest shown by parents and teachers in school activities makes school governance effective.

Fifty percent (50%) view cooperation in as far as contributing towards fundraising as a factor that makes school governance sound. This refers to support given by parents to school activities. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents commented, *“The principal must set a high standard and lead by example”*. Parents also noted the fact that the SGB should have a clear mission towards achieving its vision. Sixty percent (60%) viewed SGB policy that aims at developing learners as something that might have a positive effect on school governance. Seventy percent (7%) of the SGB members view the availability of resources as something that enhances school governance. The following were the answers that were given by some other SGB members:

Respondent 1: *“The availability of computers that would assist learners with more knowledge and adequate teaching staff could enhance school governance”*.

Respondent 3: *“Organising computers for learners so that they can learn and giving uniforms to indigent learners affects school governance positively”*.

Respondent 4: *“There must be facilities such as kitchen to cook for our children, garden to grow vegetables and our school must be clean and have toilets”*.

Ten percent (10%) of the parents view regular visits by SGB to the school to look into the efficient running of the school as something that could make school governance sound.

On factors that affect school governance negatively one hundred percent (100%) of the respondents gave the opposite of the above factors. They further mentioned the lack of commitment and dedication, disrespect and lack of communication among SGB members. On the lack of commitment, respondent 23 indicated that SGB members who do not attend SGB and parent meetings regularly make SGB operations difficult. In his own words he said, *“Ilungu elingazihambiyo iintlanganiso zekomiti nezabazali liyayiqhwalelisa I SGB. Liyenza ingakwazi ukusebenza kakuhle”*. The English translation is: *The SGB member who does not attend SGB and parents’ meetings causes the SGB to be ineffective and inefficient*. He also said, *“When SGB members miss meetings it is difficult for the SGB to make informed decisions and sometimes this leads to meetings being called off which in turn affects the effectiveness of the school as a whole”*.

Respondent 1 reported that the lack of communication between the school and parents causes school governance to be ineffective. He further suggested that this communication start between the principal and the SGB chairperson. This was further supported by one hundred percent (100%) of the respondents.

Treasurer 1 and secretary 2 reported that respect must prevail amongst the SGB members. Sixty percent (60%) of non SGB parent respondents indicated that educators must show respect for parents and vice versa. One hundred percent (100%) of parent SGB members noted the lack respect amongst SGB members as affecting school governance negatively.

Sixty five percent (65%) of the respondents claimed that the lack of support by the Department of Education leads to poor school governance. Forty percent (40%) of the respondents indicated that failure by the SGB to implement the decision it makes affect school governance negatively. Chairperson 1 elaborated, *“If the SGB fails to implement its decisions, progress in school development will be slow”*. Fifty percent (50%) of the SGB members viewed the lack of funds as a factor that leads to poor school governance.

A hundred percent (100%) of the parent SGB members also highlighted team spirit as one of the major tools to keep the SGB effective. Respondent 22 reported,

In school we must assist each other and when there is a conflict we must not expose it to the public. We must sit down and resolve it. We must respect each other so that we can work as a collective. We should draft an agenda and allocate items of the agenda amongst us when there is a parent meeting. We do this so that we are able to control our meeting. This results in parents gaining confidence in us.

The fact that there are participants, as has already has reported above, who regarded the lack of physical resources such as computers, school buildings and toilets as factors that could affect school governance negatively and those who viewed behaviour as a factor may be an indication that SGB members have different conceptions of what roles they should perform. Perhaps those who highlighted physical resources as factors that affect school governance associate them with the performance of the SGB, that is, in cases where there are enough resources, it is an indication that the SGB is performing well.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings that emerged from the data and relates them to the literature that was reviewed in chapter 2. The researcher has divided this section into sub themes namely: gender, age cohort, educational qualification, SGB components, SGB portfolios, role of parents in school governance, calling SGB and parents meetings, chairing SGB and parent meetings, formulation and ensuring the implementation of school policies, managing school finances, ensuring the culture of teaching and learning and factors affecting school governance.

4.3.1 Age cohort

The majority of the respondents were above the age of fifty. This may be an indication that school governance in the rural primary school is considered to be safe in the hands of those who are elder citizens in the society. This is despite the study by Kabacoff & Stoffy (2001) arguing that keeping leadership in the hands of elderly people is conservative and unprogressive. The young leaders may view their elders as too fiscally and socially conservative. On the other hand the elderly leaders may view their counterparts as workaholic, idealistic and overwhelmed by their parents depression mentality (Ibid, 2001).

The fact that the majority of respondents are elder citizens might have a bearing on the old traditional belief that adults should assume leadership roles in the society. This belief entails, as indicated in chapter 2, that adults' judgments are

regarded as more reliable than their children's and children should always listen to the elders (Mabasa & Themane, 2002; Duku, 2006). Carnaby (2009) refers to this situation as a "paradigm shift of the digital age within the constraint of old world structures, established organisational models and workplace cultures and capabilities".

4.3.2 Gender issues

The majority of respondents in both schools were females. However, the chairperson positions were held by male parent SGB members. This may be an indication that the rural communities still believe in what Duku (2006) refers to as 'African habitus' where men are regarded as heads of households. In both schools secretaries and treasurers were females. Inclusivity is defined as an inclusion of divergent gender, race, age and social background in school governance (Brown & Duku, 2007). However, females are regarded as inferior partners who can not assume leadership positions. The election of males as SGB chairpersons might be an indication that chairpersonship is associated, as noted by Kelly (1997), with boldness. On the other hand the election of females to the positions of secretary and treasurer could indicate that these portfolio are associated with the good intuition of the females as the secretary and treasurer are the persons who deal with records (Ibid, 1997).

4.3.3 Educational qualifications

The fact that there are few parents who have only a primary education may be an indication that parents view school governance as something that should be done by those who are literate. The majority of parents have a secondary education. Perhaps, when electing SGB, parents considered those who have secondary education to deal with school governance matters. This is in line with Heystek (2004) who argues that where parents have limited skills, knowledge and low levels of literacy they may find it impossible to assume responsibility for governing the school.

4.3.4 SGB components and SGB portfolios

As has been indicated above, the majority of respondents indicated that the components of the SGB at primary school level are educators, parents and non teaching staff. This is an indication that they understand the SASA prescription on the composition of the SGB. However, there was a section of respondents who did not understand how the SGB should be composed.

Regarding the SGB portfolios, all respondents included the portfolios of deputy chairperson and deputy secretary despite the fact that the SASA prescribes the portfolios of chairperson, secretary and treasurer. There were a few of the respondents who indicated that the SGB must have an organiser and coordinator. This is an indication that the DoE should mentor the SGBs particularly the parent SGB members so that they have a clear understanding of their roles as SGB members.

4.3.5 Calling SGB and parent meetings

Regarding the calling of the meetings it emerged from the data that the principal is the person who calls school meetings. This may be an indication that the principal is the person who is knowledgeable in matters of school governance as he represents the DoE. Even some respondents referred to him as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the school which means he is superior person in matters of school governance.

Some writers like Farrel (2001) view the partnership between the principal and the SGB chairperson as vital in school governance. The principal represent the DoE while the SGB chairperson represents the interest of the community (Ibid, 2001). However, the partnership seemed to be unequal as it was the principal in most cases who initiated meetings with the SGB chairperson.

The issue of collaboration as raised by Heystek (2004) seemed to prevail between the SGB chairperson and the principal in that the principal seemed to have sessions with the SGB chairperson. After the session between the principal and the SGB chairperson, an SGB meeting would be called and it was reported to be the role of the principal to call these meetings.

4.3.6 Chairing SGB and parent meetings

The majority of the respondent, as indicated above, noted that it is the role of the chairperson to chair SGB and parent meetings. However, there were a few

respondents who indicated that the chairing of the school meetings is done by the principal and the SGB chairperson.

The fact that it was reported that principals sometimes chair the SGB meetings may be an indication that they overstep the role of the SGB chairperson in school governance. The overstepping of the SGB chairperson's roles by the principal is what Heystek (2004) refers to as 'power plays' which may be conscious or unconscious. The power plays happen when the principal dominates the rest of the SGB or the SGB chairperson dominates the principal (Ibid, 2004).

4.3.7 Formulating and ensuring the implementation of school policies

The majority (80%) of respondents reported that it was the role of the SGB to formulate and ensure the implementation of school policies. Another 80% reported that parents formulate school policies. This was an indication that parental participation was enhanced since parents were reported to make decisions on school policy formulation. This was therefore consistent with what Lewis & Naidoo (2005) refer to as involving stakeholders in making decisions by consensus.

The fact that the SGBs reported regularly to parents on school progress and require parents to have a say and to make some decisions on the education of their learners was a reflection of what Maclure (1994) calls decentralisation of education. The majority of respondents view the role of SGB as that of

formulating school policies and this is consistent with what Mathonsi (2006) view as delegation of powers to the local people.

SASA requires that the SGBs establish SGB committees so that the SGB is able to execute its roles effectively. However most of the SGB sub committees were reported to be dysfunctional and their tasks were performed by the SGBs. This means therefore that though the involvement of parents in decision making was an indication of democratization of school governance, what Mathonsi (2001) referred to as 'delegation of powers' within the SGB was not prevalent. That most of the SGB subcommittees were dysfunctional makes the SGBs look like a nerve centre that does not have enough branches to support it in executing its duties. No other persons were reported as serving in the SGB subcommittees. This was an indication that community involvement was limited to making decision at the level of parent meetings. On certain school governance matters that required some expertise, the community was not involved. This was despite the SASA (1996) prescription that the SGB should appoint on the basis of expertise other persons who are not members of the SGB to serve in these committees.

4.3.8 Managing school finances

Regarding the management of school finances it emerged that this is largely dependent on the educators. In this regard the issue of mentoring as argued by Crawford & Earley (2004) and Mathonsi (2001) emerged as it seemed educators and the principal assisted the parent SGB members in financial management. It

was reported that the principal gives direction on many occasions on matters of school finance. This may indicate the fact that parent SGB members needed a person with expertise to guide them on SGB financial matters.

There were no sessions that were reported that dealt with the book keeping school finances by the finance committee. The processes of budgeting were apparently not done by the SGB finance sub committee. It also emerged from the report that the finance committee meetings are not held regularly, that is, there was no schedule of meetings by finance committee. There were no reports on the procedure followed when the school purchases goods except for educators having to secure quotations from different shops. The processes that are followed during cheque requisition were also not reported. This means, therefore, that parent SGB members need support for them to be able to perform their roles effectively.

4.2.9 Ensuring a culture of teaching and learning

It also emerged from the data that SGB persona and other SGB members sometimes visit school to check that teaching is taking place. This may be an indication that the parent SGB members do not understand their roles regarding ensuring culture of teaching and learning. SASA (1996) prescribes that the principal of a school see to that all the education programmes and curriculum activities are implemented and that there is academic improvement in a school. This therefore means that some parent SGB members do not differentiate between the roles of the SGB and those of the SMT.

4.2.10 Factors affecting school governance

It emerged from the data that the SGB and non SGB members seem to have similar conceptions of the factors that affect school governance. These included commitment, punctuality, dedication, trust and respect. Amongst other factors that the respondents reported was the lack of support from the Department of Education. Crawford & Earley (2004) indicated that the lack of mentoring given to SGBs in executing their roles brings about factors that are detrimental to the school governance.

4.3.11 Conclusion

From the above presentation one could deduce that SGB members, parents, educators and principals, have different conceptions and assumptions about the roles of the SGB parent members. The data that were gathered from both schools are more or less the same. There are no fundamental differences in as far as understanding of the roles of the parents in the SGB. It emerged from the data that parents are unable to distinguish between the roles of the SMT and those of the SGB in as far as ensuring culture of teaching and learning. It is also clear that the SGB sub committees are not doing enough to support the SGB. Most of the tasks are performed by the SGB itself. There are some parents as indicated above who see chairing and calling of meetings as the legitimate roles of the principal and educators. The participants were given an opportunity to specify their understanding of the roles of SGB parent members. In chapter three it was indicated that this study falls within the parameters of the qualitative

approach which allows the participants to express their experiences and understanding of their situation (Flick, 2006).

It emerged from the data that in all the levels of school governance (SGB and parent meeting) the parents are included in the decisions that are made. This means therefore that the inclusion of people of different social background as noted by Brown & Duku (2008) prevailed in school governance matters. That professionals like educators and parents are working together in school governance is an indication of partnership, inclusion and collaboration. According to the biographical information it emerged that the majority of parent SGB members are older than the age of 50. This was an indication that the multigenerational issue as argued by Kelly (1997) still needed to be addressed.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The aim, of this chapter is to present the summary, conclusion and recommendations from the findings that emerged in chapter 4. The researcher has highlighted the findings that are based on the data that were discussed in chapter four. The researcher has summarised these findings and made recommendations that relate to them. These recommendations concern the roles of SGB members, formulating and ensuring school policy, ensuring the culture of teaching and learning, managing school finances and factors that affect school governance. The researcher has also summarized the findings by relating them to the theoretical framework that was raised in chapter two and in conclusion the researcher has indicated what he thinks are the areas for future research.

5.1 Summary of major findings

The following is the summary of findings emerged in chapter 4.

5.1.1 Composition of SGBs

(a) SGB components and portfolios

Though the majority of respondents indicated that the SGB is composed of parents, educators and non-teaching staff members, there were respondents who seemed not to be aware of the composition of the SGB. They included the

deputy chairperson, deputy secretary, organiser and coordinator which SASA does not include. This means that some parents are not knowledgeable about the composition of the SGB.

On the SGB portfolios, it emerged from the data that parent SGB members do not understand how many SGB portfolios there should be.

(b) Age, gender and educational qualifications

The majority of parent SGB members were above the age of fifty which was an indication that school governance was seen to be better left in the hands of senior citizens.

Despite the fact that the majority of the SGB members were female, the positions of the chairpersons were held by male figures. Females held the positions of secretary and treasurer in both schools.

The data revealed that the majority of parents in SGB have secondary education. There were few parents who had only primary education in the SGB.

5.1.2 The roles of parent SGB members

(a) Calling and chairing of SGB and parent meetings

Regarding the calling of meetings, the majority of respondents indicated that it is the principals who call SGB and parents meetings. This, as it emerged from the data, happens after the principal has called the SGB chairperson.

On chairing the SGB and parent meetings, the majority indicated that it is the role of the chairperson to chair school meetings. However there were respondents who indicated that it is the role of the chairperson and the principal.

(b) Formulating and ensuring the implementation of school policies

From the data that were collected from the two schools it was apparent that parents are involved in the formulation of school policies. However, it emerged that the methods of initiating the formulation of school policies are different. Some indicated that the educators initiate policies and bring them to SGB others reported that it is the SGB that initiates policy formulation. SASA prescribes that the SGB of the school must adopt a school policy. All the respondents reported that it is the role of the SGB to formulate school policy. What SASA does not specify is the involvement of parents in the formulation of school policy. SASA only specifies the consultation of learners, parents and educator on the adoption of a code of conduct. It does not specify the involvement of parents in the formulation of, for instance, language policy, admission policy and development of mission for the school. However, the respondents conceive parents as part of the policy formulation process. According to the reports, the adoption of policy is done by the parents in a parents meeting whereas SASA prescribes that the adoption be done by the SGB.

(c) Ensuring a culture of teaching and learning

It emerged from the data that to ensure a culture of teaching and learning, in some instances the SGBs visit the school to see if the educators are teaching.

They also reported that the SGBs encourage parents to visit the educators and monitor their children's work. It also emerged from the data that parent SGB members reprimand educators who are not doing their work. It is good to know that parents view themselves as having an important role in their children's literacy. However their role, as in the case of ensuring policy formulation, should be clearly defined so that they do not overstep their line of function to intrude on that of SMTs.

(d) Managing school finances

It emerged from the data from both principals and SGB members that finance committees deal mainly with making financial reports. It also emerged that the business of procuring assets is handled by educators.

5.1.3 Factors affecting school governance

It emerged from the data that a lack of commitment, a lack in punctuality, a lack of transparency and a lack of trust are the factors that affect school governance negatively.

5.2 Conclusion

This study has helped the researcher deduce that parent participation in school governance is important, however, parent SGB members need to be engaged in some form of intensive training by the Department of Education. This training might increase the parent SGB member's motivation and this might in turn bring

about increased effectiveness in school governance. This research was conducted in schools which are in historically disadvantaged rural areas and the study reflects the rural perspective of school governance.

The conceptual and theoretical framework that was raised in chapter two was helpful in this study, in that, the researcher was able to know what the parents do when they are tasked with policy related matters. The data reported by the respondents reflected the concepts discussed in chapter two. The theory discussed in chapter two served as lenses when the researcher was exploring the roles of the parent SGB members. The data revealed that there is a level of learning that has taken place due to exposure to the operations of the SGB. The knowledge that the parent SGB members have acquired due to their exposure to SGB is in line with Bruner's Cognitive development theory. The respondents reported that due to short workshops that they have undergone have learned some of the things regarding school governance. For instance those who are still new in the SGB have little to explain on some of the SGB issues. This is congruent with what Vygotsky refers to as sociocultural theory where an individual learns due to exposure to a new environment. The use Bloom's taxonomies (cognitive and effective domains) as lenses in the understanding of parent SGB members of their roles in the SGB has helped the researcher to understand the knowledge and the attitudes the parent SGB have on school governance.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

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

- On the basis of these findings the researcher recommends that clear national or provincial guidelines in the form of an SGB constitution be established to define the specific roles of each member of the SGB.
- The Department of Education should conduct an intensive training course for the parent SGB members on issues of school governance.
- The Department of Education should increase the period of the term of office of the SGBs to five years to allow for stability in school governance.
- In ensuring policy implementation the Department of Education should develop a manual for the SMTs in ensuring the implementation of school policies so that the line of operation of the SMTs and that of SGBs is clear. This could assist in improving the relationship between the SMT and the SGB and what Heystek (2004) referred to as 'power plays' would be addressed.
- The researcher recommends that there be a common manual for the SGBs for reference in matters that pertain to financial management. This manual must contain all the guidelines in respect to financial management of the school. SASA just prescribes that SGBs must prepare a budget for

the school but it does not give the details of the budget processes that must be followed. There must be a manual that contains all the details regarding financial management. It also emerged that educators are the key persons in procurement processes. The researcher therefore recommends that the Department of Education organise a training course for SGB treasurers who seem to be parent SGB members.

- On factors that affect school governance the researcher recommends that the SGB members, as a measure to motivate them to take part in school governance, be paid a stipend whenever the SGB members attend SGB meeting. This will not only motivate those in the SGB but parents in general since they will realise that parents who are active in school might be considered for election to the SGB. SGBs must as a measure of improving punctuality introduces award system for good governance by each SGB member and these awards be accompanied by prizes. This recommendation is in agreement with Self Determination Theory which Mwamwenda (1989) refers to as a situation in which extrinsic motivation leads to intrinsic motivation. This means that the SGB members, if they can be given rewards, would develop an interest in SGB matters since they derive pleasure in participating to school governance.

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Appendix A

2445 Thembisa
Dimbaza
5671
03 June 2009

The Principal
Zama L/HP School
King Williams Town
5600

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request to conduct a research study in your school

The above matter refers.

I am MEd candidate at the University of Fort Hare and my student number is 9626964. My research topic is 'An investigation into parents' understanding of their roles in the SGBs of the two selected primary schools in the King William's Town District'. I am due to collect data from April to August. I kindly request you to grant me a permission to come and visit your school and your SGB.

I hope my request will meet your favourable consideration.

Sincerely

MP Mavuso

Appendix C

School A L/HP
King Williams Town
5600
05-06-2009

Dear Mr Mavuso

Re: Permission to conduct interviews – School A L/HP

I have been authorised by the School Governing Body (SGB) of the above mentioned school to grant you a permission to come and conduct your research in this school. I therefore invite you to come to the SGB meeting that will be held on the 15th of June 2009 to introduce yourself formerly.

Wishing you a very good luck.

Thank you

NM Mfene (Prncipal)

Appendix D

2445 Thembisa

Dimbaza

5671

03 June 2009

The Circuit Manager

Department of Education Circuit 25

King Williams Town District

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Request to conduct a research in your circuit

I hereby request you to grant me a permission to conduct a research in School A and school B in your circuit. This is the requirement for the fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Education at the university of Fort Hare. The topic of my research is *'An exploration to the roles of the parent SGB members in the SGB'*

I trust that you will treat this request with fairness.

Sincerely

MP Mavuso

Appendix E



**Province of the Eastern Cape
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KING WILLIAMS TOWN DISTRICT**

Enquiries: N. Mafekula

Tel: 043-6052016

Fax: 043-642 4718

Dear Mr Mavuso

RE: PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH- SCHOOL A AND SCHOOL B

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 03 June 2009, and I hereby grant you a permission to go and conduct your research in the above mentioned schools.

Wishing you a good time.

Sincerely

N Mafekula (Circuit manger)

Appendix F

2445 Thembisa

Dimbaza

5671

03 March 2009

The SGB Chairperson

School A L/HP School

King Williams Town

Dear Mr Mfene

Re: Request for a permission for interviews- yourself

I hereby request you to grant me a permission to come and interview you on matters relating to school governance. I am a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and my topic is "An investigation into the parents understanding of their roles in the SGBs of the selected two rural primary schools in the King Williams Town District". I am due to collect data during the month of February-March 2009.

Thanking you in advance.

MP Mavuso

Appendix G

Madadeni Location
PO Madadeni
King Williams Town
5600
20 June 2009

I..... hereby consent that I
will participate in the interviews that will be conducted with me by the researcher.
I understand the topic of the research and I will cooperate him as as long as he is
within the requirement of the topic.

Sincierely

M.Mdevu

Appendix H

Structured interview questions for SGB members

Name of the
school.....

Section A Biography and demographics

1. Sex (please tick one)

Category	Code
Male	1
Female	2
Any other, please specify	3

2. Age group (Please tick one)

21-30 years	1
31-40 years	2
41-50 years	3
51-60 years	4
61-70 years	5
71-80 years	6
80 and over	7

3. What is your position in the SGB? (Please tick)

Category	Code
SGB chairperson	1
SGB secretary	2
Treasury	3

Additional member	4
Other	5

4. How long have you been holding this position in this committee?

Category	Code
Between 1 and 3 years	1
Between 4 and 7 years	2
10 years and over	3

5. How long have you been in this committee?

Category	Code
Between 0 and 3 years	1
Between 4 and 7 years	2
10 years and above	3

6. Why were you elected into the SGB? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Literate	1
Am a community leader	2
Few people turned out on the day of the elections	3
I like to talk in the meetings	4
I am a female	5
I am a male	6
I am respected	7
I am strict	8

Any other, specify	9
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7. Tick your highest education qualification

Category	Code
Never been to school	1
Primary education	2
Secondary education	3
Diploma/University degree	4
Any other, please specify	5

8. Marital Status

Category	Code
Single	1
Married	2
Widowed	3
Divorced	4
Other, please specify	5

9. Employment status

Category	Code
Never been employed	1
Unemployed	2
Self employed	3
Permanently employed	4

Part time employed	5
Any other specify	6

Section B: Beliefs

10.1 What is your religion?

Category	Code
Christianity	1
African Religion	2
Any other please specify	3

10.2 Do you regard the following important?

Category	Code
Ancestors	1
Traditional leaders	2
Western medicines	3
Traditional healers	4
Democracy	5
Any other, please specify	6

Section C: Understanding school governance.

11.1 Does the school have SGB?

Category	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Other	3

11.2 If the answer is yes, what is the composition of your SGB(Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Teachers	1
Parents	2
Learners	3
Non teaching staff	4
Other, please specify	5

11.3 (a) Who chairs SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Chairperson	1
Principal	2
SGB Secretary	3
Teachers	4
Any other, please specify	5

11.3 (b) Why specifically this person?.....

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11.4 (a) Who calls SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Principal	1
Chairperson	2
SGB Secretary	3

Treasurer	4
Any other, please specify	5

11.4 (b) Why specifically this person?

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11.5 How are SGB members notified about SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Letters	1
Word of mouth	2
Community meetings	3
Any other, please specify	5

11.6 Who speaks most in these meetings?

Category	Code
Chairperson	1
Principal	2
SGB Secretary	3
Teachers	4
Any other, specify	5

11.7 The law prescribes the following SGB portfolios (Tick as appropriate).

Category	Code
Chairperson	1

Deputy chairperson	2
Secretary	3
Deputy secretary	4
Treasurer	5
Organiser	6
Coordinator	7
Any other, please specify	8

11.8 What is the role of teachers in school governance?(Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Teachers are secretaries to parent meetings.	1
Teachers draw agendas for the parents.	2
Teachers workshop parents on school governance matters.	3
Teachers invite parents to parents' meetings.	4
Teachers attend parents' meetings.	5
Any other specify	6

11.9 What is the role of the principal school governance? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
The principal chairs parents meetings	1
The principal capacitate parents on SGB matters.	2
The principal supports parents with necessary documents.	3
Principal draws agenda for parents.	4
The principal formulate policies with parents	5
The principal plans a year plan for the SGB.	6
The principal attends parents visiting the school	7
Any other, please specify	8

11.10 What is the role of the parents in school governance? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Attend SGB meetings	1
Attend SMT meetings	2
Clean the school buildings	3
Draw school policy	4
Draw school time table	5
Draw a code of conduct for the school	6

Any other, please specify	7
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11.11 (a) Do you assist in school activities?

Category	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Sometimes	3

11.11(b) If the answer is yes which school activities do you assist in?

Category	Code
Sport	1
Music	2
Gardening	3
Any other, please specify	5

11.12 What is school governance? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Formulating of school policies	1
Monitoring the implementation of school policies	2
Influencing the staff to implement school policies	3
Seeing to it that high level of teaching is maintained	4
Seeing to it that high level	5

learning is maintained.	
Seeing to it that school finances are properly managed	6
Any other specify	7

11.13 What is the role of the parents in the SGB? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Representing the interest of parents in education	1
Ensuring that educators do their work	2
Making sure that learners do their work.	3
Drafting year plan for the school	4
Organising SGB meetings	5
Ensuring that learners are punctual.	6
Attending parents meetings	7
Any other, please specify	8

11.14 What is the role of the SMT in school governance? (Tick)

Category	Code
Representing the interests of educators in school governance.	1
Ensuring the implementation of school policies.	2
Formulates school policy	3
Organizing staff meetings	

	4
Ensuring that educators do their work	5
Any other, please specify.	6

11.15 What do parents do in assisting the SGB in this school? (Tick)

Category	Code
Parents attend parents' meetings.	1
Parents take decisions on policy matters.	2
Reprimand underperforming educators.	3
Discuss learners' problems.	4
Any other, please specify.	5

11.16 What does the department of education do in assisting SGB in this school? (Tick)

Code	Category
Supporting SGBs in their work.	1
Chairing the SGB meetings	2
Fundraising for the school.	3
Any other, please specify	4

11.17 How would you describe governance in this school? (Please tick)

Category	Code
Sound	1

Average	2
Poor	3

12. Explain the answer provided above.

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13. Do the following stakeholders play a role in ensuring school governance in this school? (Indicate your answer x in an appropriate box below).

Stakeholder	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Principal				
Educators				
Parent governors				
Non Teaching staff				
District education officials				
Any other, specify.				
Local chief				

14. Explain the factors that you think affect positively school governance.....

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15. Explain the factors that you think affect negatively school governance.....

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16. Is there anything that you would like to share with me around school governance?.....

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Thank you very much for your time!!!

Appendix I

Structured interview questions non SGB parent

Name of the
school.....

Section A Biography and demographics

1. Sex (please tick one)

Category	Code
Male	1
Female	2
Any other, please specify	3

2. Age group (Please tick one)

21-30 years	1
31-40 years	2
41-50 years	3
51-60 years	4
61-70 years	5
71-80 years	6
80 and over	7

3. What is your position at school? (Please tick)

Category	Code
SGB chairperson	1
SGB secretary	2
Treasury	3

Parent	4
Additional member	5
Other	6

4.1 Have you ever been elected as SGB member before?

Category	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Any other, Please specify	3

4.2 If the answer is yes above how long have you been in this committee?

Category	Code
Between 1 and 3 years	1
Between 4 and 7 years	2
10 years and over	3

4.3 If the answer is yes on 4.1 why were you elected into the SGB? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Literate	1
Am a community leader	2
Few people turned out on the day of the elections	3
I like to talk in the meetings	4
I am a female	5
I am a male	6
I am respected	7
I am strict	8

Any other, specify	9
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4.5 Tick your highest education qualification

Category	Code
Never been to school	1
Primary education	2
Secondary education	3
Diploma/University degree	4
Any other, please specify	5

4.6 Marital Status

Category	Code
Single	1
Married	2
Widowed	3
Divorced	4
Other	5

4.7 Employment status

Category	Code
Never been employed	1
Unemployed	2
Self employed	3
Permanently employed	4

Part time employed	5
Any other specify	6

Section B: Beliefs

5. What is your religion?

Category	Code
Christianity	1
African Religion	2
Any other please specify	3

6. Do you regard the following important?

Category	Code
Ancestors	1
Traditional leaders	2
Western medicines	3
Traditional healers	4
Democracy	5
Any other, please specify	6

Section C: Understanding school governance.

7.1 Does the school have SGB?

Category	Code
Yes	1

No	2
Other	3

7.2 If the answer is yes, what is the composition of your SGB(Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Teachers	1
Parents	2
Learners	3
Non teaching staff	4
Other, please specify	5

7.3 (a) Who do you think should chair SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Chairperson	1
Principal	2
SGB Secretary	3
Teachers	4
Any other, please specify	5

7.3 (b) Why specifically this person?.....

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7.4 Who do you think calls SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Principal	1
Chairperson	2
SGB Secretary	3
Treasurer	4
Any other, please specify	5

7.5 Why specifically this person?

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7.6 How are do you think SGB members notified about SGB meetings?

Category	Code
Letters	1
Word of mouth	2
Community meetings	3
Any other, please specify	5

7.7 Who do you thin should speak most in these meetings

Category	Code
Chairperson	1
Principal	2
SGB Secretary	3
Teachers	4
Any other, specify	5

7.8 The law prescribes the following SGB portfolios (Tick as appropriate).

Category	Code
Chairperson	1
Deputy chairperson	2
Secretary	3
Deputy secretary	4
Treasurer	5
Organiser	6
Coordinator	7
Any other, please specify	8

7.9 What is the role of teachers in school governance?(Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Teachers are secretaries to parent meetings.	1
Teachers draw agendas for the parents.	2
Teachers workshop parents on school governance matters.	3
Teachers invite parents to parents' meetings.	4
Teachers attend parents' meetings.	5
Any other specify	6

7.10 What is the role of the principal school governance? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
The principal chairs parents meetings	1
The principal capacitate parents on SGB matters.	2
The principal supports parents with necessary documents.	3
Principal draws agenda for parents.	4
The principal formulate policies with parents	5
The principal plans a year plan for the SGB.	6
The principal attends parents visiting the school	7
Any other, please specify	8

7.11 What is the role of the parents in school governance? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Attend SGB meetings	1
Attend SMT meetings	2
Clean the school buildings	3
Draw school policy	4
Draw school time table	5

Draw a code of conduct for the school	6
Any other, please specify	7

7.12(a) Do you assist in school activities?

Category	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Sometimes	3

7.12(b) If the answer is yes which school activities do you assist in?

Category	Code
Sport	1
Music	2
Gardening	3
Any other, please specify	5

7.13 What do you think school governance is? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Formulating of school policies	1
Monitoring the implementation of school policies	2
Influencing the staff to implement school policies	3

Seeing to it that high level of teaching is maintained	4
Seeing to it that high level learning is maintained.	5
Seeing to it that school finances are properly managed	6
Any other specify	7

7.14 What do you think is the role of the parents in the SGB? (Tick as appropriate)

Category	Code
Representing the interest of parents in education	1
Ensuring that educators do their work	2
Making sure that learners do their work.	3
Drafting year plan for the school	4
Organising SGB meetings	5
Ensuring that learners are punctual.	6
Attending parents meetings	7
Any other, please specify	8

7.15 What do you think is the role of the SMT in school governance? (Tick)

Category	Code
Representing the interests of educators in school	1

governance.	
Ensuring the implementation of school policies.	2
Formulates school policy	3
Organizing staff meetings	4
Ensuring that educators do their work	5
Any other, please specify.	6

7.16 What do parents do in assisting the SGB in this school? (Tick)

Category	Code
Parents attend parents' meetings.	1
Parents take decisions on policy matters.	2
Reprimand underperforming educators.	3
Discuss learners' problems.	4
Any other, please specify.	5

7.17 What does the department of education do in assisting SGB in this school? (Tick)

Code	Category
Supporting SGBs in their work.	1
Chairing the SGB meetings	2
Fundraising for the school.	3

Any other, please specify	4
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7.18 How would you describe governance in this school? (Please tick)

Category	Code
Sound	1
Average	2
Poor	3

7.19 Explain the answer provided above.

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8. Do the following stakeholders play a role in ensuring school governance in this school? (Indicate your answer x in an appropriate box below).

Stakeholder	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Principal				
Educators				
Parent governors				
Non Teaching staff				
District education officials				
Any other,				

specify.				
Local chief				

9. Explain the factors that you think affect positively school governance.....

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10. Explain the factors that you think affect negatively school governance.....

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11. Is there anything that you would like to share with me around school governance?.....

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Thank you very much for your time!!!

Appendix J

OBSERVATION GUIDE

ITEM	COMMENTS
1.Punctual Start to meetings	
2. Opening of the meeting	
3.Attendence Register	
5. Minute book	
6. Reading of the minutes	
7. Chairing of the meeting	
8. Participation in the meetings	
9. Discussions in the meeting	
10. Sitting arrangement in the meetings	
11. Conduct by	

participants	
12. Closure of meetings	

Appendix K

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - PARENT SGB MEMBERS AND PRINCIPALS

What policies do you have in your school?

How are these policies formulated?

What do you do to ensure that school policies are implemented?

What do you do to see to it that high level of teaching is maintained?

What do you do to ensure that learners do their work?

How do you ensure that school finances are properly managed?

Which sub committees does your SGB have?

How often do your SGB sub committees meet?

Is it important for your SGB to have sub committees?

How do you ensure that learners are punctual?

How does your SGB ensure that school governance is sound?

Appendix L

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE NON SGB

PARENTS

Which policies do you think SGB must have?

How should, in your opinion these policies be formulated?

What do you think SGB must do to ensure that policies are implemented?

What do you think SGB must do to ensure that there is high level of teaching?

What do you think SGB must do to ensure that learners do their work?

What can be done in order to ensure proper management of school finances?

What must be done by the SGB to ensure sound school governance?